

**LEEDS CITY COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

Held on

Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> September 2012

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
CIVIC HALL,  
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR  
(COUNCILLOR A CASTLE)

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**VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS**

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 12<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2012

THE LORD MAYOR: As I reminded you earlier, please switch off your mobile phones because they can cause a disturbance. I have got a couple of announcements to make.

I am sure that you will all join me in congratulating the following people from Leeds on their recent medal successes at the Olympics and the Paralympics.

In the Olympics, Nicola Adams, a gold for boxing. (*Applause*); Alistair Brownlee, gold in the triathlon. (*Applause*); Lizzie Armistead, silver in the cycling. (*Applause*); Jonathan Brownlee, a bronze in the triathlon. (*Applause*)

In the Paralympics, Hannah Cockcroft – although she lives in Halifax she trains in Leeds so I think we can accept her! Two golds in the athletics. (*Applause*) David Stone, MBE, Gold and bronze in cycling. (*Applause*); Claire Cashmore, two silvers and one bronze in the swimming. (*Applause*)

I am delighted that at 12.30 pm tomorrow there will be a reception to celebrate all Leeds-based Paralympians on their achievement, at the Civic Hall. You should all have received an invitation by email yesterday and I do hope that as many of you as possible will turn up to show our appreciation of what the Leeds Paralympians have done.

Secondly, in addition, I would like to announce that I am having an Open Day at the Civic Hall on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> September between one o'clock and five o'clock. Entry is free and I would be delighted if you would pass this information on to friends, family and constituents. It would be lovely for me to meet as many people as possible on that day and to let people see inside this building. I know when we have been going out visiting community groups a lot of them have said "Oh, I would love to see inside the Civic Hall" so this will give them the opportunity.

ITEM 1 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>th</sup> JULY 2012

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 1, Minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July.  
Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second, Lord Mayor.

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

ITEM 2 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 2, Declarations of Interest. The list of written declarations submitted by Members is on display in the ante-room, on deposit in the

public galleries and has been circulated to each Member's place in the Chamber. Are there any further individual declarations or corrections to those notified on the list?

COUNCILLOR HARDY: My wife thanks you for the elevation but she is just a teacher, not a headteacher.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: Member of West Yorkshire Fire Authority.

THE LORD MAYOR: Any more? Please can members, by a show of hands, confirm that they have read the list as amended and agreed its contents insofar as it relates to their own interests? (*Show of hands*) Thank you very much.

### ITEM 3 – COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Communications. I understand that you have no communications? I understand that Councillor Blake would like to make an announcement.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Many of you have asked me to give an update to Council on the situation with regard to GCSEs that is affecting so many young people in the city. I am sure all of you are well aware by now it is a very complex and confusing situation. We are not talking at the moment about the general standards debate, which is an important debate. We are talking about, very specifically, the unprecedented grade manipulation in year with no warning to teachers, schools or pupils, that has seen a difference of some 10%, 15% and 20% in some cases. As I said, this is unprecedented and this in particular is in relationship to the English GCSE and has meant that many young people who were expecting by their consistent performance throughout the year of achieving a 'C' grade, have actually been awarded a 'D' grade.

I am sure you will all join with me in expressing our real concern about this, the feeling that it is deeply unfair and a great injustice that so many young people are paying for serious failings in the system.

Initial attempts to sweep it under the carpet disappeared very quickly over the first weekend when the sheer extent of the problem became known and Ofqual, on the Saturday afternoon of Bank Holiday weekend, announced that they would investigate after all the particular circumstances around the English GCSE.

They held an investigation – a short one – and they agreed to allow free re-sits in November for these young people which, in my mind, clearly acknowledges that they knew there was a serious problem. I do not have to go into detail about the pay offs that this has led to in the system. Organising re-sits for young people who have already left school, expecting them to go to College where they might face a different exam board – it just has not been thought through at all.

A further twist occurred yesterday when the Welsh Education Minister, following an investigation, has ordered that the Welsh exam boards be regraded. English students in England study with the Welsh Exam Board. We have many schools in Leeds who use the Welsh Exam Board. We do not know what that will mean for them.

Many of you, I know, know personally young people who have been affected by this. We understand that it is possible that as many as 800 young people in Leeds have been affected. This affects all types of school, from our outstanding Academy to other Academies, to faith schools, to our maintained schools and, indeed, to independent schools as well. The FE Colleges have been particularly badly hit by the same issue.

The particular impact has been most stark for young people who expected to go on to do Grade 3 apprenticeships. This is similar to a job application, Grade C English is an essential requirement and they have been told they cannot progress. It is affecting young people who thought they had places on FE courses and those who wanted to study A-levels, and we have just heard that there are ten pupils who thought they would get the grade and then be able to go on to do English Lit in Year 11 have not been able to progress to do this. It is affecting businesses who have co-operated with us to a great extent to provide apprenticeships as they will have to go through another advertising process to find other young people to take on. The picture is still emerging.

In Leeds I can tell you that of the many schools that have been seriously affected, the most affected schools are Horsforth, Cardinal Heenan, Boston Spa, Brighouse, Carr Manor, the Co-op Academy and East Leeds Academy. We know that as a result of this at least three of our schools have fallen below the floor standard and they were expecting to be well above it. There are more who were expecting for the first time to be above the floor standard who will fail to achieve that.

The current situation, I can tell you that the LGA Children's Board met last week and reached the unanimous view that the situation for our young people was unfair and unjust. This is an all-party board chaired by a Conservative. As I am sure you are aware from the news items, it is currently for discussion at Select Committee in Parliament.

Our response in Leeds has been to give as much support as we possibly can do to our schools and to our young people to try and guide them through this chaotic situation. We are also demanding a full, independent public enquiry. We believe that Ofqual is not in the place where it can hold an investigation into itself, particularly with regard to leaked letters which show that it did indeed put pressure on at least one of the exam boards to change the grade boundaries.

We are asking for these English papers to be re-graded to the January grade level. It cannot be fair that young people in the same class have been treated differently just because they have been submitted in January rather than June.

We are also pursuing the avenue of legal challenge for judicial review. The consortium of other interested parties nationally that is gathering around this is growing on a daily basis. Many other Local Authorities, headteachers' associations and different associations and, indeed, the independent schools as well are joining forces.

I will, I am sure, come back and give you further updates on this, but I have to say to Council this, indeed, is a very, very sorry mess and a great disturbance to so many of our young people who have done brilliantly well in their exams this summer and, despite all of this, I want to give real congratulations to the young people who have done so well and have actually achieved, in spite of this, the best results this city has ever seen. Thank you. *(Applause)*

#### ITEM 4 – DEPUTATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 4, Deputations. Mr Riordan.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: To report that there are four deputations: first, Friends of Allerton Playing Fields regarding the future of Allerton Grange fields; second, local residents raising serious objections over the removal of Yorkshire paving stones in the Burley Park area; third, Hyde Park Olympic Legacy Group regarding the health of the community of Hyde Park and the desperate need of local schools and the community for sports facilities; and fourth, Leeds Youth Fight for Jobs regarding the housing situation facing young people in the city.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, I move that the Deputations are received.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Seconded, Lord Mayor.

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

#### DEPUTATION ONE – FRIENDS OF ALLERTON PLAYING FIELDS

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 the people in your deputation.

MS C BRITTON: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, good afternoon. I am Charlotte Britton, Chair of Friends Allerton Grange Fields and I would like to introduce Depinder Dev, who is the Secretary.

The Friends of Allerton Grange Fields were established in 2009 and are a voluntary association made up of residents and local stakeholders. With our partners we work to protect, enhance and maintain the Allerton Grange playing fields as a public recreation ground. These fields are located just off Lidgett Lane, on the boundary of Roundhay and Moortown wards.

The reason we are so passionate about the fields is because we believe this green open space will benefit the local community, especially children and young people, in a number of ways, such as making stronger communities and improving physical and mental health.

Today in this deputation we are seeking the following outcomes:

To ensure the continued protection, maintenance and public access to Allerton Grange Playing Fields in accordance with original planning permission so that local people can continue to enjoy the fields.

Also, to seek support and guidance from officers and local Councillors for progressing the community's aspirations through the proposed environmental improvements to the fields.

Let me give you some background. Back in November 2010 we stood before you making our first deputation. Our vision and drive have not wavered and we remain committed.

In 2005, during the BSF Allerton Grange School planning application discussions, local Councillors and residents were informed at public meetings that the Allerton Grange Fields, (which were surplus to Allerton Grange School requirements) would to be transferred to Leisure Services and made available for public use.

In 2011, the Department of Children's Services explored the potential for a new primary school on these fields and a series of public consultations were held. This proposal for a new primary school has now been withdrawn due to sustained objections from local residents, Highways and the Planning Authority relating to traffic, highway access and loss of playing fields.

The Department of Children's Services has subsequently asked neighbouring Moor Allerton Hall Primary School if they would want to take on ownership of the fields. After consideration, the Governors have unanimously decided not to take on ownership of the land through a Full Governing Body resolution this July.

We are now back to the position where the Department of Children's Services are set to declare the fields surplus to education requirements. The Friends of Allerton Grange Fields would like to ensure that Leeds City Council fulfils its original obligation to transfer the fields to Parks & Countryside so that the fields can be adequately maintained for community use.

At present the fields are maintained on an *ad-hoc* basis. Local residents have to go through a very frustrating process of making individual requests each time the grass needs cutting. This process can take many weeks to arrange and often means that local children cannot use the fields for sport or play. Indeed we cancelled our 'Celebration on the Fields' which we had planned on 7<sup>th</sup> July to celebrate the Olympics, because the grass was too long.

Following our last deputation in November 2010, the Friends have also explored the potential for a Community Asset Transfer of the fields with senior officers in Asset Management. However following advice from Voluntary Action Leeds and other third sector organisations, we have been unable to build a sustainable business plan as the playing fields do not generate sufficient income to cover annual maintenance costs.

Therefore, to deliver this community vision, we the Friends of Allerton Grange Fields propose a formal partnership with Leeds City Council is established to ensure that the fields continue to be protected, maintained and enhanced as a recreation space. The Friends are already committed to working in partnership with Leeds City Council through 'sweat equity' of its volunteers on community litter picks and bulb planting.

By way of policy background, the Leeds Open Space Sport and Recreation Assessment Report provides the evidence base for the Leeds Local Development Plan. This report recognises that there is a 19 hectare deficiency in playing field provision in the Inner Leeds North East area.

Allerton Grange Fields could become a lasting sports legacy of the London 2012 Olympics and help fulfil the vision of the people of Leeds to make it the best city in the UK and a child friendly city.

As our elected councillors, you have this once in a lifetime opportunity to safeguard the Allerton Grange Playing Fields for present and future generations.

We would also like to take this opportunity to publicly thank our Roundhay and Moor Town ward councillors who have supported us all the way. Thank you for your time. *(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 consideration.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second, Lord Mayor.

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

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. *(Applause)*

#### DEPUTATION TWO – RESIDENTS OF BURLEY PARK

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 the people in your deputation.

MS J WEYMONT: Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, we are residents of Burley Park Area. My name is Judith Weymont and with me is Pauline Scholey and Steve Cook.

The reason we are here is that we have observed the removal of Yorkshire paving stones in our area. We regard Leeds City Council as the Trustee of public resources and as such we would expect consultation on matters affecting our neighbourhood, so we would like to express our serious concern over the removal of Yorkshire paving stones from Burley Park and from Stanmore Hill in particular.

We may not live in a conservation area but we value our neighbourhood. Steve has lived there for more than ten years, I have lived there for more than 30 years and

Pauline for more than 35. We resist the Council's attempt to downgrade the area and understand, perhaps wrongly, that paving stones from area such as ours are reassigned to conservation areas or so-called better areas of Leeds.

For those of you not acquainted with Burley Park, we would like to describe it to you. It is an area of high quality back-to-backs with front gardens, redbrick houses with pavements for the most part of Yorkshire paving stones, all of which are over a hundred years old. We are served by a railway station and four regular bus services. We are within walking distance of a range of shop, doctors and dentists, two cinemas and restaurants serving food from all over the world. We are also within reasonable proximity to a Council run sports centre and swimming pool. We have two powerful 'green lungs' in our area, Burley Park itself and Burley Park Model Allotments, which not only improve the wild bird life but provide recreation, exercise, fun and satisfaction to residents.

Residents of Burley Park include teachers, solicitors, working families, artists and musicians, and students. The increase in the student population, notably in the 80s and 90s has now decreased considerably and families and young couples are moving back in to the area. We are suspicious that the image of an itinerant student population has led the Council to disrespect the area, hence the gradual and insidious removal of Yorkshire paving stones.

We would argue that Yorkshire paving stones in Burley Park have stood the test of time. They are sustainable, long-lasting and environmentally friendly. They are in keeping with the surrounding houses and they look good.

We would also argue that tarmac, which seems to be the Council's best attempt at a replacement, is non-sustainable, environmentally unfriendly, being petrochemical in origin and needs regular replacement. None of it will last a hundred years and it is ugly.

We charge Leeds City Council with short termism. There was a time when Yorkshire paving stones were stolen by thieves in the night, so when we first saw the empty pavement on Stanmore Hill, we thought they were back again. It would appear that it is now the Council who, dare we say it, steals in daylight.

Previously when they were stolen by thieves, Leeds City Council would, when asked, replace like with like and secure them. Not that long ago, the Council upgraded parts of Burley Park, notably the Lumleys and the Knowles, replacing cobbles with cobbles and paving stones with paving stones, not tarmac. This was greatly appreciated by residents.

We argue that replacing Yorkshire paving stones with tarmac is not only short termism, it is in the long run uneconomical. Tarmac might, and we have yet to see the evidence, cut costs now, but it increases the expense for the immediate future. Decent maintenance is an investment for now and for the future.



We would like to leave you, as Trustees of public resources with a few questions that we would be grateful if you could answer.

What was the reason for the decision to remove dozens of paving stones from Stanmore Hill in particular and Burley Park in general? Who made that decision? Why was there no consultation with residents? What happens to the removed paving stones? What is the cost comparison for replacing Yorkshire paving stones with tarmac? What plans does the Council have for the future maintenance of pavements and Yorkshire paving stones in particular in the Burley Park area?

Finally, we cannot express too strongly our concern and, yes, anger, at the way in which Burley Park in particular is being treated. We look forward to hearing from you, and would like to wholeheartedly thank you for your time. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

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

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Seconded, Lord Mayor.

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

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

### DEPUTATION THREE – HYDE PARK OLYMPIC LEGACY 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 begin by introducing the people in your deputation.

MR D DAVISON: Hello, Lord Mayor and Members of the Council. My name is John Davison, I am a grassroots football coach, a teaching assistant and a volunteer. I have with me Amit Roy, who is a resident and I suppose a community organiser, Yasmin Ajib, who is a resident and parent of Hyde Park, and Rachael Ryan with young Amir. Adel, Rachael's husband, he is a football coach as well and a colleague of mine, I suppose.

I am going to talk to you about the health of the people of Hyde Park and the need for the local schools and community to access decent sports facilities.

There is great scope for increasing the health of this or any inner city population and I have a got a good idea of how to do it, but first some facts.

Some of you will be aware of the statistic that people living in inner city areas like Hyde Park, Woodhouse, South Headingley and Burley tend to die on average 10 to 12 years younger than their contemporaries in the outer suburbs. There are many reasons for this, but in my experience the quickest and most effective way to remedy a person's poor health is to get them into an exercise habit.

My father, a general practitioner of some 30 years, would agree with me that poor diet, smoking and excess drinking can be curtailed by the fact that aside from cardiovascular benefits, when you are good at a sport it motivates you not mess your body up. As a member of a team you tend to want to improve the facets about yourself that you do not have, and this flows into your general life. You become a more balanced and compassionate person. A person who cares about a sport will tend to avoid such extremes of behaviour that will be damaging to them. You develop a desire to help others, be nice to people, be carefree, and I see this in the people who work in a team or a group around me, or who I have taught.

Five of the primary schools in my immediate area are what I would term seriously deprived in terms of space for participation in competitive sport. Three of them - Quarry Mount, Rosebank and Brudenell Primary - have only access to tarmac playing pitches. These are often shared-use facilities, inaccessible for certain times of the day as PE lessons can clash with other year group's playtimes. Often these playgrounds are on slopes. School halls in primary schools are generally small and are put out of action at key times of the day as they are used as dining areas, and nearby green space can be problematic due to dog mess and litter and one head teacher has even mentioned discarded needles on a field near a school.

Limits such as these conspire to make competitive sport on these areas difficult or dangerous for fear of injury. This does not mean decent athletes cannot be produced in poorer inner city areas (Thierry Henry for example, is the initial product of good free-to-use sports facilities in inner city Paris). A person's environment and influences in their early life can set the habit, or not, to truly excel in terms of technique, determination and athleticism, and it isn't just about producing Olympians or, for that matter, professional athletes, but just good people.

I can't legally talk about any live planning applications, but I must talk about the plans myself and an organisation that I helped to form had to change this situation for the better and, for that matter support, the agenda that the Government's new Health and Social Care Act legally infers upon you, the local Council — namely to narrow the gap in terms of this health divide.

Let us say that a playing field with an adjoined sports hall (let us say it is the second biggest sports hall in Leeds ) an additional hall area which is currently a swimming pool became available in an inner city area like ours that had previously been offered for free to a community group that could run it. Now, let us think about the model of how this site could operate if it were run as a non-for-profit enterprise by a charitable trust.

I want you to imagine a few things now. A playing pitch which was a hypothetical 90m x 63m could be an official eleven-a-side pitch, with the option of two x seven-a-side football pitches running across it, like the local-use AstroTurf pitches in Spain. This meets the requirements laid out by FIFA for these pitch sizes. The use of high netting around

the field would stop balls going into neighbouring gardens. The centre circle of the pitch would be interceded by a coir-mat or an artificial turf wicket, and a cricket oval of 60m x 90m (which complies with the governing body's legal requirements) could be put as the border. At least five or six local clubs could share-use these facilities and the primary schools can access them during the day. The requirement of each club that uses them is that they hire the facility for their senior teams on the condition that they are actively promoting their sport within the community, and especially to young people.

I want you to imagine a pyramid feeder system. At the bottom is your under 8s, boys and girls, your under 12s, your under 16's, your development squad and your senior squad. All of this is accessible to anyone who wants to play the sports offered. At the heart of this pyramid is a sphere. That is you. You can enter sport at any level and find a place. Above this are your exit routes (sports scholarships, semi professional clubs) and above that still are professional athletes, your Olympians. You could add to this over 35s, over 40s, playing for fun or playing for fitness. Anyone from the bottom can see the progression to the top and there are at least five different sports here running every week.

To have this beacon site that anyone can access giving encouragement, good technical coaching and a diversity of options to people in the area where it is actually needed. The site can be used by people from other more disadvantaged areas of the city where transport can be set up.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could you make your final point? You have got to the end of your five minutes.

MR J DAVISON: We have set up free after school clubs at this facility between 4.00 to 6.00pm every day, a multi-sports company would do this. This helps address the particularly high rates of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease in the South Asian population in this area often genetically suffered from and it would help lower the risk of cancer, improve cardiovascular health and improve community cohesion.

My last point is something which is seriously needs to be considered by those who can. If you look at a map of Leeds and pinpoint where the existing sports clubs are.

THE LORD MAYOR: I must ask you - final warning to wind up, please.

MR J DAVISON: OK, sorry. They are generally around the outskirts you do not have a lot in the inner city and in Woodhouse you have got a load of back-to-back houses and someone got stabbed there recently and I saw a guy down there and it was one of my old guys that I was coaching and I wondered maybe something could be done better between planners giving 21 days, it is like a major development which involves of green site loss Between Sport England, which is supposed to be protecting pitches in the inner city showing bias by only transporting them to the outskirts, Education Leeds, defending their position in 2008, saying the provision in primaries is adequate and the new PPG or PPS survey which cannot make any distinction between sports pitches which the public can use and which they can't, planning officers writing reports and omitting certain facts...

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you for attending.

MR J DAVISON: Doing their jobs adequately – they should be doing better than adequate, we should be looking to try and make things work. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: 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. *(Applause)* I am sorry, you have completely thrown me off kilter!

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I move that the matter be moved to the Executive Board for consideration.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Seconded, Lord Mayor.

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

Once again, thank you for attending and for what you have said. You will be kept informed of the consideration which your comments will receive. I hope you are not too out of breath! Good afternoon. *(Applause)*

#### DEPUTATION FOUR – LEEDS YOUTH FIGHT FOR JOBS

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 the people in your deputation.

MR I DALTON: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, we have come here from Youth Fight for Jobs. My name is Iain Dalton, I am the local organiser of the campaign. This is Tanni Spelsham-Ray, who is a student at Leeds Trinity University College, and this is Joe Muller, who is a catering worker.

There is a crisis in housing, a crisis in the social housing sector with 27,000 in Leeds on waiting lists for Council and social housing; a crisis in the private rental sector with average rents across the country consuming around half of people's incomes; a crisis in the home owning sector, where only 1,300 homes were built in Leeds last year and to buy even the lowest priced one you would have to earn over £40,000 a year.

This is a crisis that is hitting many young people acutely. We believe that everybody should be able to live in a decent quality, affordable home but for young people it is becoming harder and harder to be able to do this. A record almost three million people between the ages of 20 and 34 still live with their parents, an increase of half a million in the last 15 years. When you do move out it is usually into an HMO – a house of multiple occupancy. For some people this is a choice, they like living with other people but for most it is a necessity to be able to afford to do so, particularly anyone under 35 on Housing Benefit.

In the area I live in young people, especially students, get crammed into houses, sometimes up to three or four in what would have in the past been a two-bedroom house because although the rent charged is cheaper for each individual, the total rent taken from a house is greater. This also limits the properties available to couples and families. In effect, the HMO landlords benefit at the expense of all tenants.

Low pay is a factor in this. Many young people are unable to find full-time work and have to do with part-time jobs. The TUC estimates that in the UK there are 3.3 million people in work who would like to get more hours up to full-time work. This is up from 2.3 million people in 2008.

Those in work under 21 years of age have a lower minimum wage than the rest of the population, which scandalously will be frozen this year, yet there is no discount on rent or bills to go with the discount employers get on staff aged under 21. This has an impact on Housing Benefit, with 93% of new Housing Benefit claims being from households where at least one person is in work.

Housing Benefit is also important for the unemployed who, with the Governments' cuts to Housing Benefits, will be expected to make up the shortfall and with the new proposal to scrap Housing Benefit for under 25s, then some young people face the harrowing prospect of losing their home as well as their job if they are made redundant. Whilst we welcome the Council's stance in taking up the bedroom tax issue, this is only one of the damaging effects of the Government's changes to Housing Benefit.

HMOs in particular can often be poorly maintained, sometimes because tenants live there for less than a year. I have heard friends tell me countless times about leaky pipes not being fixed, broken ovens and washing machines and other issues, but also it is difficult sometimes to know who is responsible for maintaining this. The buck gets passed between landlords and letting agencies.

There has been a proliferation of letting agencies with various extra charges levied by them on tenants such as credit check charges and the Guardian a few weeks ago even reported about someone who was charged £440 for cleaning that was not even carried out.

We think the Council has the choice over these matters. It can act or not. Whilst we are aware you do not have power over every aspect of housing you could, for example, increase the resources to the Environmental Health teams to carry out regular inspections of tenanted properties. You could refuse to carry out the cuts to Housing Benefit and campaign for the additional funding to make up the shortfall from the Government.

There have been Councils in the past that have opposed Government policies on housing to defend the interests of ordinary people in their areas such as Clay Cross in the 1970s and Liverpool in the 1920s. Where you do not have direct powers at the present you should put pressure on to the Government to act on these matters, or give you the powers.

We think a mass social housing building programme is necessary with good quality housing, as well as a cap on rents at an affordable level. Empty housing could be compulsorily purchased and brought back into use. The money is there for this. The Housing Benefit cuts at just over £2b are less than half what Vodafone were let off tax last year, £7b out of a total of £120b each year evaded by wealthy and large corporations.

The Government could use its ownership of some banks such as HBOS and RBS to run them in the interests of ordinary people and, for example, to make cheap, affordable mortgages available to first time buyers.

We believe that a mass campaign will be needed to build up the political pressure for this money to be used to start resolving the housing crisis, so we ask again. The choice is yours – will you act on this or not? Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

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

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Seconded, Lord Mayor.

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

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. (*Applause*)

#### ITEM 5(a) RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now on to Item 5(a). Councillor Wakefield.

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

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Second, Lord Mayor.

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

#### ITEM 5(b) RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 5(b), Councillor Wakefield.

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

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Congreve, do you still wish to comment?

COUNCILLOR CONGREVE: No.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield to sum up but I thought with Councillor Congreve not commenting there was no need.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I am quite happy to formally move.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you wish to formally sum up, Councillor Wakefield?

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: No, I am quite happy.

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

ITEM 5(C) RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES  
COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 5(c), Councillor Wakefield.

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

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I second, Lord Mayor.

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

ITEM 6 – REPORT ON APPOINTMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 6, Report on Appointments. Councillor James Lewis.

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

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Second, Lord Mayor.

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

ITEM 7 - QUESTIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 7, Questions. Members are aware that Whips have agreed that it is not necessary for Members to read out their question, they can simply move the question as set out on the Order Paper and this will hopefully allow time for additional questions to be dealt with in the Chamber rather than by written replies.

Councillor Andrew Carter.

**Question 1**

Will the Leader of Council inform me how many Leeds City Council staff are paid their salaries via private companies?

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I move the question as set out in the Order Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: To try and avoid being a Dalek, I will try and answer this. The question is about how many staff are paid salaries through private companies, for those who have not got the Order Paper. Just to formally respond, this administration does not support paying staff their salaries via private companies. All permanent staff are paid through pay roll. However, in recent years the Council employed people on specific projects and in these circumstances some individuals concerned may be self-employed and receive payments through private companies. We are now taking measures to stop this and at the present time we are down to five.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary, Councillor Carter?

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Yes, my Lord Mayor. I agree with Councillor Wakefield's summation but I would like him to specifically answer this question again. He has already alluded to it. Will he confirm that no permanent member of staff is paid through a private company?

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I can confirm that no permanent pay-rolled member of staff is paid through a private company. I do not condone this arrangement via private companies for staff and neither do I condone the 2,400 staff working in the Civil Service, some of them are paid up to £150,000 being paid via private companies, and neither do I condone comedians, bankers or any private businessmen being paid through private companies because we all know it is about tax avoidance and that is costing this country £15b a year – 15 times more than £1b benefit fraud is alleged to do.

I am really keen, like everybody else in this Chamber, for the government to commit its promise made in April to take measures to avoid this because of the cost it has on ordinary working people in this city. Thank you. (*applause*)

## **Question 2**

Can the Executive Member for Environment explain why Members were not informed of the decision to close the bulky waste collection booking service in May?

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I move the question in terms of the paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am assuming this question is a second attempt to address an issue that was partially raised in July's meeting. Again, if I am on the right lines regarding the question, just to confirm, the bulky waste service was not actually closed for bookings in May but between 9 and 17 May last there was an automated message explaining that we would like people to ring back at a later date and giving them a range of options as to why, due to the service at that time being at absolute capacity, but the service itself was up and running.

In terms of why Members were not informed, I think it is probably fair to say it was a small operational matter and I imagine if that was replicated over every directorate we would all have very full inboxes indeed.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary question, Councillor Downes?



COUNCILLOR DOWNES: Yes, thank you, Lord Mayor, supplementary. Also, at the same time, can he explain why an email that he sent to Councillors and to officers to inform Members of end of service collection failures has never been acted upon and we have never had any further emails to inform us why our collections have not been made since May?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: To reiterate, the specific reason around the bulky waste collection and why it was actually working at capacity around that period was a simple one and it was, of course, based on the fact that at that particular time of year, as is an annual event, Inner North-West, it needed particular attention in terms of the bulky waste service. I can report with some pride that that exercise went extremely well this year, as always. Officers worked incredibly hard and I have had nothing but good wishes from the Labour benches concerned in terms of how speedily and efficiently they dealt with that.

In terms of the specific issue raised, I am more than happy to take this matter up with Councillor Downes if he can bring me the specifics. At this particular moment in time I have not got a comprehensive answer to that but if he wants to come and see me I am more than happy to take it forward.

### **Question 3**

As a nominated representative on the fire authority, can Cllr Brian Selby update Members on the implications for the city of the decision by West Yorkshire Fire Authority to consult in closures in the district?

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: As a nominated representative on the fire authority, can Cllr Brian Selby update Members on the implications for the city of the decision by West Yorkshire Fire Authority to consult in closures in the district?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Selby.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Last Friday the Fire Authority agreed to consult on proposals prepared by the Chief Fire Officer taking us up to 2020. The proposals are that in Leeds it is intended to remove one fire engine from Stanningley, the areas covered by Hunslet and Morley which are currently served by two fire engines (one at Morley and two at Hunslet), it is proposed that there be two fire engines at a new fire station to be built at a suitable location to cover both areas. So far as Cookridge and Moor Town are concerned, both at the moment have one fire engine and it is intended that both of these stations be merged and a new station with a single fire engine to be provided, that site possibly somewhere on the ring road. As far as Garforth and Rothwell are concerned, they again have one fire engine, it is proposed to merge the stations, build a new one at a suitable location.

That consultation began last week on 7<sup>th</sup> September. It is due to end on 30<sup>th</sup> November and it is extremely important that everybody who has any concern, to let the Fire Authority know so that on 21<sup>st</sup> December a reasoned decision can be made and officers from the Fire Authority are happy to come out and meet with Members, meet with community groups, Parish Councils, to discuss their reasoning.

It is important, Lord Mayor, to have regard to the financial background to these proposals. The Conservative led Government decided in 2010 to cut public sector expenditure by 25% over a four year period. Unlike Local Government, the cuts as far as the Fire Service are concerned have been backloaded for the last two years and the cuts in the first two years were 6½%, it is intended 18½ in the last two years. The proposals that are being put out to us are based on the assumption that cuts are shared equally.

If that was the case we would be looking at the Fire Authority losing £5m in 2013/14 and a further £3m in 2014/15, but we will not know until December what the settlement will be.

Last time the cuts were not shared equally. The formula used by the Government last time when the Metropolitan Counties suffered 80% of the cuts, notwithstanding that they had experienced the highest level of calls per head of population and the highest levels of deprivation. We in West Yorkshire lost 10% of its grant. Staffordshire, Dorset, Devon and Somerset, Hampshire, Essex and Cheshire got grant increases. Eric Pickles represents a constituency in Essex and George Osborne represents a constituency in Cheshire, which both got increases. I make no comment.

The only other comment so far as they are concerned, however what is said is that when those were approved by the House of Commons on 18<sup>th</sup> February of this year, three Leeds Members of Parliament voted in favour of these cuts, Stuart Andrew and Alec Shelbrooke, for years we heard from the opposite benches criticism of Members of Parliament not standing up for Leeds; perhaps those Members who attacked Labour Members of Parliament will perhaps be prepared to speak to their own Members of Parliament on that issue. The third person who voted against was Greg Mulholland. All I will say is that his press releases and his voting record show a credibility gap.

Can I thank Councillor Charwood for her interest in this issue. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I do not suppose Councillor Charwood will have a supplementary after that but I will give her the opportunity of asking one.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: No thank you, Lord Mayor.

#### **Question 4**

Having read the papers regarding the possible proposal to increase the Cottingley Springs Gypsy Travellers' site, can Cllr Gruen assure and confirm that those Councillors who represent this area of Leeds will be comprehensively consulted before the decision to proceed is implemented?

COUNCILLOR GETTINGS: I move the question according to the papers, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: The answer is "yes". *(laughter)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary?

COUNCILLOR GETTINGS: I am pleased to hear that, Lord Mayor. What I would like to know, has the consultation involved the police to date and are we in danger of creating a ghetto area at Cottingley Springs, bearing in mind that one of my constituents told me that the police have described this site as a no-go area, that regularly the police helicopter is circling the site and only last week when I drove past late at night there were five, I think, police vehicles with blue flashing lights blocking the entrance to the site.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: I shall be more expansive in my answer to this one. Councillor Gettings is a wise old bird and he will not believe everything every constituent tells him so he will take all of this with a pinch of salt, I know.

Senior police officers have been consulted on the proposals to expand Cottingley Springs and they are content that this will not result in any significant police management issues.

As we know, police helicopters are used throughout the city and are not routinely monitoring Cottingley Springs. The police will respond appropriately to any incident as required.

By definition, a gypsy and traveller site will be populated by gypsies and travellers rather than people from the settled community and there is a natural consequence to that because they have different housing preferences than the settled community but that does not automatically mean that we are creating a ghetto. It is like-minded people settling together in a particular location in the city.

At the same time as we propose to expand Cottingley Springs, we are absolutely committed to improving the housing offer made to current Cottingley Springs residents. I acknowledge there is a great deal to do so this will be achieved through the modernisation of the existing pitch provision, improved dialogue at the site with residents and neighbours and also bringing new services on to the site. I thank you for your question.

THE LORD MAYOR: Question 5, Councillor Harland.

### **Question 5**

Would the Executive Member for Leisure care to comment on the fantastic achievements of our Olympians and Paralympians at this Summer's Olympic Games in London and the great pride they have brought to the city?

COUNCILLOR HARLAND: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move the q as set out in the Order Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. There is no doubt that the last few months of Olympic and Paralympic activity has really inspired the people of Leeds, as the rest of the country and, as we mentioned last time, the 200,000 people

who came out to see the Olympic Torch as it passed through the city was very impressive to see.

I know the people of Leeds are rightly proud of the achievements of the 18 Olympians and four Paralympians with links to Leeds, both those winning medals and those who surpassed their own expectations. The Lord Mayor has read out the names of the athletes who won medals and I know we are all very proud of those.

All our athletes were great Yorkshire and Leeds ambassadors and Alastair and Jonny Brownlee sum it up for all when they say that Leeds made them who they are by their training on the Chevin and swimming at the John Charles Centre for Sport.

If Leeds were a country we would have finished 36<sup>th</sup> in the Olympic and 37<sup>th</sup> in the Paralympic medal tables and I think it underlines the strength of our current sports strategy in the city and it is why we are now updating it to better reflect the value of sport in all of our lives.

We as a Council are committed to making sure that we do everything to make sure the Olympics lives up to its promise to inspire a generation. I am sure we will be saying more about this later on with Councillor Blake's White Paper.

If I can just take this opportunity to thank all Council officers who helped with all the events and activities relating to the Olympics and Paralympics over the last few months, officers within Leisure, Children's Services, International Relations and if I can in particular make a big thank you to Peter Smith who helped to co-ordinate a lot of the activity that took place. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary, Councillor Harland?

COUNCILLOR HARLAND: No thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Question 6, Councillor Lamb.

### **Question 6**

Will the Executive Board Member for Children's Services reaffirm her group's view on consultancy spend as expressed by her colleagues in 2010 relating to the appointment of the interim Director of Children's Services?

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, I move question 6, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Judith Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. 2010 is a long time ago and obviously a very significant event happened in May 2010. Councillor Lamb in his question is not specific about which of my Group's views he is referring to. Perhaps he could be clearer and then I might be able to give an answer to his question.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: I do have a supplementary, Lord Mayor. Councillor Blake will be aware that back in 2010 many members of the now Administration, then Opposition, were outraged at the use of consultants in Children's Services around that time. She will be aware that an all-party group of members met earlier this year and

reached a broad consensus about the future of the Youth Service in Leeds. Can she tell us, bearing in mind her previous views and given the broad consensus in this Council, why she is allowing her department to employ a consultant on a daily rate of around £800 a day to conduct a completely unnecessary review, and will she confirm that she has checked herself and is satisfied with the tax arrangement of this individual?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I think there is a time-honoured tradition in this Council if you ask very specific questions like that you at least have the dignity to give some warning. I think it is not an appropriate question to ask in this forum at all.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You ask them.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I did, actually look back over some of the comments and what I found was a comment by Councillor Murray, who identified that your administration actually spent £11m on consultants over the six years that you were in administration and he makes a very good point that if that money had been spent wisely and had delivered good outcomes for our children in this city, then that is a justification. What we ended up with was a situation where Children's Services were assessed by Ofsted, were deemed inadequate and that led to a massive restructure of the whole department.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: That is not the question I asked.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: We have so much work to do.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Can you answer the question?

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: If you give me the opportunity, Alan...

COUNCILLOR LAMB: You have had ---

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: ...I will in fact get there. Just keep letting him do it, it is fine; I can wait.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: She does not know it.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: As I said, the situation in 2010 was we came into power, minority power, into an extraordinarily difficult situation with a failing department, a massive restructure, officers who had left that we had to replace. That coincided with the Government coming in, completely stripping out resource from Education where the Youth Service resides.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Shall I repeat the question?

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I think every single Member of this Council recognises that the Youth Service has not been fit for purpose.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: £800 per day, Judith.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I think with the current financial climate we have to invest to come up with a way forward that will significantly reduce the amount of ...

COUNCILLOR LAMB: £800 a day.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: ...sorry, significantly reduce the amount of money that we spent on our services. This is investment in the future. We will have to do more with less and I am quite prepared to look at the further detail of the question, which I do not have the answer to. *(laughter) (applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Question 7, Councillor Cleasby.

**Question 7**

Can the Executive Member for Leisure and Skills tell Members how many times the bespoke Millennium Square stage has been used in 2011 and 2012?

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: I move, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: In 2011, ten days; in 2012 so far, 51 days.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary, Councillor Cleasby?

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Yes I have, Lord Mayor, thank you. Thank you for the promptness of your response, Councillor Ogilvie. Could I therefore ask how many times, other stages have been used in Millennium Square that are erected by the Council?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: In terms of other stages I would have to get back to him on that. The Millennium stage, as he will know, when it was procured back in 2000, it is a stage that comes in pieces so that it can be used in different formations and that is why certainly in this year it has been used not only in Millennium Square but all over the city. On the specific answer to his question, I will come back to him.

THE LORD MAYOR: Question 8, Councillor Hardy.

**Question 8**

Does the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Support Services believe the changes announced by the Government to existing planning regulations will stimulate the housing market?

COUNCILLOR HARDY: Move the question as set out in the Order Paper, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Thank you for a very perceptive question. The Government has announced a series of changes to the planning system. These include

extending permitted development rights to what they say are small extensions, small being up to eight metres. It will matter in Adel and Boston Spa more than elsewhere.

COUNCILLOR: They have abolished planning.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: They also want to make change of use to offices easy to obtain. More significantly, they say the changes to Section 106 agreements and dealing with large scale developments are proposed so that could take away decisions from local democratic control and give them to the Planning Inspectorate or to a Planning Commission.

The impact of these planning changes are likely to be significant in terms of what happens in local communities and in terms of neighbourhood disputes and in terms of local democracy. They mask far greater problems relating to the availability for finance for new projects and mortgages for home-buyers rather than being critical about planning regulations

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary, Councillor Hardy?

COUNCILLOR HARDY: I do indeed, Lord Mayor. How do these proposals from the Coalition Government fit into the Localism Agenda.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Yes, I need to think about that one!

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Did you write it, Peter?

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: I wish I had seen that...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: He is having to read the answer, so clearly he did not.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: I wish I had been that succinct. Figures show that councils are more positive towards development than ever before with the percentage of planning applications being given the green light hitting a ten year record high last year.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: The Plans Panel are fantastic, aren't they?

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: These figures conclusive prove that the Local Authority is overwhelmingly saying "Yes" to new development and should finally lay to rest the myth that the lack of new homes being built is the fault of the planning system.

Even if planning departments did not exercise another new home application for the next three years, there is sufficient approved development ready to go and last until past 2016 at the current rate of construction. This is a quote from Sir Merrick Cockelle, the Conservative LGA Chairman, who has got it absolutely right, that local democracy is being flouted for the sake of dogma and idiosyncrasies by Mr Pickles. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Davey.

## **Question 9**

Would the Executive Member for Development & Economy care to comment on the opening of the eagerly awaited A65 bus corridor and the expected benefits this will bring to the city?

COUNCILLOR DAVEY: I move the question as in the Order Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Today I and Councillor James Lewis, in his ITA role and many Members from the Council attended the official opening of the A65 bus scheme. Can I thank everybody for attending today. There are many significant things that I do need to mention.

Firstly, it was a partnership between Metro, Leeds City Council, contractors and the Department for Transport, which put up most of the money. The feedback I certainly got from the contractors was how well they have been able to work with the City Council on this scheme because of our contractual arrangements and procurement arrangements, and we can see that in that we were able to deliver the scheme on time and within budget, and that in itself is a major success.

More importantly are the long-term impacts of this scheme. Rather than quote a lot of statistics of what we hope will be achieved can I perhaps just advise people to go to City Square, get on a bus, go out along Kirkstall Road, see the scheme in operation, come back into the city because they will see what it offers to bus passengers and how it can potentially attract people out of their cars on to buses because they will get a much better travelling experience than if they rely on their car and I dearly wish it was coming to Pudsey rather than out to Horsforth, but that is the way it is.

I say this as somebody who has many years' experience of driving buses up and down that corridor and the problems that we used to encounter with peak-time traffic, which actually threw reliability and time-keeping out of the window, that will not be the case any longer, so big benefits for bus users. Huge benefits for cyclists because I think cyclists get more out of this scheme than the bus users because there are certain parts of the road where you cannot narrow it down with a bus lane but there is a cycle lane there. Here is one road that I think if you are one of those people who are kind of dipping their toe in the water of cycling, yes, you would want to cycle along Kirkstall Road because it is fairly flat, it is fairly attractive and you have got the dedicated facility now.

It is one of a number of initiatives that we are seeing happen in the city. I am very pleased to see it come to fruition and I think we all need to watch this space in terms of how it really delivers for the city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Question 10, Councillor John Procter.

**Question 10**

Does the Executive Member for Leisure feel that the administration's policy of charging for formerly free city events has been a success?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Yes, Lord Mayor, Question 10, thank you.



THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The policy has been successful in keeping city events going despite the tens of millions of pounds of cuts to our budget from this Government.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor John Procter, do you have a supplementary?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It seems to be the trend today, no-one seems to be answering the questions. Perhaps we will have to revert to the old practice of actually asking the question so then Members opposite might respond accordingly.

The question, of course, for those who have not read it, it relates to admission charges within Leisure Services and what Councillor Ogilvie did not say was, which I am asking does he believe it has been a success but he has not said whether he believes it has been a success or not. I clearly say that it has not. In our administration Opera in the Park attracted 50,000 people; in 2011 he managed to attract 6,596 at £12 apiece, those who paid full price. Of course, most of those people, I suspect, did not pay full price because of discounting arrangements. That being too high and because of the appalling attendance, this year the price dropped to £10. What happened? He gets even fewer people there, 6,339 people. That is compared to 50,000 – 50,000 – people who came free of charge previously.

Classical Fantasia 2011...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Where is the question?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: It is coming – 2,640; this year slightly better, up to 4,000. Lord Mayor, it seems clear to me, I hope it is clear to Councillor Ogilvie, that his policy has been a complete wash out and we should return to free events once again for the people of Leeds.

If he has got any difficulty on how to pay for those events, I have previously made suggestions here before, I am happy to come and see him and advise him accordingly, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I look forward to that. (*laughter*) Another top class performance from John again this year. It is a bit like an annual pantomime, isn't it, John saying "No it isn't", me saying "Yes it is." I guess I am the pantomime villain. I am not sure what he is – perhaps the pantomime dame.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: The horse.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Or the horse! (*laughter*) what I do know is that if he was sat on this side of the Chamber he would be faced with exactly the same situation.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: We did not charge.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Members over there have told me that they would be charging just like we are. It is the only way of keeping these major events going in difficult situations.

All I will say is that no doubt we will come back to this year on year but we will just have to agree to disagree.

THE LORD MAYOR: Question 11, Councillor Bentley.

**Question 11**

Could the Executive Board member for Leisure and Skills confirm when the Holt Park Active Centre will be opening?

COUNCILLOR S BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move in terms of Question 11 on the Order Paper.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: The Holt Park Active Centre is due to open in October 2013.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary, Councillor Bentley?

COUNCILLOR S BENTLEY: Yes please, Lord Mayor. Don't you think it would be better if the Holt Park Centre remained open while the new Health and Wellbeing Centre was being built to meet the needs of local residents during that time? You are going to leave this area of Leeds without any leisure facilities, swimming, etc, at a time when we are trying to encourage more people to lead healthy lifestyles, this is not the way to do it. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Lord Mayor, just like when the new centre was built in Armley and in Morley, where both those centres were closed for a period, this is the case with Holt Park. I think Councillor Bentley needs to remember one thing, when her Government came to power the first things that they pulled was the funding for this centre and it took a lot of lobbying to try and get it back on track. The reality is if that had not happened the Holt Park Centre would be open now. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Question 12, Councillor Maqsood.

**Question 12**

Could the Chair of the Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board please update Council on progress with the campaign to retain Children's cardiac surgery services in Leeds?

COUNCILLOR MAQSOOD: I move the question as set out in the Order Paper, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Illingworth.

COUNCILLOR ILLINGWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. On 24<sup>th</sup> July 2012 the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – the JHOS – agreed to refer the decision of the Joint Committee Primary Care Trust – or JCPCT – to the Secretary of State, the details to be agreed by the JHOS before referral.

Since July, Lord Mayor, I have struggled to discover more information about the JCPCT decision-making processes and to investigate discrepancies and inconsistencies in the information already published by the JCPCT. JHOS only gets one shot at this target, therefore it is important to have a complete picture of what took place and that all material information can be included in our referral.

Sadly, I have to report this process is still incomplete and that JCPCT officials are reluctant to release basic factual information that every Local Authority would automatically publish on their civic website as a matter of course. I am still waiting to read agendas, reports or minutes from meetings that took place behind closed doors as long ago as 2008. I am also waiting for a full disclosure of meetings that took place this year.

None of this information is even remotely confidential but it seems that modern concepts about patient choice and fully open and accountable government have yet to penetrate this senior NHS bureaucracy.

Approximately half the required information was very gradually published on the Safe and Sustainable Website after 4<sup>th</sup> July this year. We have additionally received some paper copies of other materials, but I can see obvious gaps in the sequence and several documents refer to further papers that we have not seen.

Clearly, Lord Mayor, the JHOS cannot delay for ever, in any event, we shall meet soon to review progress, but my advice to the Committee would be to continue to press more strongly for a complete disclosure because, in my view, there is more highly relevant material which is yet to be released. JHOS should not allow itself to be pressured by JCPCT officials into making a premature reference to the Secretary of State without knowing the full story. I have written to the Secretary of State advising him of the reasons for our delay.

As many of you will know, such reticence is not new because Councillor Mulherin encountered very similar difficulties when she chaired the JHOS. It seems to me that senior NHS officials simply refuse to disclose non-confidential information about the Kennedy scoring that was plainly relevant to the decision-making process. This is information the public needed to see in order to participate effectively in the public consultation. It is disappointing that on the advice of the Independent Reconfiguration Panel the previous Secretary of State did not support the JHOS view on this point. However, this may be due to the fact that none of the parties were in full possession of the necessary information.

Nonetheless, this lack of disclosure in 2011 is now likely to be the subject of a new legal challenge by the Children's Heart Surgery Fund, which is a local charity based in Leeds. A letter before claim has been issued and if there is no satisfactory response in the next few days, then the charity is likely to proceed to an application for judicial

review, subject to the agreement of the charity's Board of Trustees. Yesterday's press release issued by Sir Neil Mackay it was downright unhelpful in this respect.

There are discrepancies in the information that has already been issued. For example, figures published in table 4.2 of the Health Impact Assessment, which purports to show the number of patients transferring between hospitals under different options, these figures simply do not add up. Some configurations apparently result in a substantial increase in the number of patients; other cause patients to mysteriously disappear. When examined in detail, the Kennedy scoring is plainly irrational and inconsistent. JCPCT officials refused to disclose these figures during the public consultation. They would certainly have been challenged for factual accuracy if they had been released in 2011. It is difficult to believe that officials were unaware of these defects and utterly disgraceful that they had originally refused to provide the JHOS with these figures on request. We are still seeking scores from the individual Kennedy Assessors in addition to various minutes and reports.

Lord Mayor, it is surprisingly difficult to challenge a decision which has been basically illogical and where there is a strong suspicion that the stated reasons for the decision are not the real ones.

We also face problems with so-called Quality Scores which were not based on medical outcomes but on an amateurish assessment of the Trust's estates and IT strategies. The stated intention behind these proposed closures was to improve health outcomes for some very sick children. I can say with certainty, Lord Mayor, that the children in Yorkshire and Humberside these closures are going to make matters very much worse. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR MAQSOOD: No need, my Lord Mayor!

THE LORD MAYOR: Right. We have now come to the end of Question time and written replies will be given to the rest of the questions.

#### ITEM 8 - MINUTES

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to page 11, Item 8, the Minutes. Councillor Wakefield.

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

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I second, Lord Mayor.

- (a) Executive Board
- (i) Development and the Economy.

THE LORD MAYOR: The Executive Board, Development and the Economy. Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I wish to comment briefly on the Minute 56, page 146 on broadband projects. I think all of us welcome the investment in this infrastructure and the partnership between the Council and BEUK. I was

reflecting this morning when I was with Councillor Richard Lewis and other Councillors opening the A65 bus corridor that we talk about transport in terms of encouraging access to employability and jobs and growing the economy and actually for many people in my Ward who have contacted me over recent years in great frustration that in a rural area like Kippax and Methley access to broadband is well below the standard that perhaps we could expect. I do remember having furious correspondence with BT one year who insisted that a product that was available to 99% of the population of the country was not available in Micklefield and were quite surprised that somewhere that is in the boundary of Leeds is in that one per cent of the population that could not access it.

It is not just people who want to sit at home and play computer games and stream movies. It is important for people as a growing number of self-employed people in the economy need access to broadband to work, they need access to broadband for their jobs.

I very much welcome the investment going in and as the Council develops its broadband plan we can make sure the highest quality of broadband infrastructure is available right across the city and right across the area so actually those people who are working from home, those people who are self-employed are able to get on and work and hopefully have successful jobs. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Buckley. This will be Councillor Buckley's maiden speech.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. May I refer you to page 146 Minute 58. Just before I say a few words about community and community volunteers, may I just associate myself with the remarks made by Councillor Carter in respect of Ronnie Feldman. As some of you may know, I succeeded Ronnie and as all Members know in this Chamber, he was here a very long time and made a great number of friends across all political parties. He represented the Ward as you well know for over 40 years and still keeps a keen eye on things. I know this because he rings me up and offers me advice on various matters from time to time.

The good news is that I will not be here for 40 years. I think He might have something to say about that if I intended to. Just on the subject of community and community volunteers and all the excellent schemes mentioned on those pages, we ought to offer those, in my opinion, wider support for several reasons.

The groups cost little or no money to operate which, in the prevailing economic conditions is absolutely vital. Things are very tight, as we all know. They are at the grass roots of their communities. They know their areas and they know what their friends and neighbours want and need. Most importantly, they bring people together and create a proper community and community spirit.

When I arrived in Alwoodley just short of 30 years ago I saw a mass of houses and some churches, a few schools, shops, etc. What I subsequently discovered was that beneath all that there is a veritable beehive of activity of organisations working away. These are the people who serve their communities for no personal reward or any financial gain to speak of.

I recently tried to add them all up and at the last count there were between 35 and 40 organisations operating in Alwoodley which are either entirely or largely of a voluntary nature. Since the tremendous Olympic experience, which has been a catalyst, in my opinion, for a new enthusiasm for volunteering, the opportunity now exists to support these people and not lose the spirit which we have now.

From Alwoodley in Bloom to Alwoodley Art Group, Friends of Adel Wood to Maecare, and the Churches and the Parish Council who have worked so hard to facilitate voluntary action, I say to them all, well done. There are more untapped human resources still out there. Lord Mayor, we should not only support Community Asset Transfer and all the other volunteers but encourage these little platoons and join them and say thank you for all their ongoing work and efforts. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Caroline Gruen.

COUNCILLOR C GRUEN: My Lord Mayor, I wish to speak to Minute 59, page 147 of the Executive Board Minutes.

I both endorse and celebrate this city's aspiration that all Leeds communities will be successful, will seek empowerment, make positive choices, responsible decisions and enjoy all aspects of their lives. I am proud that a large, well-established and respected community group in Bramley has done exactly this in acquiring the previous Bramley Lawn Day Centre as a community asset following the Council's decision to approve this proposal.

Bramley Elderly Action has over 1,200 members, 120 volunteers, as well as a small paid staff, and generates £270,000 per year. It has an outstanding track record for delivery and through its trademark determination and sound judgment has produced a visionary plan to provide community centred services primarily for the elderly but including a spectrum of age groups.

The vision is to provide a wide range of activities based on extensive consultation, designed to be engaging, challenging and enjoyable whilst ensuring that people benefit from their own choices and preferences.

Other voluntary community and private sector organisations will be encouraged to use the centre, as well as being offered for wider community use in the evenings. The plan secures financial sustainability as well as additional revenue through income generation. Like Bramley Baths, this project shows every sign of being successful. However, there are risks and potential pitfalls which may serve as useful lessons for the future.

I believe that fundamental to the success of a community asset transfer such as this is a culture of partnership working between the Council and its community. An asset transfer is not a tussle between one side and another, a service to be wrestled from a reluctant Authority, but the product of shared creative thinking, joint goals and aspirations and combined working.

Our experience in Bramley would indicate that an investment of time in fully understanding all implications of business, community, market place and risk-related issues is a prerequisite. Balancing the ambition of the plan against its achievability is

also important but most important of all is a willingness to work across cultures and contexts even when this proves extremely challenging.

Lord Mayor, I am encourage that the people of Bramley, supported by my Ward colleagues Councillors Hanley and Taggart, are playing an important role in promoting this administration's visionary Leeds Enterprise Culture...

THE LORD MAYOR: Please can you sum up, Councillor Gruen?

COUNCILLOR C GRUEN: Indeed – in line with its recent asset transfer policy.  
*(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Groves.

COUNCILLOR GROVES: Lord Mayor, I would like speak on Minute 60, page 147, regarding the proposals for Eastgate.

My Lord Mayor, reading through the report it is hard not to get too excited about the potential office project which, if delivered will have a fantastic impact on not just the local economy but also job creation.

Of course there is still a long way to go and a lot of hard work to be undertaken but I am already very impressed at the work and leadership shown by this Council and its partners to drive these proposals for Eastgate forward.

It is positive news that John Lewis will open a store at Eastgate and I am sure such a well-respected name will attract other businesses to our city. Yesterday's news of Hammerson's investment in the Victoria Quarter clearly demonstrates confidence and commitment to our city. I am sure retailers will be saying that Leeds is the place to be.

We already have a sustainable retail-led city that employs over 37,000 people. This development will create more jobs and at the same time transform neglected parts of our city into a vibrant shopping and leisure experience. It is absolutely vital that when any scheme of this scale is being progressed, that employment and apprenticeship opportunities for local people are at the heart of its plans. I hope this will be the place for Eastgate. Our mission must be to deliver training by forming partnerships that include public, private sector, the third sector and community organisations so that we can help our people to secure employment.

There has already been some extremely positive partnership work already done in respect of preparing of the opening of the Trinity Centre. This work has taken place at the White Rose Centre and they are well placed because they employ over 3,500 people and look after twelve million shoppers per year. I hope this type of training can be applied to the Eastgate Centre when the plan is progressed.

The Trinity Development, opening in March, will propel Leeds above Manchester in the retail league rankings. Our city will move from seventh to fourth. This will be a real boost to our economy.

The Eastgate Development, along with other fantastic projects such as the Trinity and the Arena, highlight the fantastic retail and leisure offer, the ambition of this Council

to drive forward in this challenging economic climate and I look forward to seeing all these schemes come to fruition. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Iqbal, please.

COUNCILLOR IQBAL: My Lord Mayor, I would like to speak on Minute 76 page 11 page 11 in the extra papers regarding proposals for Sovereign Street site in my ward.

I am really excited about the project which will transform this part of the city into not just a business district, bringing investment, economic growth, much needed employment opportunities but also a thriving inner city recreation area for all people to enjoy.

It is really important for our city that we have good quality green spaces for local residents, workers and visitors to enjoy. A large part of my ward is contained within the city centre and it is important to remember that many residents still live in this part of the city, many living in flats, apartments and other homes with little or no garden space. Easily accessible public green spaces and recreation are therefore really important for these residents to maintain health and active lifestyles, as well as providing places for relaxation. Being so close to the city centre, areas like this are not in great supply and people often travel by car or bus to get to them in other areas of the city.

The plans for the new green space at Sovereign Street are really exciting and will create a new recreation area that is accessible for lots of people living nearby, as well as being in a prime location to be enjoyed by many other people including workers, shoppers and visitors.

I am really looking forward to seeing more detailed plans showing what features will be included in the park and it is pleasing that consultations have taken place with a range of different groups and organisations about what they would like to see in the park. Personally, I would like it to be a family friendly space and it would be great if the features in the park reflected this, providing stimulating and attractive for children and young people to enjoy.

This scheme promises to be a much welcomed boost to the area. There is the potential for the development of this site to be the catalyst for a much larger piece of green space on the south bank of the river. This city centre park is the ambition for Leeds and I would very much love to see that vision come to life. The regeneration of Sovereign Street is the first step towards achieving this and I am really looking forward to seeing the finished scheme. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Walshaw, please.

COUNCILLOR WALSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I too wish to speak on Minute 77, page 12 in the extra papers, regarding Community Asset Transfers.

I think the lesson from that report is that Community Asset Transfers are particularly important for Local Authorities given the economic times we are in and also that the core cities of this country are paying a very heavy price for the Government's microeconomic failures.



I think regarding specific transfers, we must be clear that there needs to be the will, the capacity and the need for that transfer to take place so that they are successful and nobody is let down, which neatly brings me on to a facility in my ward of Headingley. It is the sports hall, the sports field and the swimming pool of the old Leeds Girls' High School site which closed in 2008 and I am sure you will agree that in a ward like Headingley those are precious resources. I am sure you will appreciate the passion and the commitment of the delegation from Hyde Park Olympic Legacy, which is the pressure group we formed, because those facilities are threatened by potential development. They have a dream for a better future of sport and leisure for the children in the area and we fear that that dream could be taken away.

There are just a few facts. There was a strong pattern of community use before the school closed and the facilities were removed far away to the north of the city. The sports hall was used, the sports field was used and the swimming pool was used. None of the primary schools in the area have anything like adequate facilities, including Brudenell, where I am a governor. The area, as we know from Councillor Illingworth, suffers from profound ill-health and a reduced life expectancy, and that affects all age groups.

Given the chance, we would like to use these facilities for the betterment of everybody and in this year of years when we have all seen the power of sport and leisure to liberate and empower people, I do not really think as a society we can squander those opportunities. I really do use the word "squander" deliberately. Those proposals will do exactly that. In this area we have empty homes, so the homes are not needed. In this area we have convenience stores, so the stores are not needed. The strength of opposition is huge. We have got citizens, Councillors, Members of Parliament, community groups, residents' associations all united in that the use of these facilities for anything other than leisure and sport is unnecessary and unwanted.

It so often seems in planning and from developers that the message to local communities and to local authorities is shut up and know your place. In this case we shall not and we will not know our place.

I guess my final point is this. The purpose of civil lives is to leave a legacy of improvement and betterment to the next generation; I think we would all agree on that. It is in that spirit that I ask Leeds Grammar School to work with me, work with Hyde Park Olympic Legacy and let us together build a legacy of sport and recreation for children in Headingley and Hyde Park that will last for decades to come. Thanks very much.  
*(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I wanted to welcome the Community Asset Paper that recently came to Executive Board. Community Asset Transfer is a concept that is quite difficult to come to terms with, I think, and it is a learning experience for us all. I can remember being in administration where the attitude of officers towards the concept, I think you would have to characterise it as fiercely sceptical and it got to the point where we had a Community Asset Transfer that had officers and members in open conflict so that a paper came to Council where the officers were recommending something different to what the elected members actually ended up achieving. Sometimes you have to stand up for what you believe in and I have to say

that that was the HEART development in Headingley which has gone on to prove just how effective a social enterprise can be in providing services for local communities.

That is why I want to be positive and welcome the evolution that there has been in thinking amongst our officers and, of course, amongst members, because we are all on a learning curve. With each new example of a community asset that comes forward for transfer, I think we get a better understanding of what needs to be in place to enable it to happen.

Most encouragingly, I have to say, has been my experience with the Adult Social Care officers who have honestly taken on the needs of the community in terms of them wanting to take on an asset and they have been encouraging us to learn and also to engage with them.

I have to say through the process we have discovered that a lot of the time we see an asset as a problem because it costs so much to heat, so much to run and it needs this much investment in it, but actually by offering it for Community Asset Transfer you find that there is a creativity in place which can actually make that asset be several things at once. It is not just what it used to be, it actually has the opportunity to provide more.

In the spirit of that openness of debate I would like to ask that we take this learning forward and at the last paper that came to Council on Adult Social Care talking about residential homes, of course, there were two other homes where there was a very fierce campaign in order to keep them open and the Council responded to that and kept them open, but the alternative was to wait until the private sector provided accommodation to allow these “outdated” facilities to be closed so that those residents could transfer to better accommodation.

The private sector has not come in at this point so I think it is a great opportunity, the learning that we have had through the Dolphin Manor experience for Adult Social are to take another look at those two homes and perhaps proactively engage with the communities in question to see whether this model might be suitable for them and also, of course, Lord Mayor, there are others in that paper that were called subject to further review which, of course, might appreciate a proactive approach from Adult Social Care. I hope they take that in the spirit it is offered.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Martin Hamilton.

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. On the same Minute, first of all I would like to support what Councillor Walshaw was saying on the issue of Leeds Girls’ High School and those problems, two large pieces of land but the particular piece of land we are concerned with is the land that includes the sports centre and the playing fields.

I think one of the problems that we have, and I do support the paper that has been brought forward on this issue and I think it does represent an evolution in thinking, is that when a piece of land or an asset is in public ownership, it seems to me it should be relatively easy to have a process that you follow to make a decision. When the piece of land is in private ownership it is much more difficult, and I think that is the problem we have in the case of those sports fields and the sports centre. If the private owner simply

does not want to talk, does not want to be engaged, is completely intransigent, then it seems to me that it is difficult to take things further forward and I think we need to think further about how we tackle that issue when the community asset actually is not owned by the Council or by the Government or by some other public body but it is actually owned by a private organisation, in this case a charity.

How do we tackle that? I think that maybe needs to be given some further thought.

Stewart mentioned the HEART project which, of course, has been up and running for some time now and that is a clear example of where, as Stewart said, officers actually were not too keen – to say the least were not keen – on the proposal and I dragged on for quite a long time. In the end, the Executive Board voted against the officer recommendation to go ahead with it and we can see now what a success it is. I was there at the weekend at the unveiling of a new sculpture for which they raised funding from the Arts Council to erect and that looks brilliant.

They are also proposing a film club and this actually reminded me of the Ronnie Feldman story. A few years ago, about ten years ago when the Lounge Cinema closed, we tried to get it reopened, we looked at Asset Transfer, we looked at various options and it was not possible, the owner did not want to do anything. Then we found out a couple of days later that all the seats had been ripped out and disappeared and we were really furious about this. Then Ronnie came up to me and said, “Martin, Hyde Park Picture House, that is in your ward, isn’t it?” I said, “Yes”. He said, “You will be really pleased, I have managed to get some new seats for the cinema, I have done a deal with the chap who owns the Lounge and we have got all these new seats for the Grand Theatre.” I said, “That is good news, Ronnie, but not such good news for the Lounge and the campaign that we are doing up there.” That is a Ronnie story.

There are two things I would say in favour of this particular item. Having a clear policy on this, a clear process and a clear road map, if you like, is key and I think we are moving towards that.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can you make your final point now, please?

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: I will. The other thing I would say is, we should err on the side of taking risks with Community Asset Transfer. The down sides are actually quite small, the up sides can be very large. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Lord Mayor, as Councillor Buckley took advantage of his maiden speech to mention Ronnie Feldman, can I just give my Ronnie Feldman story, which is not a funny one. I do remember how Ronnie was my opposite number in Housing when I was Alec Hanson’s deputy in Housing, how helpful he was in getting Leeds Partnership Homes going and he was able to say, “Look, we can work together, I will work you and I will get into the ribs of Minister to support what you are doing on Leeds Partnership Homes.” He was great, was Ronnie on that and I think we all miss him on this side. You are hard act to follow is probably what I say.

Broadband, I think we have seen some real steps for ward on broadband and what we will do is, we will cover nearly 100% of the city; 90% with superfast broadband, not far short of 10% with minimum provision. We still end up with about 3,500 properties that will not get up to that and that is because of their isolation, difficulties of terrain and what have you. It was important to me that we made progress with the great bulk of properties and then we look at what we do for the remainder of the city.

Of course, it is one of those issues that is about jobs and I think almost all the comments that were made on these Minutes were actually about how do we create jobs because the expectation is I think about 800 jobs will come out of that roll out of broadband over the next 15 years and it will have a major impact on the competitiveness of this city in the coming years.

On Sovereign Street – where has Mohammed gone, has he disappeared – that's nice of him! I would echo what Mohammed has said. To me it is a good looking scheme, both in terms of the green space and in terms of the building that is coming forward and this is the first major office building within the city centre in five years. That is a real achievement. It is one of the other signs that Leeds is bucking the trend, it is continuing to be a successful city.

For those of you on Planning, you will have seen all the proposals; for anybody else, I would go and have a look because I think it is not only intrinsically good, it does offer that opportunity for progressing across the river and realising those ambitions that all of us do have to see that city centre park on the south bank. I look forward to those proposals happening in the near future.

Obviously a lot of comments on Community Asset Transfer, which I think is a difficult issue and in Exec Board I think Stewart talked about us all going on a journey, didn't you, a journey of discovery and exploring and finding out how far you can go with this, how you can make it work, what were the pitfalls. We have got that problem that if we are too, not enthusiastic but if we rush into things and the scheme goes wrong, the fingers will be pointed at us, so I think we will learn through all the different plans that come forward as to quite how to do this and how to do it more intelligently. I think Caroline's point was very well made about Bramley Elderly Action, which is that you do things differently. It is not just about taking over an existing building and carrying out the same function, albeit it under a different name but actually thinking we have got this building, can we do something more imaginative and add value by doing a Community Asset Transfer?

I think we are obviously going to see a lot more of this over the years. At the same time we will have people come forward with unrealistic schemes and we will have to some degree to be the doorkeeper and hopefully encourage people to be more realistic and make sure that we do not have what we have had in a couple of schemes where there has been a misunderstanding between the people who wanted to take over an asset and ourselves about precisely what was on the table and precisely what we expected from them, because you end up doing the transfer and then you have to put it right afterwards.

Councillor Hamilton I think made a very good point about the issue of risk and the issue of it is very different for buildings within the private sector because we can argue the toss all we like about a lot of our assets but I think the problem for a lot of

communities will be exactly as Neil has mentioned, it will be the ones in private ownership where you would look – if you are a community you look and think, bloody hell, why have we never had access to this, that sits in probably a deprived community? Why have we never been able to use this? Now we have found out it is here, and we might not have known it was here, it is disappearing before our eyes and there is nothing we can do about it and I think because there is nothing in the legislation that stops a private owner doing exactly as they want.

I will quickly move on just to address Kim's point about Eastgate, another great scheme. Good news about Hammersons buying the Victoria Quarter because that is another statement of their confidence in the city. My commitment and the commitment of the administration is absolutely to deliver in training because it comes back to that key issue of jobs, jobs, jobs. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

(ii) Environment

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harington.

COUNCILLOR HARINGTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. This is page 148 Minute 61. There is a description in the Climate Change Strategy of what the climate might be like in Leeds in 2050. It says that by then the hot summer of 2003 will seem cool by comparison, there is likely to be more heat, more floods, more drought but, says the report, whatever the climate is like, the standard of quality of life will still be good because of the decisions made in around 2012 by the Council at that time making the right changes.

This Minute refers to a report of the Exec Board entitled The Light Touch Review of the Climate Change Strategy on the basis that the strategy is taking us in the right direction, the right decisions are being made.

Well, some good things have happened. Between 2004 and 2009 there was a 14.4 cut in carbon emissions. The new recycling and energy recovery facility will mean a 60,000 tonne saving in carbon and there are more buildings in Leeds with the BREEAM Standard of Excellence – that is for measuring sustainability – then there are in any other major cities in the country.

So far so good but clearly a huge amount remains to be done. One, insulation. The Wrap Up Leeds Programme has made good progress but it now depends on how it can be taken on by the Green Deal. Lots of discussion about what that means but the talk must lead to action soon – important, of course, not just for reducing carbon emission but also for combating fuel poverty.

Two, transport. The passionate love affair of the human being with the car continues as intensely as ever so clearly the challenge remains to make the alternatives, whether they be public transport, walking or cycling, as attractive as possible.

Three, heating networks and fuelling structure for electric and gas-driven vehicles. These are listed in the report because an application has been made to the European Local Energy Assistance Fund – commonly known as ELENA – to try and set up projects which are commercially viable. You often hear it said that it is a choice either between low carbon options or good business but you may know there has been a

report recently known as the Mini-Stern, so-called after the national report of the same name, to show that this actually is not the case. For example, it has been calculated that the energy cost in 2011 for the Leeds City Region was £5.4b and that this could rise to £7.2b by the year 2022, but with £1b investment in low carbon technology, this could mean annual savings of £220m, a thousand extra jobs and paying back in commercial terms in four and a bit years. In other words, green business can be good business.

We hear a lot about legacy in relation to the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Legacy is also obviously crucially important climate change. Do we want to leave – I am sure we all want to leave – an excellent legacy in terms of good quality life for the residents of Leeds in 2050?

THE LORD MAYOR: Please make your final point, Councillor Harington.

COUNCILLOR HARINGTON: Final point, a lot to build on and I look forward to building on it with Councillors Blackburn and Barry Anderson as we have done in the past over setting up those meetings so the residents in 2050 are not cursing us but thanking us. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 61 page 148, basically on the same theme as Councillor Harington was.

First of all, if I can mention Wrap Up Leeds which I have got to say the Executive Member and myself have put a lot of time in over the last months trying to push this forward. I wish it had been more successful that it has been but it has made some significant difference. Of course, we are coming to the end of the time now, I think it is the end of September, isn't it, and I would say to all members, if you know of people who are not insulated, who are in the right kind of properties, who still need it doing, give them the Wrap Up Leeds number and let them take an opportunity while it is there because the problem is, we are entering this winter where there is no alternative, effectively, because the new Government scheme of the Green Deal has been so sluggishly put into operation that it is going to be next year before we can do anything and we have got to move something forward.

Also, from this Council's point of view, what we have got to do is we have got to be a little bit wiser, a little bit quicker and a bit faster on our feet and take what opportunities are there. I know the Executive Member has said about the Committee I Chair but what we have got to be is challenging and we will be. I have got to say from our discussions, we might have differences about the incinerator and things like that but certainly on this we are as one and certainly we will pressure and we expect a response. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nagle.

COUNCILLOR NAGLE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 62 page 149 regarding the funding application to the Government for a weekly waste collection and associated infrastructure.

As I am sure members will be aware, if this funding can be secured by the Council it will mean that weekly food waste collections can be rolled out to approximately 80% of the city's residents. This would be fantastic because, as a local Councillor for Rothwell, I know at first hand the real benefits to residents of having a weekly food collection and the massive impact it would play in driving up recycling rates and revolutionising the service we offer residents across our city.

Since its introduction in Rothwell we have seen over 2,000 tonnes of food waste diverted from landfill and in 2010 a Scrutiny Report found that our community had achieved a kerbside recycling rate of 53% against a city-wide average of 28%. These are obviously tremendous results and in an ideal world the Council would be able to find the money to roll out additional routes in numerous other areas across the city.

Unfortunately, life is not that simple. In the current financial climate and with the increasing pressures on our budget, if the Council was to implement a city-wide roll out, taking into account additional moneys, it would cost in excess of £4m a year, which is money we simply do not have. This is why the bid is so important and am pleased that the Council has put together a submission which is bold and ambitious in its nature which, if successful, will transform collection services and significantly boost recycling rates across the city.

Achieving a target of 55% recycling is depending on the roll out of separate food waste collections city-wide to 80% of households. This will be costly. One route would cost £120,000-£140,000 per annum. City-wide we would need a different infrastructure including a new depot. This would deliver city-wide collection of food waste to 254,000 households on a weekly basis, 100 new jobs would be created, 20 new vehicles for food waste would be required, two new gas refuelling points would be created to support the introduction of gas-powered collection vehicles.

Leeds City Council is committed to reducing its carbon footprint and looking to expand its fleet of gas powered vehicles. The fleet would be expanded through this bid. At present we have two depots. If successful we will have three. This will also help us to avoid landfill taxes. This is just one of the potential savings. Routes will have to be redesigned to take account of the lower weight due to the capture of food waste. Food waste amounts to one quarter of residual waste, nearly 100,000 tonnes of food waste would go for treatment rather than to landfill over the first five years of this project.

THE LORD MAYOR: Please will you make your final point?

COUNCILLOR NAGLE: This would help improve our recycling performance by over 8.4%. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Lord Mayor, can I reference Minute 62 page 149 and can I start by welcoming the debate that the Executive Member has started by bringing forward this paper and also the comments he made at Scrutiny the other day which managed to make the front page of the newspapers. I think it is important that we have this debate because there are a lot of views on both sides that need to be brought forward and so we need to make sure that we do start debating these issues.

What is nice to see is that he is very proud of the recycling figures. I am very proud of the recycling figures we have got because it was my administration previously that got us going after the 25 years when Labour did not seem to take recycling as seriously as they do today. I think it is thanks to the previous administration that got the ball rolling and you have run with it in terms of what you have done.

However, what you do need to start doing is winning over the hearts and minds. Over the last 24 hours I have had many varied opinions thrown at me in terms of the comments that were in the paper, so we needed to start doing that. More precisely if we are going to do this we have got to do something about our refuse collection.

At the moment, last week, some people contacted the dedicated Members telephone line but that was diverted to voicemail all day last week. Don't your officers know the instructions that you issued to them?

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: They take no notice of them.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: We are letting down the most vulnerable in society because we keep getting the assisted call out service wrong, we keep missing it. Do officers not listen to the clear instructions that you have been issuing?

We are also told to pass urgent enquiries through to officers who then go off on holiday but do not bother telling one of their colleagues what they have actually been doing, so residents do not know what is happening. Why is it the same areas throughout the city are failing week on week, month on month? It is the same parts. What is happening? What is going wrong? Why are you still using so many non-regular crews, because that is the excuse that is given by your officers in terms of what you are doing.

Why was it that in the past you did personally take responsibility for all the issues. Every time emails were sent to you, you responded within minutes, in most cases. Now you are not. Is it because you are as disillusioned as the rest of us that despite you trying to do something about it you are unable to do it because it is not being delivered the way that you have expressed it and wanted to do it and you are as exasperated as the rest of us.

Can I ask you, please, try and get the refuse collection service improved a bit more because it is failing a number of people in this city and it seems to be the same residents time after time that are suffering. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Walker – this is Councillor Walker's maiden speech.

COUNCILLOR WALKER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking to Minute 74 page 10 regarding plans to progress the compulsory purchase order for Sparrow Park in the Headingley Ward.

Firstly, on behalf of Councillor Walshaw and I, may I place on record our thanks for the hard work of Sparrow Park Action Group. Their determination to salvage and restore this area has been a credit to them and I thank them for their deputation to Council in July. It certainly got the ball rolling.



I would also like publicly to thank the officers concerned for delivering proposals to the Executive Board that were well costed, realistic and achievable to enable us as a Council to move on the project and deliver what will be an important piece of restored inner city green space. It is also worth highlighting how speedily this administration has dealt with the issue following that deputation.

This, though, is only the start. Once the CPO progress is complete Councillor Walshaw and I will look forward to working with Sparrow Park Action Group, residents and Parks & Countryside to deliver on local people's aspirations for the park. Much has been made of this in the media of late which I am sure had caused amusement and annoyance in equal measures. We are of the opinion that actions speak louder than words and are very much aware that it is actions that residents both want and expect from us as their elected representatives.

We are, therefore, delighted by this initiative and ready to face the challenges ahead. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hyde.

COUNCILLOR G HYDE: Lord Mayor, I am rising to speak on Minute 75 page 10, extra papers, Lord Mayor. It is relating to the car parking strategy for Leeds which I think, I welcome the strategy because Leeds is changing and the strategy that we have at the moment needs to be more flexible, needs to be looked at in a more pragmatic way and it needs to cater for the substantial changes that are happening. Councillor Groves has mentioned Eastgate and the Trinity Quarter and there are various developments happening in Leeds but our car parking strategy does not actually meet that because the city is moving in a substantial way, even against the background of all the recession and the cuts and things, it is actually moving so we need to do something about our car parking.

If you read the stats in the Executive Board Report which are quite clear, we actually do need to do something about it, so I would welcome all members of this Authority and the public and stakeholders getting involved in the consultation because I have to make that clear, there seem to be some misconceptions around the Chamber that this is about putting charges up and it is not. It is actually about a strategy to do something about the problems that car parking brings overall – planning problems, locations of car parks, there are other issues around the private sector has issues around it cannot fill its car parks, then why? It is actually not about charging, it is actually about a clear, modern flexible strategy for Leeds and I think we do need that, Lord Mayor.

I actually welcome that and I ask members and the public and stakeholders to get involved with that consultation, because it is a consultation, it has to be transparent, there have to be clear changes in the city in terms of our car parking strategy for the future to come because we are here for along time in terms of the developments in the city and we have to have a strategy that is for the future. Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Marjoram.

COUNCILLOR MARJORAM: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor Hyde, you are a loyal servant of your administration and you have done the best you can to get your defence in first, but before I speak to Minute 75 page 10, I wonder if I could ask us all to fast forward momentarily in time to the White Papers and an amendment in the name of Councillor Wakefield to the White Paper concerning business rates. It talks about how important local parades of shops are and particularly, it says here – your words, Keith – “Council notes with concern the very real hardships that many of our local shops are experiencing in the current economic climate.” It seems extraordinary to me that if you are prepared to put your name to a White Paper you would also be prepared to receive at Executive Board something which runs entirely contrary to the sentiment that you have expressed for us later tonight.

The report to Executive Board contains some things which are, frankly, fanciful, one of which is that – and I use the word in inverted commas – “Some major retailers have ‘informally’ expressed a view that the introduction of a Sunday charge would be discouraging to staff occupying spaces for shoppers.” The obvious corollary of that is that there are some major retailers in this city that have as many staff as they do customers and I must say I have yet to find who they are.

Some of the other things around variable pricing. Actually, the uncertainty of on-street parking charges is one of the things that deters people. The idea that we would have variable pricing across the city will not yield either higher occupancy or higher revenue.

The other issue in the Executive Board report – in fact two more. One, it says in disparaging terms that we are one of only three cities not to charge for Sunday parking. That is not a bad thing; that is a good thing, and the retail economy as the essential economy in Leeds is worth over £1b a year and it is something that we should be seeking to sustain and support and actually we have an opportunity to structure perhaps a marketing campaign around the fact that you do not have to pay to park on Sundays which, for many people because of their work and family commitments, is now a necessary day for shopping.

It also highlights the need to keep the weighted costs above public transport costs. That is fine if you happen to live in an area which is accessible to the city centre and you can come at a convenient time of day, but there are a good many people in this city, particularly in the outlying wards, for whom that is not an option and it may be desirable but I would not necessarily say should be what drives the policy.

Really, the issue of car parking appears to have been under review certainly for as long as I was on Scrutiny Board and I always thought the point of a review was to clarify an aim and some objectives which you would then work your way towards. Keeping something under review for four years is not a review; it is a waste of officer time and I would suggest that operating under 30% of the car parks in the city, the Council does not have enough to dominate parking and has too few to make their ownership effective.

THE LORD MAYOR: Please would you make your final point?

COUNCILLOR MARJORAM: Yes. The best way forward for a review would be to identify the under-performing sites, sell them and invest in the better performing ones

with modern ticketing, lighting and security to increase occupancy rates and revenue and not introduce Sunday and evening charges which will be to the detriment of all the businesses in all of the city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Martin Hamilton.

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I too would like to make a couple of comments about Sparrow Park and before I do that could I congratulate Councillor Walker on her maiden speech. I thought she very carefully trod that line between being non-controversial and controversial and it was just on the line, I think, which is find so I think I will respond in kind.

Lord Mayor, this has been a long-running issue in Headingley, that is absolutely true to say, and I have been involved in trying to get the thing moved forward; former Councillors Matthews and Monaghan also worked on the scheme and now it looks like we are moving forward with a compulsory purchase order.

You would be forgiven, given some of the correspondence in the Evening Post, for thinking this was some sort of turf war over some huge tract of land. It is not; it is a small wooded area and it is just about trying to establish ownership so that we can actually keep the area maintained in the future.

What I would say going forward, and I do look forward to working with my other two colleagues in Headingley on this, is that during the course of the last few years when I have been involved in this scheme and other colleagues have been involved, and probably Councillor Illingworth's wife was involved, I suspect, when she was on the Council as well, I think we have always tried to go with what the community actually wanted to see happen and I think that is important with this particular issue and so any schemes that have been brought up in the past were not Council schemes, they were actually community schemes. Options were looked at, workshops were held, drop-in sessions were held and then the final scheme that came forward was the scheme the community wanted to pursue and I was happy and am always happy to support what the community wants.

I understand the frustration of the Sparrow Park Action Group in the failure to deliver the larger scheme, which actually was about the Highways Department not being prepared to do the necessary legal stuff on the piece of land and that is the reason why it has not been possible to pursue that but, as I say, I think the important thing is that we actually listen to what the community want and then we support them in that and I am very much hoping that we can do that in the months to come. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. What a diverse set of issues to cover; I will have a go.

Roger and David, first of all I have to pay credit to the Green Party, they have been a real, strong, useful and challenging ally on many schemes that the administration has progressed on the Green agenda over the last few years, not least Wrap Up Leeds,

which has been a tremendous success, but I completely acknowledge there is more work to do on that particular agenda.

Roger started off with a somewhat apocalyptic vision of the future and then it got rosier as I he went on, because I think as an Authority we are on the right lines. The refit scheme, the Wrap Up Leeds, if we play our cards right and develop the energy from waste facility to the max and get a district heating scheme it will give us tremendous opportunities as a city going forward, which dovetails us in quite nicely to Councillor Nagle's comments and I welcome his contribution in terms of the food waste strategy.

There was a degree of uncertainty from the Opposition groups when we put this to the Executive Board but this is a robust bid. It stacks up, it makes sense, it actually ties in with the DCLG strategy on having a weekly collection or sorts, but why not be interesting? Why not say instead of sticking to the old black – I will come on to Barry's points but certainly I do not think is an appropriate way forward for this city going forward and we will test that with a pilot, but certainly for food waste we have got a fantastic opportunity to do something unique and it is not just about short-termism. What this could potentially represent for us, we could open the gateway. If we get the money from the Government to make food waste viable for 80% of the city, think of the opportunities. We could develop an AD facility that can actually take that food waste and produce biofuel.

We always talk about the best vision for Leeds and I am sure we all have opinions that are mixed on that one and what we see as the best vision, but what I would like to see for Leeds by 2030 is a city that can run its own fleet off its own biofuel, produced here in Leeds from food that we collect at kerbside. What a fantastic aspiration that would be for the city, so thank you, David.

Joe and Graham, conflicting sides of the same Minute. However, Graham, you are quite right, it is a strategy and I think any part of the parking strategy has to ask the awkward and difficult questions around our policy. I think Joe is right, we have 26% of the market; we cannot steer the market, we cannot control the market but what we can do is use and utilise our space more wisely than I think we are doing at present. That is why we have also committed to a street by street review of parking in the city and how we structure prices. It is not about let us use this as an opportunity to impose evening and weekend charges, it is about looking at it in the round, in its totality, it is a big conversation that has to be had.

I will make a commitment here and now – it will be a consultation, it will be with traders, it will be meaningful and we will take on board their views.

Sparrow Park. Right, Sparrow Park is actually a very simple thing that has been, I think, over-egged over the past few years. I have seen the reports, I have seen the debates around Sparrow Park. What actually should have been quite a simple piece of work – can we compulsorily purchase it, have we got the money, yes we have, let's crack on. I am actually grateful to Sparrow Park Action Group for coming in July but I am also extremely grateful – and I have put this down on record in the Executive Board – for the officers who have turned it round in two months flat and got a viable, costed, realistic paper that gives the residents in the Headingley area a very, very useful springboard to build on what is a tiny piece of land but incredibly important in terms of inner city green space. You talk about the Health and Wellbeing Agenda – people want

a bit of green space in their locality that they can look on with pride and say, "That's ours, we tend that." I think that is a fantastic aspiration and we will build on that and I am prepared to work with all Ward members – all Ward members – to get that agenda sorted out.

Barry, thank you for your kind comments and your well-meaning comments on the recycling rates that we are achieving. A really good piece of news I would like to put to Council, it was Mr Evans kindly let the cat out of the bag out in Scrutiny but in July for the first time ever we have hit 48% recycling, bearing in mind our recycling strategy is to get to 55% by 2016, so we are well and truly on the way on that journey.

I thought the 40% rate set in 2006 by the last administration, Barry, was actually a little bit pedestrian and I think we have blown it out of the water this year and we will continue to make those improvements.

However, I accept and I continue to accept that the service still is not where I want it to be. However, I would just ask for a little perspective. The current statistics show that we are currently on about, as a fraction I think it is 1 over 1,000 fails. That is about 0.1 of a per cent. We are doing very well.

One of the reasons actually why I have taken my foot off the gas and tend not to micromanage in the way I did in year one is because actually I have got increased face seeing those stats, seeing those recycling rates, that I can take my foot off the gas a little bit in terms of having to micromanage officers, which actually is not my function.

We are on the right track, I am convinced, but it is all part of a strategy. Most of the conversation this afternoon was actually revolved around the key strands of that strategy – black and green, is it going to be as controversial as you think? I do not know but I think it is important we put our toe in the water with the pilot and it is also equally important why I came to Scrutiny on Monday and was as candid as I can be about what I believe has to be---

THE LORD MAYOR: Would you make your final point?

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: ...for the city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor J L Carter.

(iii) Neighbourhoods, Planning and Support Services.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to move the reference back which is written down on the Order Paper in respect of gypsy and travellers' sites.

At a recent Council meeting I proposed that a list of sites under consideration as authorised traveller sites should be published for local people to see. I was accused by Councillor Taggart and Councillor Atha of being a cross between a member of the Third Reich and one of the Great Train Robbers. I hope they will not attack Councillor Gruen in the same way today, as he is proposing one of my policies, namely the expansion of Cottingley Springs.

At another Council meeting Councillor Gruen set up the junior member of the Executive Board, Councillor Dobson, to ask him how much the last administration spent on dealing with travellers. Following Councillor Gruen's reply that it was some £2m, immediate talk was made by certain people that they should find more sites. What we now see is that since Councillor Gruen came into office, he has spent pro rata the same amount of money on dealing with unauthorised encampments as we did.

COUNCILLOR: But more efficiently.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: My Lord Mayor, it is of extreme concern that it has been estimated around half the money spent by both administrations has been directed to the same group of travellers – the same group we are now proposing to provide extra space for at a cost of £1m based at Cottingley Springs. This amounts to over £2m on one group. Surely my plea to Government to change the legislation has never been better highlighted than this case.

Members opposite may be wondering why I am proposing to refer this back to the Executive Board, particularly as I agree with the proposal to extent Cottingley Springs. Members may not have read the wording of the resolution carefully. Resolution (a) says that none of the 35 Council owned sites that were investigated are currently suitable for use as gypsy and travellers' combination. By the use of the word "currently" this now means they could be suitable at some future date.

My Lord Mayor, it is important that Labour Members do understand that if they vote against this what they are actually doing, because this affects a lot of members in different areas of the city. Indeed, Mick Lyons has six in Temple Newsam.

If my reference back is not accepted and the wording of the resolution remains the same, those Labour Members will need to explain to their electors in their Wards why the suggested sites were not off the table completely at every future election. I move, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty, please.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, a reference back should be a reference back. It should give a chance to think again, whatever the motivation behind it, and it should not be a simple instruction to amend the decision by deleting one word; that is not really giving them the chance to think again.

Since joining the City Council I have said many times that more permanent sites for travellers were essential in Leeds and opposed Councillor Les Carter's stubborn do nothing policy or lack of policy when he was the responsible Executive Board member.

As probably the only current member of Council who knows many gypsies and Irish travellers, and that is what they call themselves, on those many occasions I said that there should be no extension of Cottingley Springs and that there should be no replica of Cottingley Springs built elsewhere in the city. Cottingley Springs, whichever

way you look at it, is a ghetto, the enormous rents have turned it into a benefits trap, it is hard to manage and it is not an especially pleasant place in which to live. Even the travellers living there now are campaigning against it being enlarged.

There is no particular reason why sites should be provided by the City Council. If appropriate local planning guidance was given travellers could find their own sites for themselves. There is a private traveller yard in Morley, not in green belt for which planning permission was granted, just over two years ago. It was supported by the Town Council Planning Committee and it has not given rise to any complaints, though no doubt hysteria could have been whipped up if we had decided to follow that path. If each part of Leeds had done the same, including Adel and Wharfedale and Alwoodley, we would not have much of a problem now.

Recently an appeal was allowed after refusal of permission for a traveller yard on green belt on the borders of Drighlington and Gildersome. One of the main reasons for this was the City Council's failure to take constructive action – even failing to claim Government grants which had been prevalent for a number of years. Something needs to be done but whatever is done must be thought out properly. When a decision has so few friends and such a wide array of enemies, it is certain to be wrong. The proposal to enlarge Cottingley Springs is mistaken and should be reconsidered but there should be a proper reference back so that the Executive Board can reconsider the decision.  
*(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I just want to refer to the consultation. We, David and I, were told that the paper was going to Executive Board but the details were very sketchy. We were not given a copy of the questionnaire that we know went to travellers and subsequently I have got a copy of that. A lot of the travellers cannot read and write but I know a lot of them are not very happy.

They were asked if they agreed to the proposals. We know that people from 17 of the 20 plots on site A do not want their site expanding. We know that because they did a petition themselves and that was handed in. I know that some of the travellers on site B do not want site B expanding either. In some of this it has to be said it is like where you get houses, a housing development – many a time people will say “Yes, we do not want them on site A but you can put it on site B” and then the site B people say, “We not want it on site B but you can go on site A”, but at the end of the day they are definitely not happy bunnies. The local residents are not happy bunnies either. They got a petition up, some of them who live in my ward, some of them who live over the border in Morley North and we passed that through because they had no consultation at all.

Now what we are saying is we need to go on from what happens here. We believe that by putting twelve more plots on that site it is expanding it even more, it is ridiculous, you are going to have tensions there but we believe there should be proper consultation with the ward Councillors, with the Councillors across the border in Morley North, definitely with all the residents from site A and B, and with the local residents who live near the site. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: I will now call on Councillor Gruen to sum up on the amendment.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: The good news is I will not take long.

I have listened very carefully to what the three speakers have said and I am going to remain with the plans that we have piloted through over a two-year period incrementally, step by step, balancing the needs of all the different communities because we think this is a fair way forward. We are going to move to consultation with people locally. We have already carried out some consultation and we will proceed in a balanced way with the plans that are going forward, so I will not accept the reference back. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Lord Mayor, may we have a recorded vote, please?

THE LORD MAYOR: Is there a seconder?

*(A recorded vote was taken)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We have the result. There are 91 members present in the Council Chamber, those in favour 26, abstentions 5, those against the reference back 60, so the reference back is LOST.

- (a) Joint Committees
- (i) Leeds Initiative Board.

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to the middle of page 13, the Joint Committees. Councillor Sobel, and this is Councillor Sobel's maiden speech.

COUNCILLOR SOBEL: Lord Mayor, thank you for the opportunity to make my maiden speech. I wish to speak to Minutes 77 and 78, pages 426 and 427. I welcome this opportunity to speak to Minutes which cover an area I work in and am deeply passionate about.

Firstly, the transformation of enterprise to serve the interests of communities is central to social enterprise and co-operatives which I am proud to represent in my day job across Yorkshire and the Humber. Secondly, the opportunity the City Deal gives us to develop world class infrastructure in Leeds and to recapitalise our communities and to place economic power back in the hands of Leeds' citizens.

The Government's Big Society focuses on driving public services closer to citizens by encouraging volunteers to run them for free, further economically disadvantaging those citizens. However, I welcome the opportunity that this Council is putting before us to turn this failed dogma on its head by allowing citizens to develop enterprises serving their communities whilst creating new jobs and reducing poverty through the redistribution of wealth. Big Society or civic enterprise – it is our choice to make.



Leeds is facing a twin problem of the reducing budget within the council and increasing unemployment. The opportunities presented by civic enterprise and the City Deal are ways to help mitigate these.

Turning to the solutions, I would like to thank the Commission for Local Government and its Chair, Councillor Wakefield, for producing an excellent report which is a real blueprint of how we can change the culture, ethos and modus operandi of Local Government to increase devolution, citizen participation and a community orientated enterprise landscape.

The Commission calls for a much more open approach with citizens and the third sector working collaboratively to use its assets to create jobs for its citizens through social enterprise and small business rather than falling into the free market dogma of promoting private enterprise to deliver public services like the infamous Barnet easyCouncil model.

Leeds is well placed to do this and the City Deals Investment Fund, which can be used to recapitalise new structure, community services and new technology and lead to opportunities for our citizens. I was proud to have worked in the Leeds Local Enterprise Growth Initiative supporting 75 social entrepreneurs set new organisations.

I want to talk about one social enterprise to show what can be achieved in the city. With an initial investment of just £5,000, Caroline Wear established social enterprise to re-work furniture, to recycle office furniture and employ people who are struggling to find work near their shop and warehouse in Hunslet. Five years later they are a growing social enterprise saving 100 tonnes of furniture a year from landfill and employing eight local people. They work in that space between the private and public sector, just one of hundreds of social enterprises in Leeds showing the way to a better social, economic and environmental model which the Commission and City Deal can accelerate to deepen across industrial sectors and across the city.

I call on Leeds City Council to use the resources of the City Deal, coupled with the culture change proposed by the Commission on the Future of Local Government, to unleash the potential of social, civic and co-operative enterprise. Thank you.  
*(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I want to back up comments just made by Councillor Sobel and completely welcome the Commission for Local Government which has been led by Councillor Wakefield. I think it has been a really creative process and something that we should all be involved in as local Councillors because our leadership in our communities is one of those things that is going to help create the civic entrepreneurship which is essential to providing local services from now on.

I remember when we were talking about the Asset Transfer Paper at Executive Board and associated it with the Commission for Local Government because it was all about if we are going to have community assets we need to have communities that have capacity to take those projects on and how do we build that community capacity.

The Commission talked about blueprints but for us we need to do it really, really quickly because we have got budgets that are under pressure now and they are going to be under more pressure in the future and some of our more expensive services, we do need to make sure our communities are taking them on board. How do we therefore get community capacity at pace?

The Government decided that they were going to encourage some of our poorer districts in the city by introducing Community First, and the intention – there is a very big intention which will take too long to explain at this point because I have only got three minutes but primarily it was to encourage community capacity. Unlike the paradigm behind the City Deals, it was not actually done in conjunction with the Council and unfortunately Community First sought to bypass the Council in order to encourage community capacity, that way actually not taking on board some of the leadership that some of these Councillors can offer in some of our communities.

What I will say, Lord Mayor, is that its primary purpose, of course, is to create this community capacity and in so doing there have been 13 of these Community First Panels set up in the city and many Councillors in the Chamber today will be on those Community Panels. However, Lord Mayor, if you were a member of the public you would be hard pressed to know that these bodies existed, let alone how they were proposing to spend taxpayers' money.

As I said, we are at a time where we are striving to cut duplication and maximise outcomes that we have from our public money and it is perverse, Lord Mayor, that in places like Inner South, double the amount of money available to the Area Committee is currently being divvied up by these Community First Panels within it and that no publicly accountable checks and balances are in place to ensure that the money is well spent. This should be a major concern to the Council, particularly given our need to build community capacity at pace as I have mentioned before, to take our agendas like Neighbourhood Planning and Asset Transfer. We do not have any apparatus at the moment to set up locally to report the activity of these Community First Panels or to monitor their progress or to evaluate their performance in terms of providing community capacity.

THE LORD MAYOR: Would you make your final point, Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Lord Mayor, I will just wind up by saying, I am writing to the Area Committee Chairs, to Scrutiny (I have discussed it with Barry) and also to the Cabinet Office because basically it is their fault because we need to make sure that we have a serious review of how Community First works to ensure that we have that capacity we need to tackle the budgets going forward for our communities. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Lord Mayor, in light of I am about to sum at half-four I will wait and just formally move these Minutes to allow other speakers.

(ii) Leeds Children's Trust Board

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hanley.

COUNCILLOR HANLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, I would like to comment on page 435 Minute 8, and that is the Child Poverty Strategy Progress Report. It is particularly timely that I am able to comment on this report today due to a report that was submitted just last week from Save the Children. When this was released it was without doubt one of the saddest and damning reports that I have ever read.

The report was called "It Shouldn't Happen Here" and, believe you me, it shouldn't happen here. The amount of poverty with children is absolutely staggering. I know that the Government say they are committed to reducing child poverty and I am quite used to people standing up in this Chamber on that side and saying that the Government are going to do this and they are going to do that, and all we ever get from this side is scaremongering.

The simple fact of the matter is that children from the most deprived families are bearing the brunt of the recession the most. The latest figures we have show that in the constituency of Leeds Central, 41%, Lord Mayor, of children are living in poverty. This is not political scaremongering; this is the latest in a line of reports that have come to the same conclusion and I believe one of the latest ones was published by the Institute of Fiscal Studies.

The Save the Children found that children across the country are missing out on daily essentials, and we are talking about food, warm clothing, replacement shoes in winter. I do not have time to go into any of the real detail in the short time that I have to speak but I would urge every Councillor across the Chamber to read that report and think about it. A few quick examples of the problems are over half the parents in poverty say they have cut back on food over the past year and over a quarter of them have skipped their own meals to feed their kids. This is going back, this reminds me of Liverpool in the 1950s. Four out of five parents in poverty admitted having to borrow money, some, of course, from the loan sharks, to pay for the essentials for their kids such as food and clothes. Perhaps the most worrying finding of all, Lord Mayor, is that many of the children that were asked were as young as eight – eight year old kids. 53% of children living in poverty say that they worry about their families not having enough money to feed them and they know they are missing out on the essentials of clothes and shoes and perhaps even toys, but these young children have stopped asking their mams and dads for some of these things because they know the pressures it creates.

Three minutes, not long enough to really comment.

THE LORD MAYOR: Would you make your final point, Councillor Hanley.

COUNCILLOR HANLEY: Yes, Lord Mayor. I am sure Councillor Blake will pick up on it in her summing up but I have to say, Lord Mayor, I do not believe this is a political issue. I think it is a moral issue for all of us. Thank you, Lord Mayor.  
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Can I start by thanking Councillor Hanley for making reference to the Child Poverty strand of the Children's Trust Board – an absolutely crucial bit of work and I really do commend this report, "It Shouldn't Happen Here", to everyone who has not seen it. It is, indeed, really shocking reading.

Under the Children's Trust Board we have set up a steering group looking into child poverty and one of the approaches that we are taking is to bring the issue to the attention of all the different departments in the Council, all of the strategic partnerships in Leeds Initiative and, of course, to our partners. We are not going to be able to solve this problem alone, as Councillor Hanley quite rightly says. Absolutely central to the work we are doing is working with family nurse partnerships and we are looking at doubling our capacity to work with teenage families.

We are looking through the Learning Centre at the White Rose Centre which has been launched and, of course, jobs and skills with learning opportunities for the PFI projects in Little London and Beeston.

Referral mechanisms for families with multiple problems are being refined to improve uptake. We have got already some real evidence of close working with Children's Services and Housing, particularly better reflecting housing priorities and ensuring that actions are robust.

One of the most important strands that all of us in this Chamber can really pick up is to encourage families in our communities to take up the entitlement of free school meals. We know that between four and five thousand children who could have a hot meal every day choose not to do so and this is a real waste of resource to those families. Many children, we know, who do have a meal, have a meal at lunchtime on Friday and that is the last real meal that they have until the following Monday lunchtime. We must do everything we can to address this.

We have been training Children's Centre Staff around fuel poverty and Wrap Up Leeds and we know that we have a key responsibility working together to do everything we can. At the last meeting we had a report from our Workforce Development Team who are actually working with all of our workers on the front line to train them into what it actually means to be a family subject to poverty. We already have instances where men with young children have committed suicide as a result of being made redundant. It is these sorts of things that we must make sure that our front line workers are really aware of the impact and one of the most crucial things in the next few months is how we help our communities to cope with the welfare changes that are coming through.

One of the least known facts about this is 61%, we estimate, of children in poverty actually have one or two working parents which is another major issue that we have to focus on, members of our community who are earning a living that is not adequate enough to support their families.

Going back to the Children's Trust Board, the Children's Trust Board is where we actually monitor the progress of the Children and Young People's Plan and through that the three obsessions of Children's Services. The focus in July was around our looked after children and our obsession to reduce the need for children to come into care in this city. I am pleased to report to Council that for the first time we are seeing a definite downward trend and drop in the number of looked after children coming into our care. If the path had continued as it was without all of the intervention work that we had done, we estimate that there would be about 100 extra children in our care and I think we have talked about this before but we estimate that that is a cost saving of about £6m to this

Council, which is a really important issue but at the heart of what we are doing is making sure that the needs of our families and our young people are put first.

This is why we are working actively with the Troubled Families Initiative which we call a Families First Initiative, making sure that we intervene with our families as early as we possibly can.

Of the 103 children who became looked after earlier in the year, 46 of these were under the age of one, and 70 were under the age of five. This is the scale of the work we need to do. Our families are really suffering and it is down to all of us to pull together to do everything we can to help them through such difficult times as we have at the moment. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

(ix) West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority.

THE LORD MAYOR: We have time for one more speaker before I ask Councillor Wakefield to sum up, so Councillor Dawson, please.

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 23 (not 22) in the paper. Following on from the Integrated Risk Management Plan consultation there has been an announcement of a further consultation on the delivery of services by West Yorkshire Fire Service. This will have a significant impact on Morley South. It will increase response times to incidents by two minutes and 37 seconds. My ward colleague Councillor Elliott will raise this as a Back Bench concern and earlier this week I wrote to her to see if I could use one minute of her time to help put the case for Morley. The offer was declined. It was not possible, I was told. I am disappointed that on such an important issue party politics has got in the way of the benefit of Morley. There are many examples across this city – planning, transport – where we get benefits from having a united and strong voice as a Council. Councillor Elliott's very partisan approach does not help Morley but shows that she is operating in her own party interest and that she puts that above having a strong and effective voice on this issue.

As the Community Safety Champion for Morley I want to ensure that the homes and businesses of Morley continue to have the highest level of protection cover that is possible. At the top of Morrison's car park in Morley the current fire station is a familiar sight. As part of this consultation we need to get across the need to keep the fire service in Morley.

However, this is a draft proposals and it is important that people make their views known. The consultation will last for twelve weeks and this will allow people time to get their views across. I will be using that time to get the best long-term solution so we can protect Morley's fire service. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield to exercise a final right of final reply, please.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I can now see the wisdom of me not talking, allowing democracy to take place instead, so congratulations.

Can I start from where we, I think, started and I have to thank Councillor Kim Groves for her comments, and Councillor Lewis, on the importance of retail. I think both

Kim and Paulene Grahame worked in retail in this city and people underestimate the economic impact of retail and the importance of actually shifting the retail experience or offer – I know that sounds fancy and I will come on and try to explain it.

The retail sector at the moment is actually worth £1.7m to this city and nearly 40,000 jobs. When you think of our rivals – Birmingham, Manchester and London and so on – actually the Trinity scheme and the John Lewis scheme and the Arena are massive boosts to that. Not only do they create 9,000 jobs but they increase the offer and if you think the potential of shoppers is actually 5.2m in this region, we get 12.7%, Meadowhall gets 6.7%, and it is actually worth £30.7b. That is massive, not just in jobs but actually generating the interest. When you think that we get in some estimates nearly a million a week footfall through this city, you can realise actually how important, as I said the retail offer is, so I am delighted that we are probably one of the only major cities that are actually improving the retail offer.

I think we could talk about what are the challenges but we are no doubt going to talk about car parking at the next Council and the policy which Councillor Marjoram, who has just written to me asking me for more money for a scheme on biking and then talks about we cannot spend and how we cannot get any money, I always find this interesting. Does he know that we are being cut back 28%? He never once mentions that, so, Joe, get on your bike and think again. *(laughter)*

Let me just talk about what I think is changing. Yes, public transport, car parking and so on but the other is, and this goes unsaid, when I was looking at this, there is actually the increase in online shopping is one of the biggest dangers to our retail offer. It has grown by 72%, nearly 42 million people do online shopping in this country and it is likely to go up to 14%. That has been hugely damaging. Talk to retail workers, who tell you that they do not get commission on people using their online. They are just supposed to facilitate it and then if they do not buy it there, they get nothing. Talk to people who work in the retail and do long and difficult hours.

Here are two ideas which I think are important. One is the Trinity idea that is actually trying to fit into a child friendly city by putting play facilities, sand, music, bit of culture so families can go shopping. I think that is hugely important. It is no longer going in and doing a simple transaction – you can do that online. When people go shopping they need to feel it is different and it has to be a better experience, hence all the facilities that Kim and Richard have spoken about.

The other important thing, I think, is that shop workers are often regarded as the kind of losers or the poor end of the job market. The one good thing about Trinity and Hammersons, not only is it buying Victoria which makes all that link but it has committed itself to developing a retail academy and it is about time our shop workers were recognised for the potential they have to have proper training, professional careers and above all a decent pay for long and difficult hours. They have been too long low paid. I am delighted that we are moving, this Council, along with the City College, in developing a retail academy for all retail shops. That is excellent news, I think.

In terms of the other aspects of the Executive Board, like everyone else we have got to be proud, not only have we got, as I said, Hammersons, John Lewis scheme, the Trinity, the Arena, 9,000 jobs, high profile stuff, we have also got as Richard mentioned the first offices in five years being built in Sovereign Street. Above all that, that triggers

the whole change, the transformation at long last in the perception, the status and the opportunities for south Leeds people. For too long I think they have borne the brunt of our industrial legacy and it is great to hear about this new park that will facilitate a different view and experience of many people living in that part of Leeds.

I went down with Councillor Ogilvie last week to have a look at the old Carlsberg building and they are really doing some fantastic and exciting stuff there. Instead of building something that we probably would have, we are now building something for the people of Leeds, particularly in South Leeds. I think that is to be welcomed as well.

If I can move on to I think it is an important debate about asset transfer, and I think first of all congratulations to Councillor Sobel for his maiden speech because he touches upon some of the key issues. We have done asset transfer in the city over many years – Tiger 11, Headingley HEART, one or two others before the Bramleys came along, the two projects that Councillor Gruen spoke about, and they are fantastic.

COUNCILLOR A CARTER: Shine.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Shine, they are fantastic, but Shine is a good example, Andrew. It takes time and it takes resources and it takes real commitment. All those organisations have had professional support in one way or another.

I would say this, we all want to build a civic society, we all want to see community capacity that Councillor Sobel mentioned, we all want to see all of us getting there, but if we are not careful we will only see it in certain parts and I want to see those assets being transferred to all parts of our city and that requires resources. Of course, it will not surprise you to say the voluntary and community sector has been cut by £5b which makes it really difficult to challenge that community capacity.

I have said let us move and let us work and let us use the ideas that were civic enterprise but let us not be forget that this is about supporting sustainability, access and, of course, training and resources and people who could get transferred. We should not forget. We have one example in this city where we did community transfer only to find that they kicked out a community project. That is not what we want and I think we proceed with enthusiasm but with a careful eye on the long-term viability of Community Asset Transfers. Sadly Shine, as you know, is struggling because its grants are cut and we all want to see that succeed because of the location and the area of work and the work that it does, so I do think it is important.

When Councillor Sobel spoke on the Leeds Initiative, it was about partnership. I went to Scrutiny Board last week to talk about Leeds Initiative and we said that if you look back and reflect, Leeds Initiative in the early 1990s started off with the successful achievement of getting the Armouries into Leeds from London, and that started the economic catalyst for the Waterfront, the city centre and so on. That was a great partnership economically and I think we have done well over the last 20 years working on the private.

We are starting to do well on other aspects – Neighbourhood Networks a great example of social partnerships. I would say the police and the community where burglary has been reduced by 25% is another good example and I would say things we have done in the Olympics was a good example of partnership – I could go on.

One partnership that we need is a partnership between Government. You heard the statistics from Councillor Hanley. We are now getting 52% of people on benefit in Richmond Hill and Burmantofts. We are now having 42% of households on benefits in Middleton and Beeston. What we really need is a partnership between the Local Government and the Central Government that actually cares about people who are struggling day in, day out, to survive on welfare benefits and I say our partnership should never be judged until we tackle inequality in this city, until we start helping people who desperately need it by providing them a better welfare to work offer and actually better supporting their hopes.

I move the minutes, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

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

#### ITEM 9 – BACK BENCH COMMUNITY CONCERNS

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to page 15, the Back Bench Community Concerns. I would like to get through two before tea, please. I understand that Whips have agreed that number 6 should become number 2, should be brought forward. Councillor Jonathan Bentley, and I understand it is your maiden speech.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor it is really good to have the opportunity of raising concerns on behalf of the community of Weetwood so soon after being elected as Councillor for the Ward, so before I start I would like to pay tribute to my predecessor, former Councillor Ben Chastney, who worked so hard for the residents of Weetwood during his term as a Councillor.

Like many wards in the city Weetwood is a very diverse ward and the concerns of residents vary, but one common concern in every part of the ward and the one that causes most frustration for residents and lots of calls of complaints for ward members is the refuse collection service.

I know that the convention of maiden speeches is not to be overly political or contentious and that is not why I want to raise this as a community concern today. It is a genuine plea for help from a new Councillor as to what I can tell my residents is happening to deal with their concerns about the poor quality of the rubbish collection service in the ward.

Let me start on some positive points. There is support for the Council's waste management strategy and especially for the direction of travel that is now planned. Residents are looking forward to the increased frequency of the green bin collections, the roll out of city-wide food waste collections is welcomed, as is the offer of garden waste collection for any household that wants it. Possible plans for kerbside glass collection are also supported.

There the disappointment lies is the apparent failure to turn this good strategic intent into consistent quality achievement. One of the areas where there is frustration is the quality of communication with residents. The intentions are really good and a lot of time and effort obviously goes into producing very nice glossy leaflets and bin stickers to



distribute to resident, but the effort is then spoiled, for example, in the flats in Tinshill Lane where the leaflets are simply thrown in and left on the floor, treated as junk mail, walked on and not read; consequently the information does not get through to residents, there is confusion when it appears that the bins are being collected on the wrong day and in this case those residents who did manage to get the information still missed the correct bin collection because it turned out the collection days quoted in the leaflet were not the same ones as those that had been given to the collection teams. Not only did the communication with residents fail, the communication with the workforce failed as well.

I have lots of examples where information given to residents on leaflets and on the website is one collection day and the crews turn up on a different day, so you get people leaving their bins out all the time because they are not sure when the bin will be collected, then that leads to further problems of obstruction on the pavement, bins being knocked over, rubbish being strewn around, etc, and more complaints.

Residents express frustration when they phone in to collect missed collections. They feel they just go into a black hole and things do not get put right. A resident phoned the other day to say that the green bins in their road had been emptied once in the last four months despite phone up every time the bins were missed and when she asked to speak to somebody in the Waste Management Department, she was told that they do not speak to members of the public. Another lady had been trying to get her bins emptied since March and trying to get some response to her request for a wheel-out service but just seems to have been ignored.

I know in big customer-facing organisations mistakes happen, but the nature of the problems reported to us are not the result of one-off understandable things like a dustbin lorry breaking down or bad weather. These are the same problems happening to the same people time and time again and the perception is that the service is not listening and not learning. They are not one-offs, they seem to be systemic. They seem to be pointing to poor systems, poor recording, poor communication, poor engagement with the customers and staff.

I think we all know there are really two fundamental characteristics to quality service – one is you get it right first time and the other one is that on the rare occasion you do not get it right first time, your recovery is exemplary. The perception of the residents in Weetwood is that that service is failing in both respects.

We all know, and the residents of Weetwood know, that no-one wants to provide bad service – exactly the opposite. The administration has an expectation that good service is provided and waste management employees have a will to provide good service. What seems to be missing is the connection between that expectation and the will and that is really the question that I am asking so that I can give the residents of Weetwood some hope that things will change in the future. Is that missing connection a failure of leadership, is it a failure of timely investment in systems and training, or is the administration failing to inspect what it expects? What is it and is it going to be put right?

This speech is about community concerns, so let me finish with a voice from the community, a resident writing to one of my ward colleagues that sums up the problem and the frustration. She writes:

“The excuse given was that my communications had all been sitting on the wrong desk and the collection rosters had not been updated. My response was that they really needed to plug those loopholes as there are other people in my situation. However, it does suggest that there is a serious organisational problem which, without your intervention, would have continued to be ignored.”

Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I very much welcome that contribution, Councillor Bentley, and congratulations on making your maiden speech on quite an interesting topic and one that I know is of genuine concern to members and something that I certainly do not take lightly at all.

That said, I do think that there are a number of examples we can point to that clearly demonstrates that it is an improving service across the piece. In think in the summing up on the Minutes I referred to that maths was never my particular forte, it still is not, but I think in terms of emptying two million bins a month as we do now on black, green and brown we are hitting 0.1% as a fraction, one over a thousand. Record numbers, actually, for Leeds in recent times and I do not think we should throw the baby out with the bathwater. We need to be very aware of that, that this is demonstrating a vastly improving picture.

I think what is fair, though, is that the service has many issues that perhaps historically have never been addressed over many years. I do not think it is a political point, I would suggest over perhaps 30 years or more. I think the IT technology that we have previously been using leaves a lot to be desired and I think we have done a lot to address that. The Executive Board has just agreed a large scale investment on improving the technologies that I think will help see us over the finish line.

Another common reason for fails, the fleet was getting to the end of its natural life, a lot of it. Again, we have put a heavy investment into fleet all of which, I believe, will start to pay dividends.

The one thing I can give members as an absolute guarantee. I know how hard officers in the department are working. I also realise it is the mother of all thankless tasks. I am a hard task master, I demand quality of service from officers and I am seeing genuine improvements in the attitude, the ability and the drive from the workforce from the crews up to senior management, from, let us be honest, a very low starting position after the unfortunate events of three years ago that I do not intend to dwell on this afternoon.

In the Weetwood area, ahead of the concerns I have done some research, obviously, as I would, and it is an improving picture since May. We are averaging about five complaints that come to us a month. The point I made in response to Barry earlier that whilst I am not, and I do not feel it is necessary for me actually to micromanage the service as I was trying to do in year one when we were all thrusting towards big service improvements, now I am seeing those service improvements coming through, I still will always work with individual members. In fact, I invited the other Councillor Bentley only

recently to drop by my office and discuss these matters, so there is a serious intent in this administration to get this right.

On a final point, I am going to bang on about this, aren't I, because it is a really important achievement for the city. We hit 48% in July for the first time historically and we have gone up leaps and bounds this year in terms of our recycling rates, so whilst there are challenges ahead which I completely accept, I think we are doing something right. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving to the middle of page 16, item 6, Councillor Wadsworth, please.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. My back bench concern is the growing concern of increased traffic congestion along the A65. The major cause of this congestion is because of increased development in my ward. For some time the A65 has become more congested which prompted a pressure group, WARD – Wharfedale and Airedale Review Development – to carry out a survey to quantify the effects of congestion in the local area. According to the recent report from WARD the worst place for congestion is between Guiseley and Rawdon where traffic speeds can be as low as 11 to 20 miles an hour and the journey from Rawdon to Leeds, which should take 18 minutes, can extend to 42 minutes at busy times.

Today the new A65 quality bus corridor was officially opened by Norman Baker. This will provide little improvement to journey times from Horsforth and Guiseley to Leeds because any improvements through Kirkstall will be lost by very slow speeds at Horsforth roundabout, Rawdon crossroads, Yeadon Westfield and Guiseley town centre.

In Guiseley we do have a gyratory but this does not work like the one in Armley which is sets of traffic lights which are computer controlled and allow traffic to flow through in a managed manner. The Guiseley gyratory is two sets of traffic lights working independently and only controlling each other by the distance they are from each other, which means that they are unable to react to changes in traffic patterns which are causing gridlock at some times of the day.

I could speak in a similar manner about almost every junction on the A65. This is because each junction has been put in on a piecemeal basis with no consideration for the impact on the next one, such as a Pelican crossing which was put only 20 yards away from where the school crossing patrol stands – a bizarre situation.

The only significant investment recently to improve traffic flow is to install the Mover system, which is software which gets the maximum capacity out of junctions. This has been installed at the A658 on Bayton Lane Junction, A653 on Micklefield Lane junction and A65 Rawdon junction, at a total cost of £38,000 – a tiny amount considering the number of journeys made each day.

We are now at risk of influx of traffic created from developments outside our area in Menston and Esholt which means more delays, more pollution and ultimately more accidents.

My question to Richard is, Leeds City Council carries out a strategic survey of the A65 between Horsforth and Menston to find out the full cost of bringing the road up to an

acceptable standard and those results are made public before any further major planning decisions are made and we spoke this morning about twelve weeks, so if Bradford could get trolley buses in twelve weeks, perhaps we could get this survey done in twelve weeks. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pat Latty.

COUNCILLOR P LATTY: Lord Mayor, I would like to talk about the social aspects of the A65 and the problems the lack of attention to keeping the traffic flowing has brought.

For many years Aireborough has been the focus of intense development and one of the prime reasons is because the A65, together with the rail link to Leeds, made it the most attractive to developers. It proved impossible to turn down applications on major brown field sites along the corridor without appeal inspectors pointing to the wonderful connection by road and rail into Leeds and saying "Go ahead." As a result we have a road that cannot handle all the people who came to Aireborough with high hopes of a quieter life. Their children cannot get into our schools; in fact it is a major job getting them to the schools. They cannot get their dental and health needs catered for and we are fast running out of sources of money to provide play and leisure facilities, but that is by the bye.

The parking problems these extra people have generated are proving unsolvable and have also turned Guiseley into a huge traffic job at several times of the day.

All this because we have a major road running through our ward; a ward which seems to produce a mental block in planners and traffic engineers' minds and which they will not accept was at capacity when the huge High Royds development was approved, and is now way past that point which leads us, again, into our request that Leeds City Council carries out a strategic survey of the A65 between Horsforth and Menston to establish the full cost of bringing the road up to an acceptable standard for the amount of traffic it is expected to carry, and that the results are made public before any further major planning decisions are taken. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was just thinking that if we had been sitting here 25 years ago we would have been calling for a bypass, wouldn't we? That would have been the answer and now we have all moved on and that is not the answer. We have a huge problem with a road unlike any other in the city because say if you went out on the A660, you have got horrible congestion; you get past Headingley and things are not too bad. You go out on the A65 and you go through one bit of congestion followed by another bit of congestion and it is a road I hate using, I will be honest. I think how on earth can I avoid it if I am ever going out to Ilkley, because it is just such a frustrating piece of infrastructure.

What happened today is certainly more significant, I think, that perhaps Paul is suggesting because no, it does not answer all your problems but it starts to answer some of the problems in terms of making public transport more attractive coming into Leeds.

I know there are problems in the Guiseley area in terms of using trains where I think they have almost resorted to the Japanese model of pushing people on to the trains to make sure everybody can get on. There is a huge capacity issue there. You are just so absolutely constrained in terms of what your alternatives are. What do you do with a road like that? It is a bit like if you go out past Halifax to Hebden Bridge and Todmorden, there is just nowhere to go with stuff and so it is not an easy one to answer by any manner of means and you have got the added complication that you are very close to the Bradford border, so you have got all the issues about what Bradford wants to do as well as what we want to do, you have got all the pressures about what follows on from the core strategy in terms of new site allocations and I take Pat's point about how you had a lot of brown field sites because the nature of the area was one when we had a lot of industry and that industry disappeared, so what goes on in its place is more housing.

The other plus is that we will get improvements of the A65 roundabout but, again, I am not one to argue that everything can be done incrementally. Work has been done on a survey, the kind of survey you have been talking about, but it is like many other things at the moment where because we have lost a number of staff who were previously working on those kind of things that did not deliver anything immediately but were very worthy, things that we really thought were things we had to do, got pulled on to the more urgent, pressing work. That work did stop but I have no problem with trying to get things resurrected again.

None of us are going to come up with an easy answer to this one, are we? I am more than happy to have whatever conversations we need to have to see what consensus can we come to as to the things that you think are the most serious, what progress we can make so I am more than happy that officers dedicate that time to doing some work – I cannot say how much at the moment because I am not sure and because I did not know what you would be coming here to day, but more than happy to come and look at all the issues that you are raising because they are issues that are serious to me and I think we really have to think about the public transport answer to these problems, it is not just about building more roads or better roads. Thank you, Lord Mayor.  
*(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We will now break for tea. As usual, I will invite our loyal member of the public to join us in the Banquet Hall and could you be back at 5.25, please.

*(The Council adjourned for a short time)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Just to remind you where we have got to, we have swapped Item 6 of the Back Bench Community Concerns with Item 2 so we are now going on to the one that is now Item 3 in the name of Councillor Dawson.

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: My Lord Mayor, road safety is a critical issue in this city. In 2011 nearly 2,400 people were slightly injured in road traffic accidents, 271 people were seriously injured and 26 people killed. Another way of looking at the figures is that during your term of four years as a Councillor, you could expect on average 300 of your constituents to be injured, approximately 35 to be seriously injured and perhaps three or four of your constituents to be killed. I hope you agree that these figures are too

high and it is important that the Council does all it can to reduce the number and severity of road accidents in our city.

It is interesting to note that the debate on road safety has changed over many years. There was a time when being caught drink-driving was seen as unfortunate and that it was not a proper crime. Thankfully public attitudes on this have changed dramatically. In the 1970s and 1980s there was a fierce political debate about the compulsory wearing of seatbelts and unlikely bedfellows such as Enoch Powell and Michael Foot campaigned against this measure. It eventually became law for front seat passengers in 1983 and it is something which Mrs Thatcher's Government can be proud of. It is not often that I praise Mrs T but on this occasion it is one measure introduced by a Government that I welcome.

A main cause of road accidents on local roads is the excessive speed of the vehicles involved. This is behaviour that it is very easy to eliminate; you just slow down. If a pedestrian steps out in front of you at a distance of 75 feet and you are driving at 20 miles an hour, you have plenty of time to react, you can slow down and give the pedestrian a cheery wave. If you are travelling at 30 miles an hour you should just about stop without hitting them. If you are travelling at 35 miles an hour you will hit them at a speed of 18 miles an hour and will certainly injure them.

When I have spoken to community groups in Morley on estates such as the Denshaws, Newlands, the Harrops, the Glens, people no longer debate whether a 20 mile an hour speed limit is right or wrong, they ask "When can we have a 20 mile an hour speed limit on our estate?"

Portsmouth, Oxford, Islington Councils have now introduced default 20 mile an hour zones. Sheffield and York Councils are introducing new programmes to increase the number of 20 mile an hour zones. In Leeds we spend over £40m a year on highway maintenance and improvements and I am asking for a small fraction of this to be diverted into a programme to introduce 20 mile an hour limits to more schools and residential areas in Leeds, especially in Morley, and that Albert Road, near Morley Newlands School, is very near the top of that list.

I think there is now a change in thinking on 20 mile an hour zones in built up areas, near schools and on estates. It may be seen as controversial by some but I believe it will be similar to road safety measures such as drink-driving and wearing seatbelts – in ten or 20 years from now 20 mile an hour zones in urban residential areas will be the norm. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bruce, please.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: My Lord Mayor, Councillor Dawson quite rightly raises this issue and it is about time that the 20 mile per hour zones were the norm. It is a fact that reducing driving speeds saves lives, so what are we waiting for? If someone is hit by a car at 40 miles an hour, they are 90% likely to be killed. If someone is hit by a car at 30 miles an hour, they are 50% likely to be killed. If somebody is hit by a car at 20 miles an hour, they are 10% likely to be killed.

We have a duty to our young people to try to protect them from the biggest dangers that they face. Road death is the number one killer of young people aged 16 to

24 and the second biggest killer of under 15, so we know that many of our young people are being killed and we have to do something to stop it.

Like Neil, I would like to see a small fraction of the Highways budget diverted into a programme to introduce 20 mile per hour limits to more schools and residential estates throughout Leeds. Estates in my own ward of Rothwell would benefit from a 20 mile per hour zone, such as the Wood Lane estate would be an ideal candidate, a local Council estate. Similarly the private estate next to it has speeding motorbikes tearing through and they have open front gardens and very young children in a lot of the properties. This would also benefit from being a 20 mile per hour zone.

There are lots of other similar Council estates and private estates like these throughout the ward where it could work well as well, and as a Council we should be at the forefront in changing attitudes locally and should be leading the way by introducing these 20 mile per hour zones and saving many local young lives. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nagle.

COUNCILLOR NAGLE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. We have explored the possibility and fought for a 20 mile per hour zone in Swillington without success so far. This would be in the immediate vicinity of Swillington Primary School, which is on Church Lane. The road concerned is very narrow, it is on a bus route and has shops and houses on both sides. The bus route, I might add, snakes through this very narrow road with some difficulty, on top of the school run, on top of all these activities. The chances of being able to do over 20 miles an hour on this particular stretch of road are very remote. It would send a clear message, a 20 mile an hour zone, to drivers as to how they should be driving and it would be very, very well supported in the local community.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could you make your final point, please?

COUNCILLOR NAGLE: Just an example to please support this because it is a very necessary plan. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis, please.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The other Sunday I was listening to the radio and one of the lead items on the news was a piece of research that had been done which said that 20 mile an hour zones were actually causing accidents. As is typical on a Sunday morning you are not probably all there but I thought this is going to be a classic piece of specious research done as a last hurrah by people who are desperate to prevent 20 mile an hour zones coming in.

When I did a little bit of research on this, how many accidents had they looked at? Actually they had look at seven accidents – there were seven accidents as opposed to six in the previous year. If you consider in terms of statistical significance that is probably absolutely meaningless, but how many more miles are covered by 20 mile an hour zones than there were in the previous year? How desperate do people have to be to make arguments like this to try and oppose what is becoming, I think, one of those generally accepted ideas that this is the way we should go.

I do not tweet, I will confess it, and perhaps if I did I would get a lot of messages from people saying that we should never move towards 20 mile an hour zones, but via email, via any other method that I do use, I do not get anybody objecting. Regardless of the letters you read in the Evening Post there are not lots of people out there saying we are wrong in pushing towards 20 mile an hour zones. We have actually done a fair bit of work – I do not think we will ever be at the place that Ward members want because that is the nature of our job that you are suddenly wanting a big change in expenditure (and it does involve expenditure) which means taking it away from somewhere else, particularly in these constrained times.

Can I just perhaps say a few words in praise of John Hardy who – people did not expect that, did they? *(laughter)* While he was part of my team last year I did ask him to work with the officers on this and I think he was very instrumental in changing the way officers thought about this as an issue, so thanks very much, John.

If I can just give you a little flavour of how far we have come. We had an initial programme which was six schemes covering seven schools and that was completed last year. This year we are doing eleven schemes and that is covering 16 schools. Next year we hope to move up to 25 schemes and that will be 30 schools covered in all. Over the next couple of months Highways Officers will be consulting with all elected members to see how we can take this forward because there are always possibilities not about getting extra funding from members if that is what members want, and I am not pushing on that because we will still proceed with the programme, but I am convinced this is something that we will go forward with, that actually has a huge amount of support there, that will make our roads safer and lead to fewer accidents. Thank you, Lord Mayor.  
*(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now going to Community Concern number 4, Councillor Elliott.

COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. Might I say, my Lord Mayor, regarding Councillor Dawson's outburst, I suggest in Olympic terms that he gets out of the blocks faster in future. *(laughter)*

The reports on the plans of the West Yorkshire Firefighting Authority from its Chief, Simon Pilling, to make significant and far-reaching changes to the provision of firefighting resources in West Yorkshire has significant potential ramifications for Leeds in general and Morley in particular.

The proposal for Leeds is that the current six fire stations should close with three new stations being built to replace them and a reduction in the number of fire engines from the present seven to four with, of course, a consequent and appreciable reduction in the number of jobs available within the area which means many more households without the income to enable them to meet the needs of this difficult economic climate in keeping their families providing for, not forgetting the knock-on effect which this would have on the local economy.

Unsurprisingly, this has resulted in opposition to the scheme from a variety of sources. This includes unions, Councillors and MPs who fear that the proposed changes, if implemented, could lead to lives being put at risk. It is said that the strategic



positioning of the proposed new stations will reduce emergency response time. This can only be the case for the people and property that will be situated closer to the new stations, whilst it must inevitably be the case that there will be more people and property further away from a new fire station and the response time in reaching these will be longer.

We Morley Borough Independents are also very concerned in particular with the proposed reduction for Hunslet and Morley area, the significant risk resulting from the number of old mill-type properties in Morley and the miles of motorway and main roads in the area and the acknowledged high risk of the Hunslet area are all factors of great concern, notwithstanding the proposal for 8,000 new properties in the Morley area which would at a stroke add to the problems of infrastructure, schools and facilities which will have the effect of adding to the potential workload of the proposed reduced service.

As a result of these factors the Morley Borough Independents oppose the changes and believe that to carry them out would decrease not increase the quality of firefighting capability in this region.

We urge the West Yorkshire Fire Authority to use the twelve week public consultation period to listen to what the people who live in our area have to say about the possible closure of the Morley Fire Station. I urge all Leeds City Councillors to encourage their electorate to make their views known during this consultation period for their wards for, as we have found in Morley, residents' views if articulated often and strongly enough in big numbers, can swing proposals as with the recent proposal to build a McDonalds at the Tingley roundabout which was rejected by the Planning Department.

Saving money is one thing but you cannot put a price on the saving of lives.  
Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Selby.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: Can I thank Councillor Elliott for her contribution. If members are going to make any difference to any proposal, then it is helpful to work together rather than apart and I would urge her to work with Councillor Dawson, to work with Ed Balls in putting forward all that is appropriate.

What we have to remember is that there are two aspects to this consultation. One is the one that has been proposed by the Chief Fire Officer and which all members I would urge, as I said earlier, to take part in. The other aspect of the consultation is, shall I say, aimed in a different direction because, as I mentioned earlier, Councillor Elliott, the proposals that have been put forward are based on the assumption that West Yorkshire and other Metropolitan Counties get a fair deal in the next settlement. These proposals are based on the fact that West Yorkshire gets a fair deal and if you do not like those, bear in mind what the alternative is, and I will highlight what the Chief Fire Officer said. If the authority is to be forced to make savings as great as 27%, that could only be achieved through the *ad hoc* and immediate closure of fire stations and the removal of appliances. That will be over and above what is being proposed. Under the last settlement we got a raw deal, other authorities got a better deal. Mr Pickles's area got a better deal, Mr Osborne's area got a better deal...

COUNCILLOR: What a surprise.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: ...and if you have any influence, Councillor Elliott, on the Government in respect of this settlement, that would be greatly appreciated.

So far as the proposals are concerned, I am conscious that we are talking about stations affecting six wards in the city: Ardsley and Robin Hood, Beeston and Holbeck, City and Hunslet, Middleton Park, Morley North and Morley South. Councillor Dawson highlighted, very sensibly, the concerns that he has on that. I am conscious the response times are affected throughout the city. Some wards will get a slightly better deal but not by much, and other wards face a longer impact on response times.

The consultation is there for everybody to take part in. One of the positive things that has happened is that the incidents of fire calls out have been substantially reduced over the years. This is to an extent because of the preventative work that the fire service has done. When firefighters are not dealing with immediate fires - and they spend about 5% of their time on that - they are out doing home visits, providing smoke alarms, looking at all the various problem properties. My concern is that if the West Yorkshire Fire Authority get a raw deal like we did last time, then a lot of that preventative work that has gone on might be put at risk.

I urge all members of this Council to use whatever influence they have, particularly with those three recalcitrant Members of Parliament who voted in favour of the last appalling settlement, to ensure that they stand up for Leeds and stand up for West Yorkshire. As I said earlier, we have got a lot of lectures between 1999 and---

THE LORD MAYOR: Is this your final point, Councillor Selby?

COUNCILLOR SELBY: It is indeed - about how Members of Parliament in Leeds voted. It is significant that we have not heard anything from over there.

THE LORD MAYOR: Red light, Councillor Selby, please sit down. Thank you.  
(Applause)

We are now moving to Community Concern number 5, Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Tong estate is a small Council estate of mainly Council houses, family houses, in Farnley. The local youngsters like playing football but there is no suitable open land for them to play on the estate. For those of you who do not know it, it does have some green land round it but it is hilly so a lot of the pieces of greenery are hilly and not suitable for playing football on.

The youngsters play in front of the old Fern Lee pub which is in the middle of the estate on Tong Way. The pub is disused, there is the pub site and adjacent land is blocked off, the children continue to still play football in front of it, they have done for many years. Even when the pub was open they used to play there. As I have said, there is no other suitable place for them and just saying they should go up the hill and on to Farnley Park is not the answer because the children play in the middle of the estate, a lot of the parents want to see where they are.

What we are asking for is, I am asking on behalf of local residents if a bit of the pub site and adjacent land could be set about for a kick-about area for the local youngsters. We know there is interest in redeveloping this site at the moment so now is the time to say yes, OK, we have nothing against using some of the site for redevelopment but bear in mind the youngsters, because that is the only place. If you use that up and redevelop all of it, the kids are not going to go away, they will still play football at the front there but they will be a nuisance and they will have nowhere else that they can go and people will just complain and, as I say, I am bringing this matter because in fact the majority of parents and the youngsters as well are supporting this. They have said, "Will you put it forward for us?" so that is what I am doing.

As I said, if nothing is done the situation will not go away so now is the time we have the opportunity to solve this if the will is there, and that is the thing, isn't it, if the will is there. I know I have been in touch with officers over time and I have had people say various things, "Oh no, we cannot do it because of that" or "No, we need to use all the site up for other things, it will not do", etc etc. I have heard it all but I know if the will is there, and that is the thing. If the will is there, we can do it.

I am saying will you support David and I and the parents and the kids on the Tong estate by letting us have a bit of that land, just a bit of land where the kids can kick a ball about. Nothing fancy, just a bit of that site leaving, please. I would be grateful if you could assist us with that. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen, please.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Can I thank Councillor Blackburn for moving this with her usual clarity and I understood what she was saying apart from when she said "What we are asking for." I want to know who the "we" is. The "we" seems to be Councillor David Blackburn and Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: No.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: I seem to think that there is a third member of that ward who has not been included in this back bench concern and I think...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: It is up to him to speak. He can get up and speak if he wants.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: He is shy.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Yes, he is shy.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: We all call him Mr Shy.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: It is the residents as well.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: To try and answer the point, I think from what I am told actually there are a number of grass space areas within the estate.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Hills.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Hang on, this is me answering and not you answering. If you want to answer your own question I will sit down.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Not such a bad idea.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: See where that takes you. I think the installation of formal play equipment in those incidental areas would not be possible because of the close proximity of houses and estate road network, although some of the spaces are suitable areas for informal play and are currently used by young children.

You will not be surprised with a child friendly city that we are very interested and committed as a city to provide formal play provision and we want to do that. However, I am told here – and I do not know the estate but I am told you have got three local green space sites already, you have got Farnley Park, you have got Butt Lane recreation ground and you have got Post Hill, all within a short walking distance of less than 15 minutes to cater for all of those things that you have mentioned.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Depends how fast you walk.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Why are you not happy? Because actually in addition, and some members will be amazed at this, this is obviously a very popular ward because in the last four years we have spent in excess of £320,000 informal play and recreational green space improvement programmes in that ward. How many wards in the city have had that much money spent on them?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: It was me, I spent it. I spent it there.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: He spent it. I know why you spent it.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Why was that, Peter?

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: £320,000, well done, John, at least you have admitted to it. Officers will take away what you have said and we will come back but I am bound to say I will consult the third member of the ward and see what he has to say.

COUNCILLOR HARDY: Thank you, Peter. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, we are now going back to page 15, Community Concern number 2, Councillor Jim McKenna.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Every time I switch on my Council computer a mission statement pops up. The mission statement says “The mission of this Council is to bring the benefits of a prosperous and attractive city to all the people of Leeds.”

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: You don't believe it, do you?

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: We have been watching this so long I think we have forgotten what it means and maybe we are not taking it as seriously as we ought to.

I know that in the inner city areas, as John Illingworth calls a doughnut around Leeds – Holbeck, Beeston, Burmantofts, Armley, New Wortley – we are all getting a poor deal – and Hyde Park, sorry, comrade – we are all getting a deal, life is getting tougher, people are out of work, the housing is not what it should be., many, many issues regarding child care need to be addressed. In Armley, for instance, we have the highest rate of suicides for men aged 45-59 and Alison is going to talk about that. We have the highest rates of NEETS. It is not her fault, believe me, she is not driving them to it! We have the highest rates of NEETS in the city, 8%, a shameful figure. Worklessness is a real problem, as is teenage pregnancy. The crime rate is the third highest in the city though thankfully it is showing some improvement thanks to the work we have been doing on community safety. Alison is on the police force! *(laughter)*

We have one of the highest numbers of looked after children. Only Outer South and Inner East have a higher number than us and our primary schools and secondary schools are sadly not performing as well as schools in other parts of the city and school attendance is very unsatisfactory. We are at the top of nearly all the indices of deprivation in the city. Next time members and in particular senior officers switch on their computers, please would you consider honestly the question, are we achieving and adhering to our mission statement? Lord Mayor, my ward colleagues will now speak of other missions in the ward. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Janet Harper.

COUNCILLOR J HARPER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am going to talk about the health inequalities in New Wortley, very briefly, in my two minutes.

First of all may I begin by explaining where New Wortley is because some of you will not know. It is actually right on the Armley gyratory. At one side there is the prison and at the other side we are sandwiched between Tong Road and Armley, both heavily used arterial road. Even the air that they breathe is heavily polluted.

Their only green space is next to Armley Jail and it is known locally as Jaily Fields, would you believe – how original

The Armley Councillors have helped them to develop the New Wortley Community Centre and I think this is one of our successes. I am sorry you are not interested but it is a success for Armley. They can get a breakfast there – in fact they are still serving breakfasts at midday and they do serve lunches, of course. Sadly I have not seen many salads or fresh fruit being served but we are working on that.

When I was a member of the Primary Care Trust we were told the shocking news or fact that a boy born in New Wortley will have a life expectancy that is twelve years shorter than a boy born in Calverley and I find that so moving, I find it quite unacceptable and I am sure you do.

In a moment of weakness I had to tell the residents of new Wortley this statistic and they laughed and said, “OK, we will move up the road to Calverley”, because that is the way they are, they thought that was going to make the difference.

Nevertheless they did take what I said on board and they have set about changing things. They have developed their own community garden and they are

growing their own vegetables. Some people said it will not work the kids will dig them all up and take them but that was just a negative comment and they went ahead and it has worked well and they have involved the kids and the kids are there working with them to grow all the vegetables. I am so proud to represent these people. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR LOWE: I do not want to depress Council but it is a really sad indictment on the city that Armley has some really bad statistics, so not only do we have some terrible NEET figures, mortality second highest in the city but also we have the highest suicide rate in the whole city and so whatever is all the goodness and the resources that are being given to people in the rest of the city really need to be visited on the people in Armley.

We know that the greatest risk to suicide, according to the suicide audit that has just been undertaken, is 80% men, white men, 30 to 50 years old so I believe that we should be doing some real targeting work in places like Armley and other inner city areas as well because we want the benefits to accrue to the whole of the citizens of Leeds, but we need to particularly be focusing on places like Armley, the New Wortley estate in particular and bring some resources to that estate because it is desperately in need.

Actually, Armley has not really had very many resources over the years. Obviously it has got some fabulous councillors but what we also need is resources to enable councillors, Council staff but also health and wellbeing partners to come together to bring the resources and the facilities that our citizens, our constituents so badly need. The evidence is there which shows that this is a really, really sadly neglected area of Leeds. It is one of the top super output areas, is the New Wortley estate, and that is not just in the city, that is in Europe. It is the third worst super output area in Europe and I think that New Wortley – please give us the resources that we need. *(Applause)*

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

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Lord Mayor, thank you, colleagues, for raising these very important issues. I think we are all well aware of the correlation between social and economic deprivation and health inequality and thanks to Janet as well for pointing out the appalling twelve year life expectancy gap between some of our most deprived communities, including the ones that you represent and some of the best off parts of this city.

I am also very familiar with the New Wortley Community Centre. Last year when I was Scrutiny Chair we held one of our Health Inequalities Working Group meetings at New Wortley Community Centre. I think some of the Board Members had difficulty finding the venue – they could see it but they could not work out how to actually find their way into the car park but those of us who did make it there found it a very good experience and I would recommend the café, as you have said.

The community garden, again, great to have aspiration and positive attitudes in the midst of deprivation and that is definitely to be encouraged. I know that as Ward Councillors you will be doing that every step of the way.

Jim pointed out all sorts of factors in terms of those deprivation statistics – NEETs, worklessness, crime, teenage pregnancy, one of the highest levels of looked

after children in the city, low school attendance and poor outcomes, but I am going to focus mainly on the issues that Alison has raised in terms of it having one of the suicide rates – the highest suicide rate – in the city of Leeds and mental health is all too often unspoken of and unrecognised and not treated with the same seriousness as physical illness despite the fact that one in four people will experience mental ill-health at some point in their lives. Thankfully the majority of people do go on to either manage their illness or to make a full recovery but tragically some make the decision to take their own lives.

As a Council we have a duty working with our partners in housing, the police, the health service and the third sector, amongst others, to do everything we can to support people in this vulnerable position and to reduce the growing number of suicides in this city.

The most recent suicide audit for the city clearly showed that most suicides are concentrated in inner city wards, in post codes with high levels of unemployment and deprivation, not just in Leeds 12 but Leeds 11, Leeds 14, Leeds 15, Leeds 8 and Leeds 9. It is mostly, as Alison said, white males between the ages of 30 and 50 who are taking their own lives and we know that mental health is affected by the type of environment that people live in, whether they are in work, what their financial situation is, what sort of a relationship they have with others.

In areas where housing is of a poorer quality, where unemployment is higher, where poverty is higher, we see higher levels of mental ill health generally and of suicide. Furthermore, we know that the economic crisis and government cuts are making a difficult situation worse for many vulnerable people. As people lose their jobs or are in fear of losing their jobs, or see benefits cut, it is not surprising that there is an increase in referrals to mental health services. That is why it is essential we take action across the Council with partners in the voluntary sector and the statutory health services in particular to support those in a vulnerable position.

Mental health and wellbeing has been identified as a priority in the draft Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the theme that those who are the poorest will improve their health the fastest is the overriding principle in all the health outcomes set out in that strategy.

The Suicide Prevention Plan for Leeds is currently being refreshed and plans are in place to develop local strategies in West Leeds through the Local Health and Wellbeing Partnerships, the Clinical Commissioning Group for Leeds West – that is the group of GPs - and through the third sector. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

#### ITEM 10 WHITE PAPER MOTION – LOCAL BUSINESS RATES

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to the White Papers. White Paper Item 10, White Paper Motion on Local Business Rates. Councillor Downes.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. We all represent the wonderful city of Leeds and within that city there are a number of town and district centres away from the city centre of Leeds. In my ward we have two main ones in Otley and in Yeadon.

If you go into either Otley or Yeadon you will see that there are a number of empty shops. I know that they are not as bad as perhaps some areas of the county – in fact I know Otley is above average for the number of shops that we have got compared to the empty units. However, a few months ago a resident told me that a friend of theirs had tried to set up a new business in Yeadon. They ran a toy shop and they wanted to expand to open up a second branch but when they found out how much the business rates would be they were concerned that it would put their first business into jeopardy because they reckoned it would take them at least six months with advertising to basically get the business on a sound financial footing and they did not want to risk their initial business.

I had somebody else come to me also to say that they were looking at bringing a new type of business to Yeadon but again could not afford the rates along with other set up costs when they were looking to move in.

It got me thinking, what can we do as Councillors to help improve the lot of the small business person coming in, wanting to open up a new shop.

If you look recently, the Government has made two changes to the business rates regime, giving councils a lot more control in this area. The first relates to giving business rates income directly to councils. 50% of the income raised in the local area is given straight to the corresponding Local Authority. This delivers a long-standing Liberal Democrat policy to give Local Authorities more financial freedom and provide an incentive to grow businesses in their area. This is contained within the Local Government Finance Bill which is currently at the report stage of the House of Lords.

The second change is that Councils are allowed much more freedom in who they grant business rates relief to. Previously rates relief was restricted to charities and non-profit making organisations and this is the critical point – under the changes introduced in last year's Localism Act councils can extend rate relief to any category of business they want to, provided they can demonstrate community benefit and are within EU rules on state aid, and that is basically what this White Paper is about.

I think we should be taking advantage of these new powers to encourage new independent shops. I am not professing to know the answers and I have tried to put down a White Paper that was as non-political as possible, so that we can get something we could all support and all sign up to.

I have thought of a couple of ideas within it such as discretionary rate relief schemes that incentivise bringing empty units back to use – far better that we are actually seeing money coming from rates eventually even if it is only a small amount to begin with and to encourage new shops – and ring-fencing of business rates income in some areas to help regenerate the communities from which it is collected.

These are only suggestions and ultimately the White Paper is open ended about how these powers could be best used for Leeds. Basically what I am proposing is that officers report back to the Executive Board within six months about how they should be utilised and I would recommend that along those consultations they look to existing Chambers of Trade and Town Partnerships, etc, to ensure that what we do not do with this is to compromise existing business or to greatly disadvantage them. We need to be



aware of what is currently in a shopping area and move new complementary business in. It is interesting because the number of times people come up and say, "We do not need another shoe shop or card shop – why can't you bring in a toy shop or a chocolate shop or something like that, or a butcher's", to basically give a better offer to the local residents, because if somebody comes in because there is a specialist shop, they are then more likely to go to other shops within the area as they are passing. They will say, "Oh, there is a fishmonger there, I will go and get some fish." That is what this is about, trying to encourage new uses but without compromising existing ones.

I think there is a wonderful opportunity here to look at what the Government has given us the opportunity to do and help us create new businesses, new shops which provide new jobs and they tend to be local jobs and they will tend to source their products from local outlets as well. It is all about reviving the local economy at the very, very local level and that is why I have put this White Paper down and I hope you can support it. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: I formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield to move an amendment.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think what Councillor Downes said confirms what I think of him – he is a very nice fellow but I think he is under some pressure. When you are in the Deputy position it is very hard and it can affect your thinking. The other thing is when you are the candidate in 2013, you start to panic and he is starting to panic early, because although there is a genuine attempt, never, ever have I read or heard such a misinformed presentation of business rate tax. I have got two and a half minutes to persuade everyone that this is a piece of lunacy that does not make sense and we should support our amendment.

I will start very quickly. First point, the previous administration put £13m into town centres, district centres, fantastic initiative and we supported that because it did bring life back to many town centres – Kippax, Cross Gates and so on and so forth, Pudsey and so on. Excellent initiative, we followed it up in 2010 and last year putting half a million pounds in so we can finish off that work and continue. Not mentioned.

Point two, the Government in October 2010 introduced the Business Rate Relief of 50% to 100% which you referred to. We have always done Business Rate Relief as well. Ryk, it runs out in March 2013. Why did you not put in your paper we need to lobby Government so it can continue instead of not even referring to it? I think you have missed an opportunity where you could have united us and I hope that has probably helped you.

Point three, the point of incentivising empty properties, I think you have probably explained it wrong, or you are the opposite logic to everybody else in this Council. Giving rate relief to empty properties is not going to incentivise them. What they have done on housing and what the Government has persuaded us to do is actually put rates up so that you get it filled rather than the opposite way round.

Point four, to try and pretend that the business rate is all within the Local Authority is nonsense. I know it is half grant and half there but who would build services around a business rate with the volatility of the market? We need a safety net and we

have not got that safety net, so what you are saying, by giving discretionary rate relief you are actually putting social services into jeopardy and many other, almost a thousand jobs.

Point five, I think that the whole thing about ring-fencing will say that the strongest and the richest get stronger and the poorest get poorer. I have never been a big fan of ring-fencing around cities or ring-fencing around anywhere because I think our belief always across parties has been helping each other when particularly in hard times.

There are four or five, I think, quite powerful reasons why this whole White Paper from Ryk – I did ask him if he did it on the bus on the way in and he said I was just sitting back and writing it, but a little bit of research, a little bit of prior discussion, we could have had a lot better paper and I urge you to move the amendment and we will have another look at it our way. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Seconded.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis, please.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was just reflecting, listening to Ryk, that we all think about our own shopping centres, how successful they are and all these actually are doing pretty well – I am not being smug, I think the big trap you can always fall into is saying there is not a problem, but I do think Otley has probably benefited from having Sainsbury's come in and provide extra car parking and actually you get quite a good mix in Otley.

One of the things that all our town centres need to provide is a good mix that makes them attractive and often that big unit brings people in and then people go out and spend elsewhere. We have got some shopping areas that I consider are in a dire situation. I would say Holbeck was one of those, I hope members would agree with me. It is really, really down on its knees and I think we really have to think about some areas like this as to how we can go in. There is a Potential Initiative and I do not know where it has got to, whether somebody is coming into the old Kwiksave there but, God, that place desperately needs it.

Keith said about the Town and District Centre Initiative. I think we would all agree we missed a trick and you did it very well there. We have carried on with that initiative and we have come up with further initiatives that support actually in the localities. If you look at the Townscape Heritage Improvement Scheme – I always get that one wrong – like we are doing on Kirkgate, that is actually about encouraging, making physical improvements to an area but actually if you talk to the people who are working down there, it is a hub for small businesses.

One of the things we clearly have got to do is encourage people into business, into setting up shops and we do that via the market, the Source in the market which gives people the chance of testing out their products over a short term to see whether they could go on and establish a shop.

There is work going on. There is the Portas funding that has come in, not a huge amount but again that goes into Town Centre Partnerships to make things happened. Lots of good things going on. The Retail Academy is, I think, going to give people the

kind of training to actually develop their own skills in retail that will actually bring benefits. All of those are far more positive than coming up with the idea of blanket rate relief that will go to people whether they need it or not. I think that is the problem with your idea, that it is just a default position for every problem in this Council to say that the Council should come in and fund something. No it is not, there are lots of other ways of doing it, there are plenty that we are actually getting on with and so I hope people will vote this down. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think first of all just picking up on what Richard was saying, and Keith, the past administration and the current administration through Town and District Centres have done a lot. My view on this, and I take into account what Keith is saying there and will see what Ryk says when he comes back, I saw this as a possibility, another way to look at, not necessarily to put into operation but for the Exec Board to have a look, get a paper to Exec Board and see if we could go down that way and then listen from that. Basically, my support for Ryk on this was on that basis.

If you say it is not possible, we will see what Ryk says when he comes back but my view is what we have to use, we have to use every tool possible to regenerate our district centres and get our local economies going again and get people back to work. Basically, I will support anything that does that within reason. As I say, if this can be proved to be right I will support this.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, everyone should agree that independent retailers and others are struggling in the current recession, though it is remarkable how many businesses in suburban parades and smaller town and district centres are managing to survive against the odds. Every bit of help they need should be given, not just business rate relief but also reductions in rents and the cost of lease renewals. It would be good to have a scheme in which business rate relief had to be matched by a reduction in rent and the cost of leases. Owner occupiers would only get the rate relief which might be balanced by the fact that their fixed outgoings would be likely to be less than those of tenants.

Both the motion and the amendment are worthy of support in their own ways. Thank you, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Downes.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was disappointed that Keith was so negative about what I was trying to achieve here.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Because it is totally wrong.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: It is not. I think you actually have mis-read either intentionally or whatever what I have tried to achieve with this White Paper. It is a shame. Going back, you were quite right to say about the Town and District Regeneration and both Otley and Yeadon were beneficiaries of that, but I think there is

still work that needs doing. I would rather the Council reduced rates to empty units to encourage people to use them.

I have certainly had two people coming to me to say that had that have happened they would have opened new shops and that is what this was trying to do.

I think the other thing with Keith's amendment, it consists of two point actually in the amendment, firstly opposing business rate retention by local Councils and secondly setting up a working party to come up with recommendations on how to support local shops. Your attitude towards local retention of business rates appears to be opposed to the view of the National Labour Party figures such as Hilary Benn...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Can I help you?

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: ...who actually criticised the Government proposals because they only gave 50% of business rates that they collect. In his view it should be a lot higher.

Lord McKenzie of Luton, the Labour spokesperson on Communities and Local Government...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: That is not what we have got.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: ...took a similar line in a recent reading of the Local Government Finance Bill in the House of Lords. He said:

"That we have set the local retention of business rates by Local Authorities can clearly be an incentive to grow the business rate base and to foster close relationships with the business community"

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: That is not what we have got, for God's sake.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Calm down, Keith, you will have a seizure.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: That is what I am trying to achieve. Whilst national Labour figures have set the principle of policy but disagree about its implementation, your argument contains not of the subtlety and simply complains that local rates retention adds uncertainty and risk to local authorities.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Absolutely.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: That is what you are saying. I think that we should be helping and encouraging small businesses and I think that we can do that within this. No need to be negative, let us try and be positive...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Tell me which services you want to cut, Ryk.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: ...in this White Paper and that is why I am asking people to support it.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: It is nonsense.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: May I call for a vote on the amendment in the name of Councillor Wakefield. *(A vote was taken)* The amendment is CARRIED and it now becomes the substantive motion.

All those in favour of the substantive motion please show. *(A vote was taken)*  
That is CARRIED.

ITEM 11 – WHITE PAPER MOTION - SCHOOL SPORTS AND OLYMPIC  
LEGACY

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to Item 11, the White Paper on Schools Sports and the Olympic Legacy in the name of Judith Blake. Councillor Blake, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am sure everyone in the Chamber will agree that we have just experienced the most extraordinary summer of sport ever witnessed in this country, starting with Bradley Wiggins and his success in the Tour de France, the stunning performances of Team GB and Paralympians, and the London Olympics as a whole, and a summer ending with the celebration of Andy Murray's victory in New York.

These events have united the whole country in celebration. In Leeds we have so many lasting memories from the unbelievable success of the torch coming to Leeds, the participation of so many schoolchildren through Spirit Alive, the sheer inspiration of our local athletes and all those who have come to Leeds to train and to encourage all our young people, the overriding message and promise of the games is to inspire a generation of young people through sport. They have provided the perfect opportunity for sport to take centre stage and for healthy living and lifestyles to really climbing to the top of the political agenda.

In Leeds it is one of our main priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan. The cost of failure for our young people to adopt healthy lifestyles in terms of increased obesity and diabetes is truly shocking.

Children all over the city spoke of the once in a lifetime opportunity they had to go to the torch events to meet the wonderful athletes. Lord Mayor, we have a once in a lifetime opportunity to seize the moment, to build on the success, the overwhelming excitement and enthusiasm generated and to make real the legacy that we owe to future generations to come.

I applied Conference Ogilvie for bringing the paper on legacy to the last Exec Board, very much work in progress and with room for all to contribute. Spirit Alive is a great example of Children's Services and Leisure coming together to make a real difference. Please go to your local schools and find out what they achieved - wonderful work, increased participation and even improved attendance.

The debate today calls for urgent action to protect our sports pitches. We note with great alarm that decisions about our provision are being made increasingly

nationally. This cannot be right. We understand that the Secretary of State has on several occasions overruled the independent Schools Playing Fields Advisory Panel. There must be an end to pitches being sold off under the radar.

Surely we must all condemn any attempts to reduce the requirement of outdoor space that schools must provide. What a joke that Michael Gove announced the relaxation just ten days before the Olympic Games began.

Lord Mayor, all experts agree that sport and exercise in school is essential to set the habits of a lifetime. The removal of the School Sports Partnership funding by Michael Gove caused a national outcry. The partial reinstatement of funding allowed us to continue but on a much reduced programme. All evidence points to its great success, particularly at primary level. This is where we need to make the changes that will set young people on the right track going forward into the future, but we have to note that even the limited funding that was reinstated is due to end next March. I move that we continue as a council to demand its reinstatement. The evidence of impact is overwhelming. Surely improving the health and wellbeing of our young people is one of the greatest responsibilities we have. This should be the great legacy of the London Olympics.

“Less dither”, cried Cameron. Have we seen any evidence of less dither? I really do not think so, so let us take a lead, let us move together in Leeds and really start to set in train the legacy that we need to support our young people in the future. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: I second the White Paper, Lord Mayor, and the comments made by Councillor Blake.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Sue Bentley to move an amendment.

COUNCILLOR S BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. What a wonderful summer, a festival of sport - endeavour, triumph, sadness, hard work and graft we have seen from the Olympics and Paralympics. Doesn't it make you proud of the generosity of spirit in Britain? Let us hope that lasts for a long time, as well as the inspiration for everyone, young and old, to take up some form of sport to improve their health and wellbeing.

I would like to congratulate Councillor Ogilvie on the Paralympic flame ceremony at the John Charles Stadium. It was great to see able and disabled people from across Yorkshire having a go at all sorts of sports and some of our able bodied people to understand the strength required to actually work wheelchairs and tricycles very well.

Sadly, only a few councillors were there so I hope more of you will welcome home the Paralympic athletes tomorrow.

I am sorry that Councillor Blake brought politics into the most successful Olympic and Paralympic event across the country and perhaps we should reflect on that. It is rich councillor Blake criticising this Government for selling off 21 school sites when the

Labour Government sold over 2,540 in ten years - but be careful, Les, what you wish for - and Thatcher and Major, 10,000.

In these recessionary times increasing hire costs for small pitches by something like 19% over two years is less likely to encourage more people to participate in sport and what we need is more affordable pitches, not expensive ones. Leeds has a high rate of obesity in children, a ten year life expectancy gap between the wealthiest and the disadvantaged areas of Leeds. We need an Olympic legacy to get more people involved in sport.

Sport is important as it provides physical exertion, it can teach all involved to respect rules, learn to be part of a team, have control, self-discipline, work hard, be competitive and have fun - all important aspects providing a great foundation for growing up and preparation for work.

The Lib Dems are restoring the £50m a year Lottery Funding for sport, £8m to tackle barriers that disabled people face playing sport. There is also an Olympic legacy of £23m Sportivate to encourage all 14 to 25 year olds to try new sports.

THE LORD MAYOR: Please would you make your final point, Councillor Bentley?

COUNCILLOR S BENTLEY: What is the legacy in Leeds? £100,000, we have no real plans with it, I have an idea - let us let the young people who keep building their own BMX course in our woods, having them bulldozed down by the Council, perhaps we could find them a piece of land where they could legally do that. That would be a real legacy for a child friendly city. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LEGAL ASSESSOR: Councillor Lamb to move a second amendment.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I know I am on the right track when I get greeted with that response to start with! What a shame, Lord Mayor, what a shame that after such a fantastic summer of sport culminating in staying up till the small hours of Monday morning watching Andy Murray win the first major championship by a British man since Bernard Atha was elected to council (*laughter*) what a shame that after that fantastic summer of sport, after nationally it is only right to congratulate the last Labour Government, the last Labour Mayor of London for securing the Games for London and for Great Britain, it is only right to congratulate the current Government and the current Mayor for the way they have implemented it. What a shame that our contribution in Leeds, our first reference to an Olympic legacy, is to go for party politics.

I put down an amendment and chose the words very carefully so that I thought that no member could disagree with what I put down. Last night at Whips I put that to all the parties and every member of every party that was in that meeting, including three from the administration, agreed with me that our contribution to the legacy of the Olympics should be to have a joint contribution that everyone can sign up to for all parties. I put it to Judith last night, who rang me, and what Councillor Bentley did not

say was the response - and forgive me for using my mobile, I will put the appropriate amount in your charity - "I have raised the discussion you had at Whips with our Leadership. Decision reached is we will not go for consensus wording." What a shame.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Shame on you.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: I really thought better of you than that but as time goes on my opinion of you gets less and less and less. The truth is, Lord Mayor, actions speak louder than words. Sue is quite right, playing fields were sold at double the rate under the last Labour Government than they were under this one and the record of this administration on sport is nothing to be proud of, Lord Mayor. They have closed down East Leeds Leisure Centre, they have closed down South Leeds Sports Centre, they have cut the hours at Garforth Leisure Centre, they promised two years ago to put a Community Asset Transfer in place - it has not happened. They cut £2m from sports funding in Leeds and decided to spend it on a computer system for the city at £1.8m that is no better than the one we had before. It is just not good enough, Lord Mayor. While over the summer we saw our athletes run faster, throw further and jump higher, we have seen Judith Blake sink lower than she ever has before. Shame on you. You should hang your head in shame. What sort of message is this to send out to the young people of the city of Leeds about the Olympic legacy. Shame on you, Judith. You are not interested in a child friendly city; all you are interested in is your own career ambitions. Shame on you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Graham Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I thought John was doing well with his amateur dramatics - that was a great performance, Alan. Crocodile tears, I think.

Lord Mayor, we have an opportunity to turn the inspiration of this amazing summer of sport into increased participation by young people here in Leeds - not only an opportunity, an obligation, I would say. One of the reasons the UK's bid to host the Olympics was successful was because of the theme of how the Olympics would inspire a whole new generation of young people, which is why Michael Gove's ridiculous decision to pull the plug on the £162m schools sport funding was so short-sighted.

The facts speak louder than words. The School Sports Partnerships of the last Government, the number of young people doing two or more hours of sport a week rose from 25% to 90% between 2002 and 2010 and this, of course, is on top of one of the first decisions of this Con Dem Government which was to scrap Labour's free swimming initiative for under 16s and over 65s - again the impact of that in Leeds was junior swimming increased by 123% at Fearnville and by 114% at the Aquatic Centre in South Leeds. While we wait for this Government to get its act together on what it is actually going to do to ensure a genuine legacy from the Olympics, we took a paper last week to the Executive Board to outline the beginnings of what we want to see happen here in Leeds. Time is limited so I will just give a flavour of some of the proposals we have put forward.



Firstly, Leisure will be working with Health to explore how we can collectively get people active across the city. This will include looking at the Be Active programme in Birmingham where the council and Health Service have funded free access to sport and fitness in leisure centres, parks and community settings with the effect that there has been a massive take-up of physical activity amongst people who previously were doing little at all and we have heard today from Councillor Harper about the massive gap in life expectancy between different parts of our city.

We will continue to support future national and international sports events in the city and use them to inspire a new generation of participants. We have the Rugby League World Cup next year, potentially the Rugby Union World Cup, Tour de France may be coming to Yorkshire and the city centre Triathlon event as well. We are also looking to establish an annual Olympic Legacy Fund of £100,000 a year to see how we can support grass roots sport and we are also going to see if we can increase rate relief to sports clubs in the city.

Lord Mayor, it is all very well, in conclusion, Mr Cameron and Mr Johnson, his successor, parading themselves at the Olympics but they need to give a clear commitment to fund long-term sport in our schools, clubs and local communities.  
*(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Lord Mayor, I am speaking in support of this White Paper also. I believe what this Government are doing to school sports across the country is truly shameful. I did not intend to spend a lot of time going over the history of schools sports funding; suffice to say I am sure we all remember the embarrassing U-turn that Mr Gove was forced into shortly after the Con Dem Coalition came to power. The U-turn still left a 62% cut in funding which is only guaranteed until 2013.

What has been the impact of this massive cut in this, our Olympic year? A freedom of information request has revealed that there are not 110 fewer School Sports Partnerships than there were in 2009/10 and that is a reduction of 37%; 48% of Local Authorities have reported a decreased in the number of partnerships and, believe it or not, 28% no longer have any at all.

Much was made by the Government of the new scheme to release PE teachers one day a week to promote pupils' participation in sport. In reality, what we have seen is a 60% drop in the amount of time dedicated to organising school sport across the country. The impact in Leeds was the loss of just under £1m per year which led to a huge loss of dedicated staff. Thanks a lot, Mr Gove, that is a real effort and a real commitment by you to sport in this Olympic year.

Before the cuts we had seen 91% of pupils participating in two hours of high quality physical education and sport. We had fantastic partnerships working with many stakeholders over the 30,000 pupils who represented their schools in inter-school competitions across Leeds. Resources to primary schools have been particularly hard hit as we have heard already.

I think this is a real missed opportunity. We have a duty to ensure that the best possible physical education is provided to all our children and young people. If we can embed a love of sport at a young age then that will continue throughout their young lives with all the social and health benefits that that will bring.

I feel that all the progress that has been made is steadily being undermined. Just exactly what kind of legacy does Mr Gove think he is leaving? He has cut funding, he has been responsible for a massive decline in school sports and he has spent the summer selling off playing pitches against the advice of an independent Panel.

The Olympics have inspired a generation, encouraging children and young people to dream and aspire, but the Government is taking this away. They have no means of achieving it; it is a disgrace.

One last message, there is life outside London. We need a true legacy for up north. Alan – you are whizzing around there – go and lobby Michael Gove for facilities here. I do not hold out much hope, he does not really listen. Sue, the Liberals, if your Parliamentary colleagues are not to become a bigger joke than they are now, influence them, please, to do something for up north now. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Maqsood, please.

COUNCILLOR MAQSOOD: My Lord Mayor, I am also speaking in favour of the White Paper because it is vitally important that we harness the legacy of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and give our young people the chance to fulfil their sporting potential.

I want to focus specifically on the importance this has in improving health outcomes. We all know that childhood obesity is an increasing problem. According to the latest figures for Leeds, 33.9% of eleven year olds in the city are either overweight or obese. This is almost exactly in line with national averages and reflects how prevalent this issue is within our society. As we live more sedentary lifestyles and eat less healthy foods, the problem gets worse and puts more pressure on our health services. The huge success of Olympic and Paralympic athletes has created a huge opportunity to break this cycle. It is crucial that we do everything we can to encourage and support young people to lead more active lives. If we can achieve this we will reap the benefits for decades because an active child is more likely to be an active adult.

We need to make sure young people who want to take part in sport are able to do so. That means protecting and enhancing the green spaces we have where young people can play and, of course, this is even more urgent within inner city areas like my ward, which are densely populated and have limited green space. It also means encouraging young people to use the sport facilities in the city. One of the advantages of public health coming into the Council is that it gives us an opportunity to develop a joined-up approach to this challenge. An example of this is making sure that our planning system considers the health implications of new developments. It also means being creative and thinking of new ways to get people active. A great example of this in action is our Have Fun, Feel Good programme, which is a rolling programme of events for staff and their families to have a go at a range of sports. Just this weekend a festival of sport took place at the John Charles Centre for Sport with hundreds of families taking advantage of the good weather to get involved, yet we have to go further. If we are to

get all young people active rather than just those who are already interested in sport, this means giving young children the chance to try out different sports and find out what they are interested in doing.

The Olympics and Paralympics showed the importance of sustained public investment. We cannot just sit back and expect young people to do it on their own. We need to offer them support and encouragement.

Unfortunately, the huge Government cuts to support funding and our budgets are making it more difficult to meet the huge ambitions we have.

THE LORD MAYOR: Please will you make your final point, Councillor Maqsood.

COUNCILLOR MAQSOOD: As a Council we are determined to do everything in our power to stop this from happening. If we do not take this chance to improve the health outcomes of a generation, we will pay the price for years to come. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Marjoram.

COUNCILLOR MARJORAM: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I think we all share the wonderment and excitement of a summer of achievement. I do not know if anyone else is also sharing my revulsion of the activities of political parties up and down the land, from the SNP to Boris Johnson, in trying to claim some kind of political credit or make this a massively political issue to their own betterment.

My podium, I am not sure who is getting the gold medal as to hijacking the Olympics. Boris Johnson was telling us that the Olympics was proof that his plan for an airport in the Thames Estuary is a good one. I think we had Liberty telling us that Mo Farah's double gold was proof that needed more immigration. Recently we had the TUC telling us that Government spending must be a good thing. I would regard all of those with some suspicion, and I hope you do too. I like to think the public are sane enough to also disregard some of the more outlandish claims.

Where the public will judge us is in the actions we take and I am afraid, Keith, I must say your actions in this city and your administration have fallen somewhat short. I will just pick out a few.

Let me start at the beginning. I had a question at the last Council meeting about cycling facilities, while Bradley Wiggins was riding to glory in the Tour de France and the answer was no, there would be no more. We had a deputation about Allerton Grange Fields and you cannot even cut the grass. We had Garforth taking two years for the Community Asset Transfer. I protested about allowing Hackney carriages to use bus lanes to the detriment of cyclists and the decision still went through. The actions do, to use the cliché, speak louder than the words.

Shall we just stop and reflect perhaps on the question that I have asked at Council this evening to further our Olympic legacy, tackle some of the health inequality that we see in the city and some of the life expectancy. I have asked you to consider perhaps a kilometre of dedicated cycle track or a BMX facility or some such linked to a major development so this could form part of a 106 agreement, it could form part of the capital receipt for Sovereign Street, Keith, that would enable us to develop something in

the city for the people of Leeds at little or no cost to the taxpayer and out of a capital receipt rather than the revenue budget, yet I suspect when the answer comes back to my written question today it will be “No”.

How will we look collectively in the eyes of the public if we continue to try and lay siege to the Olympics, as so many people have done, and I agree Boris Johnson amongst them, I see no malice against you in the Labour Party because frankly everyone is at it, but how will we look in the eyes of the public if we continue to seek only the gold medal in hot air? Let us actually deliver something, shall we? Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor John Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am sat here thinking to myself what on earth is this White Paper doing before us, and I think Councillor Lamb’s comment that he read out from Judith Blake really just sums it all up. This is more to do with the Gruen/Blake access, vying for the Leadership of the Labour Group, each of them thinking “I have got to get a White Paper down, I have got to say something at this Council meeting”. They have got to do something. Now my sources tell me that they are joined by Councillor Dobson. He is after the Gruen job, allegedly. Watch out, Peter, there is someone stalking your job. You will know just how Keith feels very shortly, no doubt.

I have to say in relation to your record on sport, it is a joke, isn’t it? Surely this is some amusing tale you are trying to tell here this evening, because you have no record on sport, none whatsoever. Nothing. What have you done since you have been in office in relation to sport in this city? You have closed the East Leeds Sports Centre, you have closed South Leeds Sports Centre – if you think that is wrong maybe you need just to have a little history lesson. You people closed those sports facilities, not the last administration – you people closed them.

What was our record in relation to sport in this city? Conveniently you have forgotten that, have you not, because we built a brand new £15m sports centre in Armley and we built an absolutely amazing facility in Morley that has to be one of the best leisure facilities in the whole of this country. In relation to Holt Park, no credit that way either because we lined up all the money for Holt Park and when we left office, we were the people who were lobbying Central Government to make sure Holt Park was still on track and we are delighted that it is. There is only one sporting facility – one – that I closed when we were in office, just the one.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: South Leeds.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: South Leeds was not closed, Keith, you closed that. There was one, it was the International Pool and what did we replace it with? A £20m Aquatic Centre, the like of which no other Authority in this country has got; the like of which brought the Chinese team here because it was that facility whilst under construction Mr Duan, the head of the Chinese Olympic Swimming Committee, saw, could not believe what a facility we had got in Leeds and that is why the Chinese team came to this city, not because of anything that you people did, not a thing. Your record on sport is lousy. You have got no credibility in this White Paper whatsoever, as we all know. We all know it is all about the future leadership of the Labour Group. *(Applause)*

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

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Calm down.

COUNCILLOR GRUEN: Dear!

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Sorry, yes, someone got in first – calm down dear!  
*(laughter)*

Where do I start? There are two sides to every story. If you had heard what Councillor Lamb said when he rang me about, “Wouldn’t it be a good idea if we all accepted my wording of the White Paper” – I mean, for Heaven’s sake, it is absolutely true. I have got no problem with any Councillors...

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Lord Mayor, I would like to make a point of personal explanation.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Just sit down. Come on. I have got absolutely no...

THE LORD MAYOR: Could you sit down a moment, please.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: A point of personal explanation. Councillor Blake has just lied to this Council. I think that was untrue and I would ask her to withdraw it. What I asked for...

COUNCILLOR: Under what procedure rule?

COUNCILLOR LAMB: ...when I spoke to her on the phone---

THE LORD MAYOR: Can you be quiet, please, and we will hear what Councillor Lamb has to say.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. What I asked for when I spoke to Councillor Blake on the phone is exactly the same as I asked for in Whips, which Members of her Group will confirm and Members of other Groups, which was for a form of words which we could all agree on. I said I was quite happy and quite prepared to change anything whatsoever in the paper to have a form of words that everyone could agree with. I hope that she will withdraw and apologise for misleading and lying to this Council. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake, would you continue?

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: No, I will not withdraw, because he has got a very selective memory about the conversation. Do you remember that expression being savaged by a dead sheep? I think you are being savaged by a tired or very tiresome lamb, I have to say. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Bad joke.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: All this huff and puff and bluster means they are on the ropes. They know that there is a real problem here because of the complete lack of consistency...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You should be agreeing on this.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Of announcements that are coming out from the Front Bench of his Government. We are not shy and we were not shy of criticising our Government and putting forward lobbying to ask them to change. Other Tory Councillors and Liberal Councillors are doing that all around the country. Without their support we would not have got the reinstatement of the Schools Partnership Funding when it happened.

Sue, just picking up on some of your things, I think you must have been referring back to the Tories when they sold off the playing fields up to 1997. In fact, you have just got to check your figures a bit better. Also the pitch funding is 22 pence per player, it is not good enough. I know we want to do more but we have got, and this is why this White Paper is so important, we have to keep lobbying Government, they have to put their money where their mouth is, they have to spend money on preventative measures rather than on a health budget that is spiralling out of control. That is the debate we have.

I want to finish by saying, all of these crocodile tears, this falseness, we are being guided by what young people in this city are saying to us today. They are saying we have got an opportunity, a chance of a lifetime, do not mess it up, do not waste it, go out there and demand what we can get on behalf of the young people of this city and this Council is determined to continue to do just that. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I am calling for a vote on the first amendment in the name of Councillor Bentley. (*A vote was taken*) That amendment is LOST.

I am calling for a vote on the second amendment in the name of Councillor Lamb. (*A vote was taken*) That amendment is LOST.

Finally I am calling for a vote on the motion in then name of Councillor Blake. (*A vote was taken*) The motion is CARRIED. Thank you.

#### ITEM 12 - WHITE PAPER MOTION – EDUCATION

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 12, White Paper Motion on Education in the name of Councillor Lamb.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor, just what you wanted – here we go again!

Lord Mayor, like everyone here I have many titles – Councillor, Director, Chairman and now even the Mayor of Wetherby, but in each case it is not the title that bothers me but the difference I can make in the role I have. There is, however, one title I do hold which really does matter to me and it changed my life when I had the joy of having it bestowed upon me. Every time that title is used it motivates and inspires me to do better, to be better and to work harder. That title is “Dad”.

Like very parent, grandparent, auntie, uncle and guardian I want the very best for my son and I know the greatest gift I can give him, the greatest gift that any of us can give to any child, is the benefit of a good education.

My son started secondary school just a couple of weeks ago and you will not be surprised to know that I fought tooth and nail to get him into the best school that I possibly could. It would be nice to be able to think that the nearest school to any of our children would give them the education they need and the best possible start in life. Sadly, that is not the case.

Don't get me wrong, we have some fantastic schools in Leeds with incredible teachers and it is one of the great privileges of my role to be able to spend so much time seeing them inspire the children in their care and to watch as they pass their passion for learning and thirst for knowledge to another generation. This is what happens in huge numbers of classrooms across our city and we should celebrate, congratulate and applaud these heroes for what they do and the impact they have on our society.

The tragedy is, and the truth that for too long we have been afraid to say, that there are too many children (and we are talking about thousands) in our city who do not have the benefit of this experience every day. There are too many bad schools and I will say what too many dare not - there are too many bad teachers.

I am delighted that the term "satisfactory" is being ripped up and removed from the educational vocabulary to be replaced with "not good enough" because, let's call a spade a spade, that is what these schools are, they are not good enough. The idea that it is all right to leave a child with a teacher in a classroom in a school which is not good enough is simply not acceptable to me. How many of us would put up with that for our children or grandchildren?

A year in a school which is not good enough is a year of that child's life that they will never, ever get back. The damage in that year will often never be repaired and yet we are prepared to condemn thousands of children to remain in these schools for the entirety of their education.

I already know what some on that side are thinking – what many of those in the educational establishment would throw at me – that you can never achieve the same results in the inner city as you can in the leafy suburbs and that I am wrong to stigmatise those schools.

Let us shine a light on what they actually mean by that. What they are saying is that if you are poor, if you are Turkish or Somali, if English is not your first language or if you had the misfortune to be born with the wrong postcode, then we do not expect you to succeed, you will always be second class and it is no surprise that your schools are second class. That is what they mean and I utterly reject that notion.

Inequality in our education system breeds inequality in our society, not the other way round. It is no coincidence that those children who have the good fortune to go to the best schools generally do well in life. Those that are condemned to an education that is not good enough find that the escalator of social mobility has been switched off and that they are up against it from the very earliest years of their life.

That is why youth unemployment is so high in this country. We learned today that a million private sector jobs have been created since the last General Election. The tragedy is that so many of our young people have been so badly let down by the education system that they simply do not have the skills to compete for those jobs. It is not their fault and it can never be too late to do something about it but the consequence of a poor education is higher poverty, high youth unemployment and lower social mobility.

Lord Mayor, that is what my White Paper is all about. It is time to collectively resolve to bring an end to this national scandal and I do not believe this administration has proved itself up to the task of turning this situation around. Two years in we still do not have a permanent senior officer responsible for education. Incidentally, I think it is totally wrong that the current holder of that post is paid into a private company and I take Keith at face value that that will be fixed as soon as possible. This is not good enough.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Point of order, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Point of order, Lord Mayor. That information is not correct.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Can you withdraw that?

COUNCILLOR LAMB: It was correct when it was provided to me by your officers so if it has changed since then I will be happy to withdraw it, but my understanding is that that is correct, unless it has been changed.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: You need to withdraw it.

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: The officer needs to update him.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Yes, the officers need to provide an update.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: He needs to ask.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Lord Mayor, I hope you will add the time on. I have got a couple more points to make.

THE LORD MAYOR: Half a minute.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: The interventions there have been have been too weak and feeble and failure is allowed to go on in this city for too long. Not a single poorly performing teacher has been sacked. This is not good enough. We cannot allow so many young people to continue to be let down by our education system. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake to move an amendment.



COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Lord Mayor, thank you. Three minutes is not enough time to respond to some of the things that Councillor Lamb has said. What I want to start by doing is celebrating our GCSE results and really I do not know where Councillor Lamb has been. He is a member of the Children's Trust Board, he knows our drive and aspiration for children and young people and learning is absolutely at the heart of what we do.

We inherited a system which, on their best performance, out of 150 Local Authorities had us in the place of 127<sup>th</sup>. Did we ever hear from them when they were in control of Education in this city any desire or any even recognition of what was going wrong in the system there?

Sir Tim Brighouse came in and had a really good look at what was happening and he acknowledged that much needs to be done to accelerate improvements rates and over the last four years, this is in 2010/11, this figures has improved more slowly than those achieved in some of the other core cities and nationally. In latter years schools collectively might have thought they had arrived in Leeds, that is what they all told us, do you remember, they were all brilliant, wonderful, sparkly, fantastic – I have to tell you, Tim went on to say, "There is an urgent need to disabuse people of this since comparative data suggests that other cities are improving faster." That is what we inherited and that is what we are determined to turn around.

We have seen the end of Education Leeds, Education has come back in, but at the same time we have seen the biggest reduction funding into education, into Area Based Grant affecting young people in our city, that we have ever seen. We have seen capital funding for our schools absolutely slashed to the bone and yet this government can afford to waste time funding vanity projects like the Free School Initiative, wasting millions in Bradford and then not allowing the school to open.

The really positive thing we have got now is we have got headteachers from all of our schools working closely with us, some of them are seconded into the centre to help us – schools leading schools, that is the agenda.

I am sorry, but from the White Paper that Councillor Lamb has put down, he clearly does not understand what is going on. This Council has used its powers to intervene in schools, it has removed governing bodies when essential and it works with schools and headteachers to support them in all of the work that they need to do to drive up standards.

We know we have a real job to do, we know the challenge that faces us and we know the impact of some of the initiatives working against our young people – removal of EMA, the latest GCSE fiasco.

THE LORD MAYOR: The red light is on, please make your final point.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: We are determined to continue to try and improve things as quickly and as radically as we possibly can. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Sue Bentley to move a second amendment.

COUNCILLOR S BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Firstly, I would like to congratulate all the pupils, teachers and everyone involved in the exam results this year. It is a shame that the joy and achievement that some of our students have has been marred by the fiasco of the English results. I support the Council in their efforts to get a fair deal for all our young people in Leeds.

I cannot support Councillor Lamb's White Paper as parts of it are contradictory. On one hand he is wishing to give more independence to schools and then wanting Council to intervene and use its powers to replace leadership where performance is unacceptable. I agree that unacceptable performance is not a good thing for our children or schools.

I would just like to remind Councillor Blake in her criticism of the former administration, you may remember, Councillor Blake, in 2000 there was an Ofsted report on Leeds City Council and their education and what it says is, "Local Councillors are still able to influence the provision of additional funds to schools in their wards." There was no Director of Education for four years because the District Auditor and the recruitment consultant described as 'perceptions of political interference'. We could not get anyone to come and work for us because of that. That is rich, coming from you.

Over the last few years there have been many changes in Education, with different Government initiatives demoralising and undermining the professionalism of teachers who want to get on with the job of teaching. The Council needs to support schools that are looking at alternative governance models to determine their own future, rather than being pushed into academies. Our children deserve the very best education that we can give and this Council should aspire to assure that all schools are excellent schools and that children can live, play and go to school in their local community and get a good education with the assistance of the Pupil Premium for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

These schools need strong leadership with good teachers, really good teachers who all should have high expectations of each other and their students, and a "can do" attitude which will perpetuate a self-fulfilling prophecy of success.

We need to reduce the educational gap for our most disadvantaged children, starting with the free education for two-year olds and getting parents involved in early education. We know that the sooner a child's difficulties are identified and dealt with, the more successful they will be in all aspects of their life, including their education.

THE LORD MAYOR: The red light is showing; would you please make your final point.

COUNCILLOR S BENTLEY: So let us have excellent schools that reflect the needs of their local community and let governors govern and teachers teach.  
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Martin Hamilton.

COUNCILLOR M HAMILTON: Formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Lord Mayor, I want to support this amendment. It is not rocket science to see that attendance at school is vital if pupils are to achieve to their very best ability. However, we have had far too many problems historically with poor attendance. For children to succeed at school they need to be there in the first place and so focusing on attendance is absolutely the right obsession for us to have here in Leeds. We believe the secret is working with families to set expectations from an early age. This is good practice and can be evidenced through our Children's Centres. Children who have come through our centres have achieved some fabulous SAT results this year. The fact is that these results have been achieved despite the best efforts of the Government who, from the moment they came to power, set about devastating education in this country. It was a Labour Government who wisely invested in our youngest children and families, establishing thousands of Children's Centres across the country.

In Leeds we can see how vital they have been to so many vulnerable children and families and are fully committed to keeping our Children's Centres open. We believe they form a key part of our relentless work to continue to drive up standards. Regular attendance at Children's Centres translates into regular attendance at school. We have the best attendance figures we have ever had with around 2,000 more children in school every single day here in Leeds, much more than we had when you were in charge two years ago.

We have moved from 119<sup>th</sup> to 61<sup>st</sup> in the Local Authority rankings and consequently are in the top half nationally. Our secondary attendance levels are the highest they have ever been. We are never going to follow the Government when they are telling us that one size fits all with the academy conversion approach. I am yet to see any evidence whatsoever that conversion to academy status alone improves results. We are looking at what best suits Leeds and we are succeeding.

We will not be bullied by politicians who have no idea of what life is like in Leeds. We are raising standards across the board and have a strong commitment and a plan in place to ensure this progress continues. We have an excellent working relationship with our schools across the city and I will not see this undermined by political mischief making.

You had the opportunity and the resource to tackle education and you failed. We are making great strides forward and all you are doing is criticising from the sidelines.

Finally, I must say I am extremely disappointed with you, Alan. I had hoped through your membership of the Children's Trust Board that you were fully signed up to what we were determined to achieve in Leeds. Indeed, I cannot remember a single time when you raised any of these concerns at the Children's Trust Board. What we have seen here is petty and childish. It is an attack which achieves nothing other than highlighting an astonishing lack of understanding of what life is like for children and families in Leeds. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mitchell.

COUNCILLOR MITCHELL: Lord Mayor, I would like to speak in support of the Labour Group amendment to the White Paper.

Councillor Lamb speaks about this Council under-performing and letting down children when it comes to parent (*inaudible*). This ignores the fantastic work that the administration is doing working with schools, colleges and apprenticeship providers to turn around the legacy of failure. It is no surprise he is also choosing to overlook the economic environment in which this Council is undertaking its work. Thanks to the success of the current government in turning growth into a second recession, it will not be news to any of us in the Chamber there are fewer jobs in the economy and more people claiming unemployed-related benefit.

Prospects for those leaving education have been severely impacted by this environment with competition for jobs at unprecedented levels. It is therefore more important than ever that our young people are ready for work and have the necessary skills to fulfil their potential.

Despite the ongoing fiasco with the inconsistent marking of some papers, the latest GCSE results clearly show that in Leeds we are performing strongly in educating our teenagers and preparing them for the next stages of their lives. For the most the next stage will be post-16 education; however, for some, this will be work-based learning or even employment. Whichever pathway they choose to take the Council's progress in preparing our young people for the world of work is clearly shown by the reduction in the number of NEETS across the city, which is the most powerful indicator of our support for young people. We have made great progress in this area and the current figure of 1.4% down on the same period last year. This is against the national trend, falling faster than any Local Authority and, most importantly, an all-time low for Leeds.

This shows that we are making progress in giving young people the opportunities they need to fulfil their potential. The number of young people starting apprenticeships is continuing to rise and we are investing millions in supporting both apprentices and small and medium-sized enterprises taking on trainees.

This administration is also making significant changes in how we prepare our young people for work. We are working closely with the Educational Business Partnership and Leeds Mentoring who work alongside schools and businesses to ensure those children who are furthest away from the labour market are identified, given the information and vital support they need to be work-ready when they leave school.

So far this year they have worked with nearly 10,000 children and young people across the city undertaking skills audits and giving some practical experience of the workplace with one of the hundreds of business volunteers connected with the programme. At a time when the Government is creating so many negative headlines for our young people when it comes to their education, EMA scrapped, tuition fees hiked and the GCSE fiasco, added to the economic challenge, as an administration we are doing some really positive work to lay the foundations for our young people's future to help make sure they are prepared for whatever choices they make. I fully support the amendment support by Councillor Blake. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. There has been a lot of talk today about us being a child friendly city and how we ensure children and their education is put front and centre in all we do. It is quite true much of what goes on in the city is good. There are some great schools, there are some outstanding teachers, there are some truly inspiring headteachers and they are getting some great results for their pupils and those schools and those teachers and headteachers quite rightly deserve our thanks and praise.

What is simply staggering, though, is the number of schools in our city which are failing to even meet the most basic, the minimum acceptable standards of education. Over 15% of our primary schools – 15% - fail to meet even the most minimum acceptable standard of education. It is all well and good for Councillor Blake to try and gloss over that kind of poor performance by saying that this year we have had the greatest set of result ever. It does not change the fact that in the Inner East and the South part of our city we have hot spots of failure. Too many schools letting too many children down; too many children getting left behind.

On this side of the Chamber we do not want to see any discrimination across the city. We want to see all schools, every school, delivering educational excellence right across the board and to do that is going to require a major change in attitude of many of you sitting opposite.

Those of us who are involved in education know it works best when it is delivered by those who are genuinely responsible for it, that the nearer the point of delivery lies the responsibility, the better.

It is a simple fact disliked by colleagues opposite, I know, that increasing the autonomy of schools, of headteachers, of governors and allowing them to focus on the issues and challenges facing their school, allows them to improve and drive up educational standards. We see that with academies, we see that with their new younger sister, Free Schools, with their commitment to lifelong learning, of good discipline and an appreciation of every child's uniqueness. We see them driving up standards, improving outcomes and helping ensure that pupils are ready to graduate into the workplace.

The problem for the current administration is that on purely political grounds you refuse to support academies. It really makes no sense because, as Councillor Dowson has explained, one of your obsessions, one of our obsessions, is driving up attendance and the schools that drive up attendance best are academies. Try and square that circle because I really cannot.

In short, academies work. They work for communities, they work for teachers and headteachers and most importantly they work...

THE LORD MAYOR: The red light is on, Councillor Cohen, will you please make your final point.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Most importantly they work for the children that attend them but this administration has a real problem with accepting this. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor John Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor Blake seems to be of this misguided belief that she is the only person who can want good things for the children in this city and I have to say it is a little tiring to hear her preaching Council after Council that really she had her colleagues are the only people who have this belief. That is absolutely, completely, totally and utterly wrong.

We all share the same objectives and the same aspirations and to try and claim them as your own I believe is rather foolish.

It is interesting, and we had a bit in the last White Paper about how short some people's memories are, and I appreciate you have got a lot of new members on your Labour Benches who do not quite understand and clearly have not bothered to research things, but how on earth you can talk about an inheritance in education is beyond me. It was not the last administration who lost control of the Education function of this Council. It was not a Conservative or Lib Dem Government who sent a Minister here to this city to the Banqueting Hall to publicly humiliate the Leader of Council and, indeed, the entire Council, by telling every headteacher in the city in the Banqueting Hall, one Estelle Morris, that the Education function had been taken away from Leeds City Council. That was a Labour administration. That was a Labour administration who had that...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: The Romans were not very good either, John.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Do you know who the person in Education was at the time? One of the major culprits? Your Leader. He had got the Educational portfolio shortly before, he was one of the people responsible for that. At the end of the day, because of political interference, a Labour Minister was sent from London up here...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: That was 20 years ago.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: It was not 20 years ago, sent from London up here to take Education away from this city because you people could not manage it. It is only this last year, under a process that we started off, that the Education function has fully returned back to the control in this city.

There are some of my colleagues, JL Carter being one of them, who said. "Do you think it is the right decision to bring Education back wholly into the city? Education Leeds has done some good work, should we not allow it to continue?" but the consensus round the Cabinet table was no, we would bring it back in house as far as we were concerned. We will see whether that was a mistake or not. I sincerely hope that it was not but Councillor Blake is not the only person in this Council who believes that young people deserve a decent future – we do.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Bring back Paddy Crotty.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb to sum up.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The response from the administration was not surprising but it was still disappointing, nonetheless. Judith and Jane and the other members opposite that I have worked with on the Children's Trust

Board I hope would testify to my passion and commitment for young people in this city and yes, I have tried to work closely with them on the Children's Trust Board and in the social care side of Children's Services we totally support what they are doing and the work they have done. That has been going on since we were in administration, the things that Councillor Golton set up which Councillor Blake quite rightly carried on are bearing fruit and we are making progress and we support that.

The problem is, when people disagree and challenge you, you do not want to listen and you do not want to know. The difference between us, as someone who is actually an employer and while you are talking about things I am doing them in the real world, in the last 18 months I have battled and battled to fill three positions which I was determined to go to NEET young people in this city. I was determined and it has taken 18 months to find suitable people that could come and stay in work. When I was doing the interview process I had a young man that lived three miles away and, of course, the job market is open to the entirety of Europe. There was a young man who could not come to the interview because there was not a bus. I wanted him to come at eleven o'clock in the morning and there was not a bus for an hour either side of it, so he rang up and said, "I am sorry, I cannot come." On the same day a young man from Czechoslovakia rang up and was prepared to fly from Czechoslovakia to Walton in West Yorkshire just to attend an interview. That is the difference, that is what our young people are competing against and our schools are not giving them what they need.

I welcome the talk of an academy for shop workers. Some members may not know, I started my life in the retail sector in the city centre. When I left school at 16...

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Wrong academy.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Wrong sort of academy.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: When I left school at 16 and worked on Burger King in Briggate for £2.60 an hour and my job for three months was to sweep the floor every day for eight hours, and I got promoted after about a year to wiping tables, what that builds up in you is crucial. Our young people are not getting those jobs any more and we are not giving them the skills.

It is Judith that does not know what is going on. She does not know that in her department they are paying a consultant £800 a day. I do not think she knows what is going on with the arrangements of paying people into private companies and we have the list here of them. I think Judith has not got a grip of what is going on in her department and she needs to sort it out.

Employers and universities have lost all confidence in the exam system. The fiasco of this summer has highlighted the problems and why reform is so essential and Dan Cohen hit the nail right on the head. It is their ideological opposition to academies which is holding things back. The interventions I am talking about is to set schools free, to give them the leadership and I absolutely agree with you, Councillor Bentley, that is the sentiment I was going for.

We have changed "satisfactory", that has gone in the terms of Ofsted to "not good enough". If you were to rate Judith Blake's performance on education, you might say it is satisfactory – I would say it is not good enough. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I am calling for a vote on the first amendment in the name of Councillor Blake, please. *(A vote was taken)* The first amendment is CARRIED.

I am calling for a vote on the second amendment in the name of Councillor Bentley. *(A vote was taken)* The motion is LOST.

Therefore the amendment in the name of Councillor Blake becomes the substantive motion. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

Right, that brings us to the end of the meeting. Thank you very much for your attendance and a safe journey home.

*(The meeting closed at 7.30 pm)*