

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday, 1st April, 2015

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC HALL,
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR
(COUNCILLOR D CONGREVE)

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 1ST APRIL 2015

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon everyone and welcome to today's Council meeting. Can I ask Members to ensure that their mobile phones are switched off, and their computers, or at least to silent. Just to remind everyone that today's meeting will be webcast.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: I have a number of announcements. There are a number of Councillors standing down this time, and just to name them we have Les Carter, who was elected as a Conservative Councillor in 1973 representing the old Cookridge and Weetwood ward, which changed to Cookridge between 1980 and 2003, then Adel and Wharfedale through to the present day. Les was Lord Mayor in 1989 to 1990.

Ted Hanley. Ted was elected as a Labour Councillor in 2003 for the Bramley and Stanningley ward; Joseph Marjoram. Joe was elected in 2008 for the Calverley and Farsley ward; Katherine Mitchell. Katherine was elected as a Labour Councillor in 2011 for Temple Newsam Ward; and Vonnice Morgan. Vonnice was elected as Labour Councillor in 2007 for Killingbeck and Seacroft ward.

I would also like to take this opportunity of thanking George Mudie, MP, who will be retiring this year. Prior to being a Member of Parliament for Leeds East, George was a Leeds City Councillor from 1971 and was, of course, Leader of Leeds City Council from 1980 to 1989.

It is with deep regret that I inform you that Victor Watson CBE DL passed away peacefully on 25th February. Victor, as many of you will know, was presented with the Leeds Award in October 2013 for his outstanding achievements, both professional and charitable, over many years. I will be attending a public memorial service at Leeds Minister on Thursday, 23rd April at 11.00am.

It is with great sadness I also have to inform you of the recent death of Honorary Alderman Heather Gardiner, who passed away on Sunday, 15th March. Her funeral was held on 27th March. Heather served as a Conservative Councillor from 1977 to 1996. Can I ask you to please stand for a minute's silence?

(Silent tribute)

ITEM 1 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 25th FEBRUARY 2015

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. We now move to the Minutes of the meeting held on 25th February. Councillor Nash.

COUNCILLOR NASH: My Lord Mayor, I move that the Minutes held on 25th February be approved.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 2 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE LORD MAYOR: Declarations of Interest. Do Members have any declarations of interest? No.

ITEM 3 - COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Communications.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: None, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I now invite Members to address Council in respect of the recent OFSTED Report. Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you. Can I thank you, Lord Mayor, for the opportunity to update Council on the outcome of the recent OFSTED inspection of our Children's Safeguarding Services. I am delighted to inform Council that over a five year period we have transformed our service from "inadequate", from a service found in 2009 not to be adequately safeguarding children, to a service rated as "good" across the board with an "outstanding" judgment for leadership, management and governance. *(Applause)*

Furthermore, we are the only Core City out of seven inspected to date to achieve a "good" rating for our service.

Can I first of all pay tribute to the leadership of Councillor Wakefield and our administration for holding their nerve and, in the toughest financial climate we have ever faced, for providing, to quote OFSTED, "ongoing investment in Children's Services despite the challenging financial context." *(hear, hear) (Applause)*

We have been on an incredible journey rebuilding the entire service layer upon layer, developing a vision for the whole city, putting children and young people at the heart of everything we do. I would like through you to extend our sincere appreciation for the extraordinary contribution of Nigel Richardson and his team, and we have several of them here today *(Applause)* for "creating an environment" – and I am quoting directly here – "where great social work can flourish"; to recognise also the phenomenal dedication of our tenacious staff, those on the front line every single day, and also to our inspiring young people at the centre of the inspection, a huge thank you.

I would like to pay tribute to all elected Members who have contributed so much from all possible areas of Council. Please, I urge you, read the report to see where all of your work has been recognised and, of course, I want to pay tribute to all of our partners across the city who have made this progress possible.

I would like to also quote from a letter we received from Lord Laming who of course, as you will recall, led the Victoria Climbié enquiry. He ended his letter saying:

“The City of Leeds is now pioneering standards of service that raise the bar for all other service providers. I have been thrilled by reading this report and I wish you all well and all continued success in this important work.”

Lord Mayor, this is a significant step in our journey. We know we still have much to do. There is no room for any complacency from any of us. The challenges remain immense.

Could I ask all of Council to join me and to show their appreciation for the hard work, dedication and passion of all our staff and everyone involved for this phenomenal achievement. (*Standing ovation*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this matter and can I thank Councillor Blake for her comments. For too long we have lived as a Council under the shadow of being deemed not good enough at looking after our vulnerable children. The problems are deep rooted. There will be time for political ding-dong later on, I am sure; this is not the time. I think it is a cause for great celebration. For those who have not read the report yet, it is fantastic reading. It is good news all round. I certainly add my tribute to those that Councillor Blake has paid.

I think it would be wrong not to mention those in the previous administration such as Councillor Golton and our Leader, Councillor Carter, who took some very difficult decisions when we were found wanting and started the process. To make one slightly political point, the administration have stuck to the plan and stuck to the course that was set then and it does show the benefits of sticking to a long-term plan (*laughter*) whether economic or not.

Lord Mayor, I would like to add the thanks of our Group to Nigel Richardson. He often refers to me as his harshest critic. It may well be the case but it is part of our job to keep people on their toes. We will continue to challenge where we need to, we will continue to scrutinise where we need to but one thing I think everyone will agree we have never done, we do make points, we do hold you to account but we do not take specific issues and try and beat you over the head with them and I think it is important that whatever we do, we try and be constructive.

I want to pay particular tribute to Councillor Judith Chapman. The Scrutiny Board was given an exemplary review in the report and Councillor Chapman's leadership on that Scrutiny Board has been exceptional. The contribution of all Members from all parties and those independent Members has been absolutely crucial in helping to shape the agenda for Children's Service and I think, while we are going to gain an incredible Lord Mayor next year, we are going to lose a fantastic Scrutiny Chair and I think she deserves all of our thanks for the work that she has done with the Board.

Lord Mayor, the final thing I want to do is to thank the social work staff in our city. They do the most incredibly difficult job in the most exceptionally challenging

circumstances. They are damned if they do; they are damned if they don't. They have the most horrible decisions to take that have profound impacts on people's lives and under the leadership of Nigel and his team we have seen our social workers grow in number, our recruitment has improved, our retention has improved and they are doing a magnificent job. They deserve every ounce of our gratitude for the work that they have done.

Lord Mayor, we must not rest on our laurels. In this case "good" can never been good enough. It is fantastic progress but we have to keep working. We will keep doing our bit to keep you under pressure to make sure you are doing your job, but at this point I think we all have to say what a marvellous job, well done, thank you to all of the staff and let us celebrate. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Chapman.

COUNCILLOR CHAPMAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would also like to welcome this report and congratulate all staff across Children's Services whose hard work has now been validated by OFSTED. I would also like to thank all Members of the Children and Family Scrutiny Board. Their dedication and enthusiasm has been invaluable in my time as Scrutiny Chair, providing a first rate Scrutiny function that I am pleased to see was noted by OFSTED in their report at paragraph 162 where they said:

"Scrutiny activity and oversight of Children's Services is impressive, with strong prioritisation and a comprehensive understanding of the needs of children, young people and their families."

The thanks go not only to the Board but for every single person that has been involved. I think it would be wrong of me not to give thanks to my Scrutiny Officer, Sandra Pentelow, who has made the journey very, very smooth for me. Without her I do not think we would have got such a wonderful result. I know Sandra is not in the room but if you see her just say thank you on my part.

Next year as Lord Mayor I will, of course, be unable to continue as Chair and I wish the very best to whoever takes over my role and I will sure they will keep a close eye on Children's Services in Leeds. I am content that the safeguarding is on the right track and while there always remains room for improvement and growth, I am confident that the children of this city will continue to be served well by Children's Services. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gettings.

COUNCILLOR GETTINGS: Lord Mayor, the MBI Group is delighted with the OFSTED report and its achievements of Children's Services. What a difference from the real concerns being expressed by Children's Scrutiny some seven years ago. How encouraging, following the disaster in Rotherham, to feel confident that Leeds is in a strong position to deal with problems as they arise.

From attending the OFSTED feedback sessions held at the Headingley Centre for Children's Services Partners, I was moved, excited and motivated by the views expressed and even more impressed by the universal excitement and desire to do even better.

The clear focus presented by our Director, Nigel Richardson, has played an important part in moving these things forward. His repeated focus given to all our partners and officers, whilst we continue to listen to the voices of young people and whilst we do not deviate from genuinely believing that every child does matter, we were moved from “good” to “outstanding” or, as Nigel Richardson says, from “good” to “great”.

The MBI, Lord Mayor, congratulates Children’s Services. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would also like to offer the Green Group’s congratulations to all concerned in gaining an overall “good” rating on the Inspector’s report and particularly the “outstanding” rating given on the leadership, management and governance of our Children’s Services.

One area of the report that does concern me is where the Inspector mentions under “Areas for improvement” that front line managers and staff need to fully understand the capability of the electronic recording system in order for them to produce reports that help them to effectively understand their performance. I hope that all concerned will now be given training to help them to produce improvement in the quality of services offered to children and their families.

I remember back in 2009 when, after an unannounced inspection, the Inspector found that our Children’s Services did not adequately safeguard children and when I questioned this I was told that when files were inspected some cases had not been signed off and that some of our social service practitioners were not following what the Council’s practice was for dealing with cases.

However, we have come a long way since then. As this report states:

“There have been significant improvements in every part of the Local authority’s arrangements for safeguarding children and young people. Risk and harm are responded to in a timely, assured and well co-ordinated way”

which means we have, as I have said, things have changed a lot since then but, there again, they needed to.

Though this is a good report we must not rest on our laurels as it only takes one report not followed up properly and children not seen as regularly as they should be that could lead to another Baby Peter. However, I would say thanks to all the staff and everybody. They have got a “good” rating now and I think we have got to go on and try to get “outstanding” in everything next time. Thank you. (*Applause*)

ITEM 4 - DEPUTATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. We now move on to Deputations. Chief Executive.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Yes, Lord Mayor, there are two Deputations: the first deputation regarding private sector housing and letting agencies; and the second from the Association of South Horsforth Residents regarding saving Leeds Green Belt.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nash.

COUNCILLOR NASH: My Lord Mayor, I move that both deputations be received.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

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

DEPUTATION ONE – REGARDING PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING
AND LETTING AGENCIES.

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, my name is Ian Dalton. To my right is Gary Kay and to my left is Katy Johnstone.

In the last 15 years the number of people renting in the private sector has doubled across the UK to 8.3 million, with projections forecasting this to increase by a million in the next five years, sending rents up by a further 25% while wages stay still or drop and living standards have plummeted.

Nationally, the housing market might seem healthy; 65% of homes are still owner occupied and homes are still being sold, but to who? In 2012, 85% of prime property purchases were with overseas money and in 2013 40% of purchases were completed with cash. In other words, it is not ordinary people who are buying homes in which to raise a family, it is the wealthy and the super wealthy.

There is a chronic and drastic shortage of affordable homes with a staggering total of 1.7 million people on social housing waiting lists in England – that is one in twelve families. In Leeds over 20,000 families are waiting for a decent affordable home to live in. In 29 of the 30 years leading up to 1978, Local Councils built more than 90,000 homes per year, but from that point neo-liberalism ate into the idea that Councils should provide homes for local populations. By 1999 only 50 homes were built by Councils and 19,000 by housing associations. This is simply unacceptable. It goes hand in hand with creating more demand in the private sector and ramping up rents to make fortunes for profit hungry landlords and letting agents.

The private rented sector is not an easy option for most. Increasing competition due to a lack of affordable options has given landlords and letting agencies the power and taken it out of our hands.

The problem has become so extreme that figures from last year highlighted that 80,000 young people nationally experienced homelessness across the UK.

These figures paint a stark human reality to the experiences of ordinary working class people across the UK, but in this city as well. It is meaning overcrowding in cramped conditions with poor and unsafe housing, undoubtedly leading to poor health.

Some Councils, have begun necessary action to tackle this, such as in Newham, Southampton and Liverpool setting up compulsory licensing schemes to ensure certain standards. This is a welcome change of pace in Local Government housing policy. However, it simply is not enough. We need to see the enforcement of rent control on private landlords in order to cap rents at affordable rates, not just rent rises.

This Deputation, organised by the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition, is calling upon Leeds City Council to take a similar step. Set up a Council run not for profit letting agency to scrap administration fees levied at tenants by letting agents. It could also demand landlords enforce minimum standards for properties and set a guidance as to what an affordable rent would be. These things should be decided amongst tenants associations, local trade unions, and elected Councillors. Such a scheme has been costed as viable to do so by several university students unions, including York University. If they can do it, why can't the second biggest Local Authority in the country?

This council would set a standard high for the rest of the country and could provide much needed security and safety to thousands of families across Leeds.

We would not stop there however. Building Council housing would provide a more secure solution to some of those issues, yet the 388 homes planned to be built by the Council and over a thousand being refurbished falls far short of what is necessary for the 2,000 people on the Council House waiting list.

The Council should seek to embark on a huge Council house building programme as a long term solution to the housing crisis, utilising reserves but also demanding finance from the Government in order to do so. This should be done in co-ordination with UCATT and other construction unions, employing construction workers on the proper rate for the job and not exploiting vicious umbrella companies that pass employers tax on to workers, resulting in a loss of £30 every week. These companies also blatantly avoid tax, resulting in an estimated loss of £3,800 per year for a single worker.

TUSC supporters and everyone who has signed this petition is calling upon Leeds City Council to undertake these steps. The Council might look upon them as bold proposals but they are. It is a direct challenge to the cartel-like landlords and letting agents who control the market in this city and nationally. To support and immediately see the beginnings of these demands would send a shiver down their spines whilst simultaneously improving the lives of thousands in this city and working people nationally are watching you. We urge you to take such bold steps. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nash

COUNCILLOR NASH: My Lord Mayor, I move that this matter be referred to the Director of Environment and Housing for consideration in consultation with the relevant Executive Member.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* That is 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.

DEPUTATION TWO – ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH HORSFORTH RESIDENTS
REGARDING SAVING LEEDS GREEN BELT

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 J KAUFMAN: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, we are grateful for this opportunity to address the City Council. My name is Joel Kaufman and my colleague with me here is David Quick. We are both long-standing residents of south Horsforth, living in Calverley Lane, an ancient highway and settlement near to the Packhorse Bridge crossing the River Aire to Rodley. The lane has formed part of an important trading route over the last 500 years, between Bradford and York, originally crossing the river at a natural ford which gave rise to the name of the settlement - Horse Ford.

As picturesque as this lush valley still remains in places between the suburban sprawl, we now find ourselves adjacent to a large new housing development, Horsforth Vale, and the potential development of protected Green Belt immediately to our north. In addition we also face the prospect of further development to the east, on land currently occupied by Leeds City College, and to the west on land by Rawdon Crematorium. The large area of agricultural land to the north of Calverley Lane represents a much valued community asset in that the farmer cultivates pick-your-own strawberries, raspberries and asparagus which are sold directly to the public who attend in their thousands with their families. The area includes small strands of woodland and natural waterways and a wide diversity of wildlife and it offers residents of north-west Leeds a treasured rural retreat within a densely populated part of the city.

We are here today not to advertise the idyllic rural scenes of a beautiful Yorkshire that can still be found around the suburbs of Leeds in which we live, but instead we are here today to ask for your guidance and support for how it can be kept that way.

We stand in front of you today as proud Leeds residents with only the wellbeing, love of the land that we live on and its safeguarding for our future generations within our hearts.

There are already huge levels of public opposition at the prospect of losing our Green Belt land forever to meet current housing targets. Public meetings are already happening across all corners of Leeds in community centres, packed out church halls and in people's homes. Social media is on fire with people outraged at the prospect of being further squashed into end-to-end housing estates that destroy the soul of the villages in which they live.

The suburbs that still have these vital green lungs which separate out the distinctions between the communities are now fighting to save them. The industrialised inner cities are crying out for investment and the affordable urban regeneration that they deserve.

As such, we request a clear understanding from you, our representatives, of the level of objections that you require to be raised to save Leeds's Green Belt during the forthcoming public consultation. We would like to know if there is a transparent and quantifiable number of objections that needs to be reached.

We want to know if there is a real democratic process in place in which the committee members will cap the housing target to re-plan the development locations on to only brown field sites, to respect the requests of the people whom they are appointed to represent and protect the Green Belt across our beautiful city.

We thank you for your time today and we hope we have your support and look forward to hearing your considered responses. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nash

COUNCILLOR NASH: My Lord Mayor, I move that this matter be referred to the Director of City Development for consideration in consultation with the relevant Executive Member.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I am delighted to second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. (*A vote was taken*) That is 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.

ITEM 5 – REPORT ON THE OUTER NORTH WEST COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to the report of the Outer North West Community Committee. Councillor Wadsworth.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The start of the year on the Community Committee brought in a new structure of business meetings and community meetings and some Members found this a little stressful – didn't they, Councillor Carter? Councillor Carter does enjoy the Community Committees so much but he was not keen on the change of the type of meetings.

Officers worked hard to get the first workshop in place on domestic violence and that was chaired by Councillor Anderson and after that meeting there was a view taken that the workshops needed to be completely separate – separate day sometimes, separate time and a separate venue. Two further workshops have taken place, one on social isolation chaired by Councillor Graham Latty and one on engagement with children and young people which took place at Trinity University in Horsforth. I have to really thank Trinity for the day that they gave us there. It was a super day, there

was a lot of engagement with Councillors and young people, they gave a super lunch which, unfortunately, I was not able to take part in because I was somewhere else, and then there was a session afterwards which found nine out of the twelve Councillors sitting down on the floor with groups of young people working out how they wanted money spending. I think there are some pictures on Facebook about that and they are really worth seeing, because seeing nine out of twelve Councillors sitting down with young people really engaging was something that really captured it and I have to really pay tribute to the Area Officers who made that happen, and Councillor Pat Latty who chairs the Children's sub-group.

On the part of the sub-groups, the sub-groups align with the Community Champions, so Councillor Barry Anderson chairs the Environment and Community Safety sub-group; Councillor Pat Latty chairs the Children's sub-group; Councillor Graham Latty the Health sub-group; Employment and Skills is chaired by Councillor Ryk Downes; and Highways and Transportation is chaired by Councillor Cleasby.

All the Chairs do a big job. They make my life an awful lot easier by chairing sub-groups and going to Champion meetings. Without them my life would be an awful lot harder and, of course, Councillor Anderson has the Street Scene delegation which takes up a lot of time. I know that his sub-group Members do attend a lot of meetings and, of course, Councillor Pat Latty has the Youth Fund and she executes that very efficiently and I think they have spent all their money this year and have spent their money quite in advance of the end of the year.

Councillor Graham Latty does Health and Adult Social Care and clearly that is a big thing in the Outer North West. Employment and Skills is chaired by Councillor Downes and he does that very well as well; and Councillor Cleasby has the job of dealing with First Bus and the A65 corridor as well as the A660 corridor, which does give him challenging conversations with the bus company and Highways. I cannot praise the Champions enough.

Two years ago when I took over the Chairmanship, the underspend on funding was around a quarter of a million pounds.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: It was, I noticed that.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: It is not any more though, you will have noticed that.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: I did know that too, yes.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Since then, due to my good Chairmanship, I have to say, it has been reduced to £5,462, so you make a decision as to whether I have done a good job but I think value for money I have spent a lot of money. I have to say on the money, the money has been spent very wisely as well. Members have not gone out and spent it rashly, they have looked at where the funding needs to go and delivered that funding.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Well done.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Some wards, including my own ward, because the pots are spread equally across the four wards and including my own ward we have

overspent, so we have had to borrow from other wards, which will remain nameless, but that will be paid back in the next year.

Moving on to Facebook...

THE LORD MAYOR: Red light, Councillor Wadsworth, thank you. Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I formally second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking mainly in my role as lead on Environment and Community Safety but I will be referring to something outwith of that portfolio.

Just to comment upon the good working relationships we have with the Members that we have got here. We do work exceptionally cohesively together and we all equally argue for each other whenever we get an opportunity. We do not start saying one ward is better than the other; we do try as best we can.

This equally goes for the officers. The officers who have been working with us from the various services have done their best to meet with our needs and our requests and we have an excellent working relationship with them, but we do have some concerns as to how our views are being escalated back up into the centre and how they are being represented. We make arguments at a local level, they then go into the Minutes but it is what happens to them after that. We are unclear as to what actually happens to the information and the comments we make. Do they end up on the doorsteps of the Executive Members or do they end up with the Executive Director? At this stage we are not clear so maybe that is one thing that we could learn to move forward on.

As has already been remarked upon, we started off the year by looking at domestic violence and that has moved on tremendously since then. I think there has been a greater overall understanding of the issue and how it is not just certain parts that are the victims of domestic violence, that this is a city-wide issue that has to be looked into.

The one area that I want to mention just now that was not directly within my remit was the work that we did on the Otley CAB. That was brought to us and through the good offices of Councillor Grahame we were able to keep the debate going, but we do certainly have concerns that we were never, ever approached by Council officers to explain that this was on the horizon. It was only because residents brought it to our attention. It was not brought to our attention via the officers, so we have got to maybe ask the question what protocols can be put in place to bring issues like this to CAB in the future.

Other things that we would look to try and see if we can get the administration to work better with us is on brown bin collections. This is equally true in this one and also in the Outer North East Area as well. We would argue that we need more brown bin collections. In our area Jason Singh was still collecting leaves in January and he has been working flat out, so if he is needing to do it, so are the other people who have got gardens and that, they need to be able to do it as well.

We have also got concerns over the bulky waste collection...

THE LORD MAYOR: Red light, Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: ...but overall what we would say is we are working well together. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pat Latty.

COUNCILLOR P LATTY: Lord Mayor, I am delighted to be able to speak about the workshop which actually Councillor Wadsworth has said many things about my speech here, so I am afraid you will have to hear some of them again about the Children's Services and Family Health sub-group of which I am the Chairman.

At the end of January we held a workshop at Trinity University. Some 63 young people between the ages of seven and 17 came along and various activities in the morning were organised for them, and then after the morning we had a question and answer sessions with the ward Councillors which seemed to go down very well indeed, and where they asked some very probing questions. We all had lunch, paid for by the four Councillors on the sub-committee, in the university dining room. After lunch we all split into groups, each with a couple of Councillors and looked at the question of how we would like to spend the Youth Activity Fund for the coming year.

If you had seen our Councillors squatting on the floor amidst a crowd of youngsters it would have opened your eyes. Mind you, it took Graham all his time to get up again! (*laughter*) It was really interesting to see how sensibly they approached this task and the serious consideration they gave to it – I am talking about the children now, not the Councillors!

Finally, there was a tour of the university to give them a taste of what the future could hold for them. The next step will be to form a Panel with some of these young people as Members to help select the activities that we will be supporting and financing. All in all it was a very good way of involving the young people in the planning of how to best use the money available and we picked up a lot of good ideas at the same time.

In closing, Lord Mayor, I would like to say a thank you to the officers of the Community Committee who worked so hard to make this wonderful event possible. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cleasby.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Council, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Pat Latty on her efforts leading to the successful day that now two Councillors have already spoken about, not only for our children but for our university. I am aware of the efforts by Trinity University to engage with my community which actually is its community. Usually these are with Horsforth School; now they can be proud to have reached down the age scale to our primary aged children.

Lord Mayor, if you will pardon the pun, a pat on the back to everyone! (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I cannot let this opportunity pass without mentioning the role of the Committee that we have taken in questioning Council officers and in particular I think the future of Council advice services provided by the CAB.

As you may know, the City Council's decision to move to a phoned-based system has meant that the CAB has had to close a lot of the local officers – I think in Morley and Pudsey – and the Committee's close questioning of Council officers showed how flawed the argument was on that particular case and it has meant, I think, that that pressure has ensured that certainly within some areas a local service has remained, albeit a truncated one. I think it is a good example of how enthusiastic local Members can make a real difference. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Yes, a surprise addition! A pleasant surprise addition, I hope! Thank you, Lord Mayor, and I am delighted to have this opportunity to pay tribute to the work that the Outer North West Community Committee do – actually the second best Outer Community Committee that there is in the city, of course, after the Outer North East Community Committee where I have the privilege of sitting under the excellent chairmanship of Councillor Wilkinson here.

I want to pay particular tribute to my colleague Councillor Anderson, who does a phenomenal job particularly in ensuring in terms of the Environmental work across the Outer North West is paid particular heed to and his comments, of course, are exactly right about the need for more brown bin collections. There can scarcely be a surgery I carry out across our area where it is not a regular issue that is raised and I am sure therefore our areas being so similar it is of no surprise to me that it is something that is raised with you, Councillor Anderson. It is just disappointing that it does not seem to be paid full heed of across the way. I know Councillor Flynn has done some amazing work in his first year. Councillor Les Carter, you are going to be leaving a huge void – a huge void – that I am sure Caroline, with the support of local residents will ably fill. She might not quite fill the void but I am sure her tremendous efforts will go some way towards that.

What was really good to hear about in the report today was that your Area Committee – sorry, Community Committee (Heaven forfend we call them Area Committees) your Community Committee was not just satisfied with the regular meetings that were scheduled, you were going over, above and beyond that by the regular workshops that you have been holding.

There is no question across the city that social isolation is a real problem in our communities. Councillor Harrand gave a phenomenal speech some years ago and he started off to me with a really moving phrase and a really important phrase. He said the key to avoiding social isolation is the one to the front door, and how true that is and what is so impressive is what this Community Committee, similar to our own Community Committee, the work you do with local stakeholder organisations to make sure that there are events and activities, schemes that people can access in a real and

meaningful way to get out there and try to deal with social isolation which, as I say, is real issue across our whole city.

It was also good to see that we are doing similar work in terms of the Youth Activity Fund, really engaging with young people, not telling young people how we are going to be spending money that is set aside for them but engaging with them in a real meaningful way. For example, in Alwoodley we met with – I see my red light, I would not dream of going further. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Cohen. Councillor Lamb.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to join Councillor Cohen in paying tribute to the work of the North West Outer Community Committee. Again, I second the fact that it is the second best Community Committee in the city.

I particularly want to pick on, having been name-checked by Councillor Anderson and particularly around the brown bin issue, it is a crucial issue I am sure across all Community Committees but particularly in the Outer areas. We have a situation in the village I live in, Walton, where we have some residents who rang the Council to say they had not had their brown bins collected for a fortnight and it turned out the Council said, “Well, you do not have brown bins there.” Actually, we do but the Council did not have them on record. There is an awful lot of work to do on the brown bin collections and I certainly applaud the work that the North West Outer have done on that. We will certainly be picking that up and I hope the Council will take that on board and carry it forward.

One other issue I wanted to pick up while I had the opportunity which, again, I am sure affects all Community Committees, is around dementia. I do have a question later and a comment, but it looks unlikely that we will get there today so it seems timely to take the opportunity here instead, Lord Mayor.

We have an ambition in the Elmet and Rothwell constituency and in my ward in Wetherby, to become the first dementia friendly constituency in the UK. We have done a great deal of work. Recently we had a meeting with the CCG, some local residents who are affected by dementia, local GPs and we were pleased to welcome Jeremy Hunt, the Secretary of State for Health, to our area.

Lord Mayor, all of those people concurred, including the CCG, the voluntary sector, local residents for a particular constituent who happens to live 200 yards from the North Yorkshire boundary and is a wonderful carer to his wife. He would have a much better service if he lived 201 yards up the road because what everyone agreed at that meeting was the Leeds City Council is not doing its bit. They are not putting the same kind of services in that they are in North Yorkshire, they are not putting the same level of support to carers as in North Yorkshire and they are not putting the same sort of crisis response out. Councillor Mulherin is shaking her head but, Lord Mayor, she has failed to respond to those complaints. There are a number of people who have contacted and she has ignored the questions, ignored them.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: I have actually written back to your constituent, Councillor Lamb. That is not true.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: I am sure the same sort of issues are being felt in the North West Outer Community Committee, Lord Mayor, but I am pleased to be able to take this opportunity to raise them now. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: I just want to take this opportunity... I am sorry, am I interrupting things?

COUNCILLOR NASH: My Lord Mayor, I do not know what Standing Order it is but the Opposition Party are not playing the game. This was not agreed at the Whips' meeting. All this is just persiflage and we will not get through the Executive Minutes.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin, pardon?

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Point of personal explanation, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Point of order? Personal explanation.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Just to say that it is simply not true that I have not responded. The situation was raised by the local MP and I responded to the constituent directly so that is just simply not true. I sent a full list of all of the services that were available for dementia sufferers and their carers in the Wetherby area both from the Leeds side of the border and from North Yorkshire. (*Applause*)

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Withdraw it, Councillor Lamb. It is not true.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Apologise.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Withdraw that.

THE LORD MAYOR: We are going back to the agenda. Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you. I am assuming that time does not come off my three minutes. I just wanted to take the opportunity to begin with, Lord Mayor, to pay tribute to all those Members who are standing down at this election. Every Member who is elected to this Chamber, every Councillor, tries to do the best for their ward, I think they have the best intentions at heart and the intentions of the city, so I wanted to say a quick thank you to them on behalf of myself and the residents of the Harewood ward.

I also want to pay tribute to the superbly chaired committee of Councillor Wadsworth. He has mentioned a few interesting issues which I wanted to pick up on. Much like the Outer North East, which is chaired by Councillor Wilkinson – brilliantly chaired, as my colleague Councillor Cohen has just said – Councillor Wilkinson chairs a very cohesive committee where we always try and encourage good relationships and I know that is something that Councillor Wadsworth and I have spoken about before and how you take that forward on every Area Committee – Community Committee, sorry, forgetting the recent change. Apologies, Mr Rogers.

Councillor Anderson also mentioned something on Back Bench Community Concerns, or rather how issues that are raised at Area Committee are then taken up by officers, and I have had a conversation with our own Whips about Back Bench Community Concerns and what happens to those issues. Many Members in this Chamber stand up, they make comments about Back Bench Community Concerns and there is no report that is ever produced, there is not necessarily ever a meeting that follows up with the Executive Board Member from that. It seems that it just gets talked about in this Chamber and becomes hot air afterwards. I wonder if that is something that the Whips might want to take up at their next meeting?

Going back to the issue of Community Committees, at our last Community Committee – and I know this came up with Councillor Wadsworth...

COUNCILLOR: Red light.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: I do not think it is.

THE LORD MAYOR: Just a moment, Councillor Robinson. Councillor Robinson has another minute, although the red light has come on, because of the interruptions. It is being timed but unfortunately the lighting is not as quick as the computer time.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: We are desperate to hear some more.

THE LORD MAYOR: Yes, I know, we all are. Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I accept their apology.
(laughter)

COUNCILLOR: Despite none was proffered.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: I just wanted to talk a little bit about dog fouling that was brought up as well I know at Councillor Wadsworth's committee. I have raised this with Councillor Dobson as well. I know it is something that he is very keen to see tackled across the city. I wonder if it is something that he can discuss with me following this Council meeting about (a) how we enforce greater action against those who are letting their dogs foul; (b) if we can increase the fines for those who are caught; and (c) what powers we have as residents in the city when we are bringing the cases towards officers' attention and how we can prosecute from there.

I know I have a little extra time, Lord Mayor, and there are a few other issues that I could discuss but I will respect my colleagues in the Chamber and sit down at this time. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Well timed, Councillor Robinson. Councillor Wadsworth to sum up.

COUNCILLOR NASH: I was going to move it now be put.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am sure that Councillor Dobson will take seriously brown bin collections and dog fouling because I do find that Councillor Dobson is very receptive to all issues regarding that department.
(interruption)

The CAB was a piece of work that came to us unexpectedly and I think it was very useful that we did a piece of work around that and I think that some changes did take place, but I think it would have been much more helpful if that had come via officers rather than come via members of the public because it did seem that we were a little unprepared at the beginning with that, but I think it was a useful piece of work which has been useful in the long term.

Youth Engagement Workshop, everybody has spoken about that. I just think it endorses how much everybody enjoyed it and how much everybody found it useful. Just moving back to Facebook, because that is where I left at the beginning, we were very slow to take Facebook up but, after a lot of discussion and conversations around that, we did decide to go on with Facebook and the Area team very diligently sent me a chart this morning to say that we are still the lowest, we are at 1,483 reaches, I believe is the word you are supposed to use, which does not actually compete with the Outer East in any way at all, they are at 14,279 reaches, but we are moving on. I am led to believe that there have been an awful lot of reaches this last week so, Outer East, we are coming after you but we have got a good way to go on Facebook.

Those are the good bits. There are a number of things that we are disappointed about. One, obviously, is the reduction in Wellbeing spend. We do understand that everybody has to take their part in this but there is quite a lot of waste, we feel, at the top of the service. The Area Officers in Horsforth, I cannot feel for them more, they do an extensive job and help me out significantly and work very hard, but at the top end we do feel that there are cuts that could be made there and that have not been made there that should have been made there, and Central Communications, that really does not work for Outer North West. We just do not get Central Communications coming and asking us for press releases, so that just needs to be helped with there.

I hope that Councillor Gruen will address those in his management of the portfolio because I know that he wants to get Communications working much better and I hope that he can deal with some cuts more at the top than at the bottom because we are all in this together, of course. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I now call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED.

ITEM 6 – REPORT ON THE INNER NORTH EAST COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to the report of the Inner North East Community Committee. Councillor Hamilton.

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: My Lord Mayor, I would like to take this opportunity to update Council on the work of the Inner North East Leeds Community Committee over the last year.

I have been really pleased with the progress made to the way the Committee conducts its business. One of the main considerations was to improve the engagement with local people and to try and get more people to attend the committee meetings. Since the inaugural meeting in July, the committee has seen a significant increase in attendance with an average of over 70 people attending the meeting, including local residents, partners and representatives from the Third Sector. This increase in

attendance is as a result of our increased connectivity with local people and local organisations and the changes we have made to the committee meetings themselves.

We now have themed meetings around specific topics of interest to the local community. We have changed the format of the meetings to include greater public participation. We have introduced later starting times to fit around people's lives and we have introduced better publicity around the meetings and our activities. The themed workshop style committee meetings we have held so far have enabled elected Members and residents to explore a range of issues, including setting local priorities, employment in the Queenshill and Brackenwood estate, social isolation, setting the Wellbeing Fund and Community Committee priorities for 2015/16. My colleagues Councillor Hussain and Councillor Taylor will explain some of these themes in more detail in a short while.

Another important feature of the committee's increased connectivity with the local area has been as a result of increased communication. Since July we have established a Facebook page as a new means of communicating with partners, Third Sector organisations and local residents. The Facebook page currently has over 130-plus likes and over 200-plus items have been posted.

Looking forward, we will be looking to further develop the involvement of local communities in the decision making process by actively involving residents in themed Community Committee meetings and other engaging activity in the Inner North East Leeds. We will continue to work in partnership and support projects and programme of work that improves service delivery and continues to address local priorities.

Over to my colleagues. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Urry.

COUNCILLOR URRY: To second formally, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Taylor.

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, I would like to speak to the Minute on the Inner North East Community Committee. One of the pieces of joined up work undertaken by the committee in recent months has been around social isolation and links between health outcomes. Back in January we held a really informal workshop around social isolation and mental health involving a range of different partners, including Public Health and the North Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group. We learned that social isolation can be because of the reaction to a wide range of health and social issues and that affects people of all ages, not just older people as it is a common perception.

The workshop really helped our understanding of why people become socially isolated and how we can work together to identify these people who are locally isolated, to establish priorities about how their needs can be addressed.

One of the key focus areas around social isolation is unemployment amongst working age people. There are strong links between unemployment and low self esteem which can lead to mental health issues and people shutting themselves away from their community. I am pleased to say that the Inner North East Community Committee has

been working hard to target unemployment area. Councillor Hussain will speak in more details.

The mental health and social isolation workshop was the first innovative step of being able to understand the issues that lead to social isolation and to work with our partners to identify those people who are socially isolated or have a risk of becoming socially isolated. We are now using what we learned from it to work alongside and prioritise with the City Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy Development measures to tackle the problem in our area.

Lord Mayor, before I finish I would like to thank the officers in the Health department, the Exec Member and the Chair for Health Scrutiny for the brilliant work that has been happening around Health. In the past couple of years we have been in a challenge with Health and because of the findings at the moment we are really trying stability and without this group the Chair, Exec Member and the officers, we could not have done what we have done. I just want to thank them for the hard work that they are doing. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hussain.

COUNCILLOR G HUSSAIN: My Lord Mayor, I would also speak on the issue of the report on the Inner North East Community Committee. As has been mentioned by Councillor Hamilton and Councillor Taylor, I will be talking about employment.

Employment and skills training are big issues for most communities and I would like to speak about the work that Inner North East Community Committee has been doing to target affected communities and offer assistance in this area.

We have identified two estates in the area with particularly high rates of unemployment and large skill gaps, the Brackenwoods and Queenshills. In both cases over 50% of the working age people living on these estates are unemployed and in receipt of either Employment Support Allowance or Incapacity Benefit. Many of these claimants are unfit for work due to physical disability but a large proportion are as a result of having a mental health condition or the fact that they do not have any formal skills or training. This latter category makes up nearly a third of people aged 16 and over living on these estates.

In response to this situation the committee has set up an East North East Employment Board chaired by myself to oversee an action plan to target and address employment issues on these estates. Because it covers other committee areas as well, Councillor Ron Grahame for Inner East and Councillor Matthew Robinson from Outer North East are also represented on this Board

One of the initial findings of the Employment Board is that it is clear that more services are needed to help people living on the Queenshill and Brackenwood estates to prepare for work. That would be helping people to learn more workplace skills or have the job surgeries and job applications. As a result of the work of the Employment Board, we are currently working on setting up a focus group in each of the two estates to further connect with the local people and to establish what their priorities are. This is a really positive example of the work of the Community Committee and we are leading on the work towards local priorities, so also, like my colleagues, if I could thank the colleagues from the staff who have been helping and

researching this and the Councillors across the three areas who are working together on the employment issues. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was overwhelmed by my Conservative colleague's enthusiasm for Outer North West Community Committee and I did wonder if it was going to extend to Inner North West but apparently it has not done so, so on their behalf can I just raise a couple of issues which I think are relevant to all Area Committees and I am slightly surprised that Councillor Hamilton has not raised the issue of disparity of funding between Area Committees because, as we all know, certain Committees are in receipt of more Wellbeing money than other Committees. Obviously that makes a difference to the ability of that particular committee to undertake works and also it makes a difference to the notional devolution which has taken place to Area Committees because, as we know, though the Area Committees in theory have control over things like lettings of public halls and soon to be green parks and green spaces, the funding for that is kept centrally and the policy is central.

Can I pay tribute to Councillor Hamilton and, by extension, Councillor Bruce, because I am sure she is going to tell us all about it. It is really interesting for us Members on this side of the Chamber to know just how many Facebook hits there have been on the Area Committee websites. It is one of those things that I know several people on this side lie awake at night and worry about and as a consequence it is really nice to know that so many people are actually taking the trouble to click on our Facebook page and hopefully after today's discussions we will get even more of them.

Can I also, actually, seriously, pay tribute to Councillor Hamilton's efforts to increase public participation in her meetings. I think she has done sterling work. I have to be honest with you and say you would be a very brave resident who would refuse a direct invitation from Councillor Hamilton but all power to her elbow. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hamilton to sum up.

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: Councillor Campbell, all I can say is thank you. *(laughter)* I will not go into the Facebook but thank you.

Thank you to Councillor Hussain and Councillor Taylor for your important contributions to this report. I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of all elected Members - Councillors Dowson, Macniven, Urry, Councillor Charlwood and Councillor Sobel. I would also like to acknowledge the officers in the Inner North East Community Committee over the last twelve months. It has led to a significant improvement to the way the committee works and engages with the community.

As I mentioned earlier, Employment and Skills and social isolation have been identified as two of the main priorities in the Inner North East Leeds and therefore form that basis of two themed workshops community style meetings. Councillor Hussain has played an instrumental role in leading the development and research for the October Community Committee meeting around employment and skills in the

Queenshill and Brackenhill estates. This project is a work in progress but will serve to target those most in need of employment and skills advice and hopefully later translate into increased employment opportunity for people living in these estates.

January Community Committee, the Champion for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Taylor, led the development of the report which discussed issues of social isolation across the Inner North East Leeds. This report was produced in partnership with officers and Public Health and North Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group. This is a really important piece of work as social isolation and loneliness can only be the trigger for the negative outcome.

The Community Committee can play a key role in not only identifying people in need but also by helping to link people to the various different organisations that are set up to help people in this situation.

I would just like to end by saying I look forward to the future work of the Committee and to updating Council in due course. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: I now call for the vote. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

ITEM 7 – REPORT ON THE OUTER SOUTH COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to the report of the Outer South Community Committee. Councillor Bruce.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: My Lord Mayor, I would like to speak to the Annual Report of the Outer South Community Committee.

Times have been tough for many in Outer South and as the Government's cuts to Council budgets bite, many are suffering. Through our Community Committee we have sought to support people through the current climate and do our bit in keeping their spirits up and bringing everyone together.

Like many we have had to open food banks – a sad, sad reflection of life in Cameron and Clegg's Britain. We invested £4,000 to help set up food banks in all four wards. £1,000 has been spent this year on a new food bank in Rothwell. Funding paid for essential equipment to set up and manage the food bank, which is based at Temple Lawn Community Centre and soon to relocate to the fabulous Windmill Youth and Community Centre in the heart of Rothwell.

The Coalition Government tells us we are better off, we are all in this together. I say that the people in dire straits in Rothwell and Morley, tell it to them. People needing emergency food aid in 21st Century Britain – it is a disgrace.

In Outer South we have enthusiastically embraced the new Community Committees and are constantly seeking to work with key partners and residents with local action. We are tackling loneliness in our communities, we are helping people with disabilities find real jobs. We will be out at community events and galas – we really are in it all together.

The real heroes are not just the hardworking Council staff, and it is certainly not the Councillors. The real heroes are our community heroes (*hear, hear*) and every year we celebrate the contribution that volunteers make to their local communities at our annual awards ceremony, where we share the best ideas and work across Morley, Ardsley and Robin Hood and Rothwell. It is thrilling to see more than 100 community volunteers being celebrated and sharing what is best about our places and our people.

We celebrated the International Day of Older People by investing £2,000 in two events for some of the most important people in our community. Morley Elderly Action's event was about health and wellbeing, and Rothwell and District Live at Home Scheme had a health and wellbeing pamper day in Rothwell. Both events were well attended and there were more than 250 at the Rothwell pamper day. I was even persuaded to have a blood pressure check there and the verdict was good, luckily, so I am fighting fit for the election. (*hear, hear*)

We invested £8,000 to make sure local community groups could keep running fantastic events, such as the Rothwell May Day, the Carnival, Competitive Music Festival and the popular Christmas Fair, and £10,000 for the wonderful Morley Literature Festival that brings so many people to Morley.

Often it is the small things that make a difference. My daughter Esme's favourite is a thrilling, exciting spectacle on the River Dolphin in Rothwell, the traditional duck race run by the Rothwell Lions.

Morley Literature Festival is their annual week-long festival in October celebrating books, reading and writing. It has a broad-ranging programme and it includes author events, workshops, comedy, music and family shows. The festival draws in guests as esteemed as Will Self, Ian Rankin, Gavin Esler, Kate Adey and Barbara Taylor Bradford, to name just a few. I have even heard a rumour it is good enough to replace the Hay Festival! It is too late for April Fools now so it has to be true.

Food banks, tackling loneliness, helping create jobs for the disabled, inward investment, fun for families – just a few of the things we have achieved in Outer South. Long may it continue. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nagle.

COUNCILLOR NAGLE: I wish to formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dawson.

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on the work being done by the Community Committee in the Outer South to help people in financial difficulties.

The last few years have been tough for many, especially in South Leeds, Morley and Rothwell areas. Many people have faced falling incomes, rising prices and have found it difficult to make ends meet and some have turned for help from payday lenders and other sources that can make financial pressures even worse.

On the Outer South Community Committee we are aware of the increase in food banks and the financial pressures from zero hours contracts unlike, may I say, the Prime Minister who appeared to be woefully out of touch on these issues on television last week. A Debt Forum has now been established for South Leeds. The aim of this group is to bring organisations together to share intelligence and information on issues relating to debt advice, financial inclusion, financial literacy. The format follows similar forums already operating in East and West Leeds.

What are we trying to do? We are trying to promote the Credit Union to make it easier for people to join and manage their account. We are trying to promote savings, such as the Christmas savings account. We are providing a link to advice and employment support and other services such as food banks, furniture projects and working in secondary schools. We are working with Children's Centres and targeting mums who are the most likely group to be victims of high cost lending and illegal lending. We are providing basic debt first aid training for front line workers and community members, promoting existing debt support services in the area, Citizens Advice Bureau, Step Change and others.

Another project we are doing, we are developing money buddies. Money buddies will provide practical assistance to those in need whether this is helping people pay utility bills, claiming benefits, reducing debt payments, providing better sources of credit or understanding a personal budget. The plans for money buddies are at a very early stage but we have provided funding to deliver the project across the Outer South area. Initial training has started and the first money buddy will be recruited and start next week at the Morley One Stop Shop. In Rothwell the One Stop Centre has been confirmed as a venue for money buddies and we are still looking to confirm the venue for the Ardsley and Robin Hood ward.

Unlike the Prime Minister we know there is a problem and we are trying to help people who are struggling in hard times, and we are not pretending zero hour contracts are a good thing, and we know that people who are attending food banks because they are desperate, not because they have been more widely advertised, as David Cameron seems to think. Like him we are rolling our sleeves but, unlike him, we are actually helping people in need to recover their hope and their dignity. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Renshaw.

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak about the work of the Older Person's Working Group on the Outer South Committee, for which I am the Area Champion.

One of the main tasks for the group over the last few months has been the co-ordination of the Wellbeing packs for distribution within the Outer South area. Community Committees have again helped to fund the Wellbeing packs this winter, along with matched funding from the Public Health Locality Team and Housing Leeds Area Panel. These packs have been distributed to vulnerable adults and older people throughout the Outer South area by a range of organisations, including our brilliant Neighbourhood Networks and Integrated Health and Social Care teams. However GPs, Care and Repair, Trading Standards, Age UK, the British Red Cross Hospital to Home Service and the Fire Service have all played an important role in helping to distribute these packs to those who need them most, often identifying

adults in social isolation. It shows the great links that the Community Committee has made with other organisations and is an example of the kind of partnership working being undertaken to improve outcomes for local people.

The Wellbeing packs themselves are mainly handed to the most vulnerable people over the age of 65 and are a great comfort to the people who receive them. They contain items which help to keep people warm during the cold winter months, such as a blanket, thermal socks and gloves as well as plenty of really useful information about how to keep warm and who to approach for help and advice. These packs offer practical help and reassurance to people in their home at a time when they feel most vulnerable.

With the strong community links and partnership connections, Community Committees are really well placed to co-ordinate the allocation and distribution of these packs. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to stray towards the Outer South Garden Maintenance Scheme that covers the Morley and Rothwell area and to talk about transformation not necessarily of people's gardens but in the Labour Party's approach to this particular scheme.

Would you believe it, this is the third year of a three year scheme. If we go back, throw ourselves back two years, who voted against this particular scheme? The Labour Party. All of them consistently were at that particular point trying to stop a perfectly brilliant scheme that operates in the Morley and Rothwell area making sure that it provides that help and support for older people. An excellent scheme, you are absolutely right, Stuart.

Councillor Dawson, who will not be here with us much longer so we have to wish him a very happy retirement, Councillor Dawson two years ago voted against it. Just the other week he voted for it. Anybody would think that he has a very close experience with the electorate coming along very, very shortly. What a remarkable change; what a remarkable transformation.

While we are dealing with retirement, and I know Les Carter is not actually in this Chamber but I thought I would try and get it in early and put it on to the Minutes of the Outer South Area Committee to offer our thanks from Morley. He has been a real friend to Morley in terms of the affordable housing schemes that were delivered during his time as the Executive Board Member. Certainly Glen Road and Kirkness Court are two schemes that he supported fully and we do appreciate very much the fact that without his help and support we would not have got that affordable housing in Morley that we were looking for at that particular point, so we do want to pass on our particular thanks for his efforts over the years. Certainly he has been a friend to Morley and we would wish him the best in his retirement. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am glad that Councillor Bruce mentioned the Morley Literature Festival. It has been going a very long time

and she obviously likes the idea of it and, judging on the performance, she will probably be able to present her memoirs there at the next time that it meets and she can celebrate her artistry at spin and her wondrous words that she uses.

We are going to talk about the Windmill Youth Centre right now. You will know, for those of you who have had community centres that have been under threat recently, consultation which has been held around the community centres that we have in our areas. Our Community Committees are supposed to be the places that decide on devolved areas and community centres are one of those areas.

According to Councillor Bruce in her latest publication, "Councillor Golton claims he was not allowed to discuss Windmill at a Community Committee meeting but it was the wrong meeting and he did not turn up to the Rothwell ward meeting where it was really discussed."

Now "disgust" is the right word for this, actually, spelled a little bit differently. Our Community Committees are meant to be where we all come together from all different parts of our areas that we represent of all parties and we discuss issues that are pertinent to us. The workshops that have started recently have been an excellent start to that and we did have a really good one which was around isolation for our older community.

Following that action was actually a Community Committee meeting and this is where I asked the question, since community centres are part of our responsibility, why have we not had anything on the agenda since the paper came out talking about how we were going to close them? Why have we never had the opportunity to discuss it in our area? Why has the Community Committee sub-committee never had opportunity to discuss it in our area? When did it finally come to the Area Committee in our area? It came on March 23rd and the Community Centre sub-committee got to discuss it, I think, days beforehand.

This is not the way to run devolved services. We should not be subject to decisions made from the centre without any kind of meaningful discussion in Area and to say it is the wrong meeting to try and discuss a community devolved issue at a Community Committee meeting is wrong. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bruce to sum up.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: It was great to hear from Councillor Dawson about the work of the South Leeds Debt Forum. The Forum provides a vital advice service helping people to come to terms with their personal finances and to manage their debts and get back on their feet again. Geoff, thank you for the work that you do as a Champion along with Karen Renshaw and Lisa Mulherin and also Bob, who does an excellent job as well. Thank you all, and to all the Councillors on the Community Committee and all your contributions.

Councillor Renshaw rightly mentions the Committee's involvement with the winter Wellbeing packs which have gone down a treat. I know that I was able to distribute mine very easily in Rothwell and David's as well, actually, so they were very popular and I know that a lot of them have gone to the most vulnerable people and they contained some really useful items and advice as well.

On to Councillor Finnigan's point about the Garden Maintenance Scheme. As you know, Robert, we all voted, it was a unanimous vote for the scheme, was it not, for this financial year.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: This year. You are facing an election.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: This is the last year of the three years. It will be reviewed for the next year, obviously, to get the best value for money but I would just like to say thank you to Morley Elderly Action for the excellent job they do.

On to Stuart and community centres. As you know there has been extensive public consultation there. I have got you a present, actually, a diary so that you can make a note in it of the important meetings for the Community Committee.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Private meetings, not the public meetings.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: At the ward based briefing where the actual Windmill in our ward was discussed, you were not able to be there, were you? Or you were not there, anyway.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: It was a private officer briefing, Karen.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: Yes, there was also a drop-in consultation event.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: I had already had mine.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: There was also a drop-in consultation event which was very well attended...

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Which I did get to.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: ...and David and I, we set up our own event and invited Councillor Gruen, which he kindly attended and he came and met the young people and the users of the centre. I think that that played a very important part in saving our Windmill Community Centre as well.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: A Labour event.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: So thank you, Councillor Golton, for your input.

In the coming year we are looking forward to taking on more issues that are important to local people with more workshops, drawing in members of the public and partners and we will continue to make a difference in our communities in the popular and vital events as well as supporting local businesses and residents by providing Christmas trees and lights. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, can I just say thank you, I missed out Councillor Rafique.

THE LORD MAYOR: No, you cannot, Councillor Hamilton. Say it outside the Chamber!

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: I have done it now.

ITEM 8 – QUESTIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to Question time where, for a period of 30 minutes, Members of Council can ask questions of the Executive. Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Does the Leader of Council agree with comments made by the Shadow Chancellor, Ed Balls, that cast doubt on the future of the second phase of HS2?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. This question is far more complex than what is being posed, Councillor Carter (*sic*). I have read the newspaper and I have actually read his comments and the newspaper's report. In actual fact, I think you would agree with some of the comments made by Ed Balls in that article, especially in terms of the timescale. So there is no avoidance that I am making this up and spinning, I will quote you what he said.

“Mr Balls added, ‘I do not understand this HS3 proposal. Why would you decide to spend 20 years improving north and south before finally, in the third place, coming to east and west?’”

In other words, why are you doing HS2? Then he goes on to say, very briefly,

“I would want to be discussing how we could improve east and west Leeds with David Higgins from Day One. That is something we can get on with quickly while we ask the big question about the second phase of HS2.”

I think actually you would probably agree with bringing forward the east-west line so that it can make better connections with the HS2.

If he is questioning the HS2 I would say this to him, and I will say it to all colleagues – do not let Nigel Lawson and the Tory cronies put you off one of the most important infrastructure projects the North can ever have. Here we have the Northern Leaders saying “We support this 100% because it goes through five Core Cities, ten million people, four million jobs and actually boosts the economy and it will be the first investment in the North for over a hundred years.”

I would say to anybody deciding whether it is value, let us get on with it and let us start building it from the north-south, because that will make a difference to our economy. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Secondary question?

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Would the Leader agree, is it not correct that Labour intends to go back to the original plan on HS2 to construct a line from Birmingham to Manchester, leaving Leeds and the rest of the City Region and the North as second class citizens with a link to Manchester across the Pennines, and also, further, is this an example of the mixed messages to business that is being proffered by national politicians as opposed to the clear and concise views that the Leader has made on this particular subject that when comments like this are made the Chamber of Commerce have had to take to the airwaves to try and get some clarity back again and, as both of us know, we have been trying to do our best for the North and when things like this happen it can cause issues.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Lord Mayor, thank you Councillor Anderson. To be fair, Lord Mayor, I have read the report and it does not actually talk about the cutting of the east line. What really gets my goat, though, is that last week as Nigel Lawson and the Tory peers started to criticise investment, London got £27bn for the second phase of Cross Rail. That beats £15bn and what really makes me angry, as soon as we start talking about improving the infrastructure, the transport in the North, everyone begins to query it.

I would say that I have said consistently, London is overheating. It is now becoming dysfunctional. The banks cannot compete globally because of the cost of everything down in London. Evidence, HSBC have just moved their headquarters to London. I would say that if we are to take advantage of those kind of decisions that banks may well make in the future, we need proper connectivity not just for capacity but actually for economic reasons and so far the estimate is that we will be able to create over 70,000 jobs for people in the North by the HS2. Let us get on with it now and let us start from the North. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Cleasby.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Could the Executive Board Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel confirm what efforts have been made or are being made by Leeds City Council to ensure that the Leeds City College site, formerly known as Park Lane Horsforth Campus site, is retained for educational purposes?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: I am going to try and keep my answer shorter than Councillor Anderson's supplementary question. I think in the Report on Site Allocations which came to the Executive Board on 11th February this site was identified for housing. It was identified for housing following the most extensive consultations with ward Members and deliberation of Development Plans Panel. That said, as all Council knows, the Development Plans Panel is still being drawn up, the Site Allocations plan will come back and that will include, clearly, requirements for new schools.

Members will note that this site is owned by the City College, so it is for them to bring forward their plans, although clearly we will closely liaise with them.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary?

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Yes, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, by way of supplementary, may I ask of the Executive Member if he agrees with me that local knowledge supplied by ward Members should be the basis on which school site selection is based.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: I think local knowledge is very important and will be taken into account in the right manner.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hyde.

COUNCILLOR HYDE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Member please explain what lessons have been learnt from Operation Boypark?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. For Members who are not aware about Operation Boypark, it was an operation jointly carried out between Leeds City Council and West Yorkshire Police that culminated in the convictions of ten young men who had basically been terrorising part of South Seacroft, running a drug operation from a house for which none of them had a secure tenancy. It has taught us a lot of lessons and it has demonstrated to me exactly why we are on the right path in terms of the partnership work with Safer Leeds through Leeds City Council and the Police.

What it did teach us is that working together we can get some fantastic results. We as a Council took the decision that while the criminal case was pending, we sought a civil injunction through the courts that ensured that these young men were no longer active on the streets of South Seacroft. That gave the police an opportunity to put together the criminal case which was vital in removing them from the streets.

It also taught us the benefits of having local good intelligence on the ground. The anti-social behaviour teams, social workers, housing officers helped the police construct a case that, as I say, led to these landmark prosecutions.

It has also taught us, of course, the value that we already knew about the importance of good local ward Members, all of whom pushed for this initiative, worked very hard to get the CCTV that helped get the vital evidence to put these young men behind bars, so I would like to thank Councillors Hyde, Selby and Morgan for pushing that agenda.

It has actually taught, I thought, the most important lesson of all to people who would turn our estates into areas that they think they can run riot, they rule the roost and nothing is going to happen to them. I hope the most important lesson from this comes to other people who would use estates in this manner. I know South Seacroft like the back of my hand, I know Councillor Lowe does as well, it is an area that we grew up and went to school in and the majority of people who live there want to get on with their lives in a decent, law-abiding fashion and it is incumbent upon us and the police to allow them to do that.

I hope the most important lesson we do send out is that if people want to behave in this way, they will be put behind bars. Eight of the young people have got average sentences of three years; two more are pending sentencing.

I hope that is the most important lesson to come out of this, that ordinary people living on estates are not going to wear this, Lord Mayor. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Hyde?

COUNCILLOR HYDE: No supplementary, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Following the refusal of Planning Permission for his Cottingley Springs Expansion Plan could the Executive Board Member for Housing confirm if he agrees with the Planning Inspector's comments that the Council's rejection of alternative sites because of negative perception and fear of encroachment leads to relegating Traveller sites to isolated locations and to choosing green field and Green Belt sites before brown field sites, and does he also agree with her that this is in direct conflict with the Council's own planning policies?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: No and no.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: By way of a supplementary, would the Executive Board Member agree with me on the following: that local residents and travellers' groups should be congratulated for their campaign which clearly showed that the Council was in breach of its planning policies on Green Belt and gypsy and travellers, as well as its policies on regeneration; that Green Party and Morley Borough Independent Councillors should be congratulated for standing with their communities and offering real community leadership on the campaign; that Scrutiny Board should immediately investigate the Council's regeneration policies which are presently operating to exclude gypsy and traveller sites from regeneration areas, probably in breach of the Council's legal obligations under the Equality Act; to see if small family traveller sites can be incorporated into these regeneration zones; that the waste of over £70,000-plus of taxpayers' money in times of austerity in an attempt to force through a party political stitch-up rather than a realistic practical solution to sites for gypsies and travellers should be condemned...

THE LORD MAYOR: That seems to be a very lengthy question, Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: There is a question at the end of it. (*interruption*)

THE LORD MAYOR: No, no, no.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: It is an inconvenient truth...

THE LORD MAYOR: Can you ask the question?

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: I was asking if he agreed with me on these following issues, Lord Mayor. It is a question.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan, will you ask the question?

COUNCILLOR: He has made a speech.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Do you want me to start again? *(laughter)*

THE LORD MAYOR: You are making a speech. If you make it for the first sentence, yes.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Does he agree with me that whoever is behind this political decision to go ahead with this wasteful and politicised stitch-up scheme, having failed spectacularly to deliver it, should apologise publicly to the travelling community, local residents adjacent to Cottingley Springs, the Council taxpayers of Leeds who continue to pay a high price for clearing up unauthorised sites because of this failure?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan, I apologise for that disgraceful question, Councillor Gruen. Will you attempt to answer the salient points?

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Lord Mayor, it is very clear that election time is close and what has been demonstrated now, let me warn the Opposition parties, never again complain about Question time because if you abuse Question time in this way, then do not be surprised if some of us will give you a single answer worth 30 minutes.

I am going to answer this question very comprehensively in my own way.

What the Inspector actually found was that, taking into account the negative effects of unauthorised encampments likely to continue for as long as the need is not met, and taking into account the lack of individual suitable and alternative sites, there is a need to identify more sites.

Between 2004 and 2010 who controlled this Council? It was Councillor Carter, it was the Lib Dems, it was the Morley Borough Independents and it was the Green Party. In six years that shower over *there* spent £2m of Council taxpayers' money simply moving on travellers and gypsies from one illegal encampment to the next to the next. What they did is condemn the people of south Leeds where those illegal encampments took place whilst the people in Adel and Cookridge and elsewhere were happily smiling away because they were not affected.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Morley, Peter.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: For six years you cost this Council £2m. In the last nine months, as today's Yorkshire Evening Post says quite rightly...

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Oh, absolutely.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: ...there are no illegal encampments. The money now being spent on illegality is almost negligible. The relationship formed with both communities and travellers is the best we have had. Our practice is now nationally celebrated and ward Members particularly in some of the Inner City wards have co-operated, like Kidacre site, etc, which is working extraordinarily well.

Let me also come to the question of money on which you were briefed yesterday. Amongst this extensive list of questions you put towards me it is interesting you did not raise how much is the cost. It is because you know that on the one hand here is the most malevolent Secretary of State we could have possible had in this particular area and yet his own department has given an £850,000 grant to us to develop Cottingley, and another £850,000 to build on to Cottingley. Talk about the left and the right hand not knowing what is going on.

We would never have been able to refurbish and to upgrade the facilities on the existing Cottingley if we had not pursued the expansion of Cottingley.

I am very disappointed with the judgement because it is actually not helpful and it has taken more than a year to consider and it has been brought out in a hurry for purely political reasons. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Taylor.

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR: Please could the Executive Member let Members have his views on the implications of the proposed changes to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations? Councillor Lewis.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. To get it right, it is the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2015, and we were talking about Eric Pickles and this is again Eric Pickles at his absolute worst. I think many of us have come to that point where we wonder why the DCLG exists. It has become totally dysfunctional and its role is purely as a playpen for Eric, the champion of the rubber chicken circuit for the Tory Party, who plays absolutely no sensible role in Government.

On the one hand you have got George Osborne going around talking about devolution, about giving powers to Local Authorities and we might have questions about that; on the other hand you have got Eric Pickles trying to micromanage Local Government and that is what these regulations are about.

What Eric is proposing is that any decision by a Council to dispose of an asset worth over half a million should only come to full Council. This is a complete and utter nonsense. We are expected to be entrepreneurial, to be enterprising as a Council, to move quickly to make things happen in the city. Are we really supposed to say to our potential partners out there, "Well, we would love to sell you that but we are not actually quite sure that we can do." They are going to love us. Open for business – I hear it all the time from George Osborne. Are we seriously going to be open for business if we have to take decisions like that through full Council?

We desperately need to sell our assets. Why do we need to sell our assets? To keep our capital programme going. That is key to us.

The other two bits of decision making that he thinks should come here are all decisions concerning parking enforcement and parking charges. This is a strategic body. Is this supposed to be a sensible Council – is this Leeds City Council or is it, I do not know, Gildersome Parish Council? Should we really be spending our time discussing every single change to parking charges and every change to parking regulations? We have TROs to do that, we have full consultation. Why do that?

The last bit of craziness that sits there concerns – I am just trying to think what it is, it is another barmy bit – the frequency of waste collection. Here we have it again, it is dear old Eric, bless him, obsessed by waste. Regardless of the fact that every Council goes through pain to decide how it is going to have waste collected, how frequently, we all know where we are, people are happy in Leeds and I think most places across the country have a fortnightly collect. Dear old Eric is sitting there obsessing about weekly collections and tries to, through the back door, push his own policies.

This is nonsense, this is not sensible government, this is allowing a completely irresponsible individual to run what used to be a respected department. I am sure that come 8th May there will be sensible decisions made about the future of that department. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: He sends his regards to you too!

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Taylor? No. Councillor Wadsworth.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Member for Planning provide an assurance that any conditions attached to approval for further development of the High Royds site will be sufficiently robust so as to ensure that any and all obligations are met by developers in a timely fashion?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Where this is within the powers of the Council, yes, I can give that assurance.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Wadsworth?

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Yes, Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Member explain why we are still waiting for traffic lights at the junction of Hawksworth Lane, Bradford Road and Park Lane ten years after the inception of the scheme and despite there being an S106 agreement in place that specific traffic lights as a condition of the scheme.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: You were in control then.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: I think you have a point. There are a number of obligations that have been fulfilled. 94 affordable houses have been provided. Off

site highway works including the new junction arrangements at the Bradford Road/Bingley Road and Buckle Lane junction have been done and various other provisions such as laying out of sports pitches have also been done. Some have not yet been provided, as you rightly state and I am told that Highways remain in discussions with the developer about these particular issues.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR S BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Does the Leader of the Council agree with me that it is important that as many people as possible are registered to vote in the next General and Council elections?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I could just say “Yes” but I am going to be like Councillor Gruen and be helpful. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: To you!

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Because it is an important issue and I am going to treat it as an important issue and therefore it is worth just taking a little time in response on progress so far because, as we know, the individual electoral registration was implemented by this Coalition Government in June 2014. This led to about one million people dropping off the Electoral Register nationally. In Leeds this was 6,700 by March 2015. However, thanks to some very hard work of the electoral officers who have been doorstep canvassing, sending letters, sending reminders and using other means, there was an overall increase in the Electoral Register of 3,855.

As you will appreciate, the picture is changing for the better all the time and no doubt political parties and officers have made a difference. Last Friday, on top of the figure I have just given you, officers received a further 4,000 applications to register, so on top of the actual increase in numbers of people registered to vote in Leeds, we now have a more accurate register which compares very favourably with other Core Cities. In Liverpool there has been a 14,000 decrease; in Nottingham, a 15,000 decrease; in Birmingham 16,000 decrease; in Manchester 35,000 decrease.

There is more to do but we are making every effort to make sure that we give everybody an opportunity to vote by carrying on working with the universities and so on. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Bentley?

COUNCILLOR S BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you and I would like to congratulate the Elections Office on the hard work they are doing. I would, however, like to ask in that case can you please explain why the Council has decided to – and this is a quote from the Elections Officer – “no longer have a freepost address which can be provided for applications. The best and quickest way for us to receive applications is via the Government website.”

That is fine except that not everyone has a computer, as you know, and this will discourage a lot of people and disadvantage many of our vulnerable residents. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thanks to Councillor Lewis I have just been told that (a), you can do it online and (2) you can still post it back if you have not. I thought you were going to ask me about Weetwood's drop, Hyde Park and Headingley and I was just going to refer to some excellent work again being done by the Election Office and the University who have a new social media and marketing company and they are doing everything possible to register students. Interestingly enough, by the end of February only 2,000 out of 22,000 had registered as students. That is why there has been a big step up.

Personally I think we need to carry on doing that work because I would welcome students in this election to come out, express their view, give their points (*Applause*) and particularly about the broken promises from your particular party. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Illingworth.

COUNCILLOR ILLINGWORTH: Yes, Lord Mayor. Please could the Chair of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Transport Committee update Council on work on the new Station at Kirkstall Forge?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Councillor Illingworth. Work started on site in September 2014 and the foundations for the station and the car park are in place and work is under way to put the road in for the new car park.

The station is due to open in October of this year and, along with its sister station Appley Bridge, the new southern station entrance at Leeds and the new stations in Calderdale and Bradford, it is a real commitment to expanding the railway service in West Yorkshire. I would draw direct comparison to the six years when the Conservatives and Liberals ran Metro when the number of new stations opened in West Yorkshire was zero. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Illingworth?

COUNCILLOR ILLINGWORTH: Yes, Lord Mayor. I would like to ask the Executive Member if he would like to comment on the funding of transport infrastructure in London as compared to the problems we have in West Yorkshire.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, a very good supplementary, Councillor Illingworth. I just happen to have the figures at my fingertips (*laughter*) as I always do.

The recent IPPR report into transport in the North revealed that this Government is spending £395 per person in Yorkshire and the Humber but £3,095 per person in London on transport infrastructure. Clearly, we are not all in this together, they are overheating the London economy, overheating infrastructure investment in London and, despite promises made to invest in transport for the North, we all worked together on developing a report on the schemes and interventions we need in the North and, despite all that work together and despite promises that money would be

made available, all they have done is kicked it back till the election and say you can have a few million pounds to have a look at it again. I do not think we need to look at it again. I think we know what the problem is, we need the investment. I look forward to receiving it after the next election. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ingham.

COUNCILLOR INGHAM: Could the Executive Member with responsibility for Planning please update Council on its recent planning appeal performance?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Again, I happen to have the figures at my fingertips as well. I think our performance compares extremely favourably with all the other Core Cities and nearly 70% of appeals have been dismissed, so that is very good news, it demonstrates that the City Council, both officers and Plans Panels, are making good decisions.

In February and March there has been a successive run of 15 wins in a row.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Ingham?

COUNCILLOR INGHAM: Yes, thank you, Lord Mayor. Could the Executive Member please provide details of any recent planning appeal successes.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: I can. Thank you, Lord Mayor. The most recent appeal have been around Outwood Lane Horsforth in a conservation area; in Deighton Road Wetherby and the Kirklees Knoll, Farsley – a very significant decision indeed.

I am very pleased to say to Council that for the first time in many a year the Secretary of State and the Plans Inspector have agreed that this Council now has a five year housing land supply which is, as you all know from previous discussions, hugely significant.

I really also want to put on record my thanks to the officers throughout the Council who prepared and undertook the work before and during the appeal because it is a very significant success. It demonstrates that all the hard work put in over the last few years has been worthwhile and it is a clear indication I think that this City Council is not going to remain on the back foot and let developers bring forward premature plans which are not fit to fit in with our plans-led system.

I would just add one more thing. We all know on this side of the Chamber who actually voted for the Core Strategy and it was us, on this side of the Chamber, and hardly anybody on that side of the Chamber. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I will not correct Councillor Gruen now under a point of explanation but he knows he is wrong in what he has just said.

Will the Executive Board Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel confirm to Council when he intends to initiate the public consultation on site allocations?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: As stated before, it is my intention to bring back reports during May and June so that the Executive Board will approve a draft plan and therefore, taking into account the need to avoid the summer holiday period, I am anticipating full public consultation towards the autumn of this year.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary, Councillor Procter?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. By way of supplementary, that is very disappointing to hear. Councillor Gruen knows very clearly our views that he has an opportunity to move this process more quickly and if he is to save the Council a vast sum of money by side-stepping the appeals process which many PAS sites are currently in, he should look to bring the papers forward to the first Executive Board, actually, of the new Municipal Year and thereby going out to public consultation we believe before the summer holidays. He can then stretch it over the summer holidays, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR: Question.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: It is coming, do not worry. It is coming. So, Lord Mayor, would Councillor Gruen not agree with me that that is the most appropriate way forward?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: I do understand the thrust behind Councillor Procter's question and I am as eager as he is to make the quickest possible progress which is prudent, and I am therefore bound to take the advice of the Chief Planning Officer in how quickly his colleagues and his team can turn round all the information that is still required to be put together, and I can say I will bring it back at the earliest possible opportunity.

ITEM 9 – MINUTES

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now moving on to Item 9 on page 8, which is to receive and comment on the Minutes of the Executive Board, Committees established by Full Council and Joint Authorities to which the Council makes appointments. Councillor Wakefield.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nash.

COUNCILLOR NASH: I second, my Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nash.

COUNCILLOR NASH: My Lord Mayor, I move the next item in the terms of the notice.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

- (a) Executive Board**
- (i) Transport and the Economy**

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move to the Executive Board, Transport and the Economy. Councillor Khan.

COUNCILLOR KHAN: My Lord Mayor, I am speaking on Minute 169 on page 57 about the Aire Valley Enterprise Zone which will have a positive impact on jobs in my ward and it shows how good Labour is for business. This report highlights a new 50,000 square feet distribution centre for Enterprise Zone. It is testament to the Council's proactive work to ensure Enterprise Zone is a success. The Enterprise Zone went live in April 2012. It has been significant progress in the last year. The Council has played a lead role working with the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership, an experienced team of landowners, developers to activate development of the Enterprise Zone. As a result development is now progressed across all four sites within the Enterprise Zone.

At Thornes Farm construction of 80,000 square feet of industrial premises is under way on Wilton Development on next 55 site earlier this year work also began on the 50,000 square feet unit for packaging and distribution firm Samuel Grant Group. A deal was also agreed last month with the developer CDP Ltd to build a 30,000 square feet manufacturing facility for Orion, a specialist flyer to serve and data centre market. Meanwhile, Watershed Packaging's new £200m production facility is now operational. Construction of the new 80,000 square feet industrial unit for Logic Leeds is now under way and scheduled to be completed in August 2015. The £5m development is the largest one of its kind in West Yorkshire since the recession.

At Temple Green, the largest of the four sites, a £7.5m infrastructure and ground engineering programme is being carried out. This will include a park and ride facility with space for 1,000 vehicles, due to be operational in April 2016. This is a massive success story. 425,000 square feet of development and employment space under construction; 4.5m square feet in the pipeline.

This investment demonstrates that the success of this Labour administration is boosting our local economy and will ensure the positive momentum of the Enterprise Zone will continue in the future. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pauline Grahame.

COUNCILLOR P GRAHAME: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on Minute 169 on page 57 regarding the Aire Valley Enterprise Zone. This report

outlines the acquisition of a new proposed distribution centre to be built and let to an occupier in the Enterprise Zone by way of a full forward funding commitment to the developer. Of key importance is the fact that this report supports the best Council Plan of becoming a more efficient and enterprising Council. This opportunity is one of those cases. It will generate a financial surplus to the Council as a new addition to its investment portfolio by providing an immediate and growing substantial rental income. It will also provide £130,000-plus of additional business rates per year that will go to the LEP to find further economic activity in the City Region.

This new asset will sit well among other major key investments such as the Arena and the redeveloped Merrion House, for example. The Council's investment in the Arena now brings in approximately £25.5m a year to the city's economy.

As the Council's budget has reduced even further this financial year by £44.2m, with Leeds already losing £129m of core Government funding over the last four years, it is becoming more important than ever that the Council works in a more enterprising manner. This is in line with the Commission on the Future of Local Government's report which led the way in suggesting that Councils need to think about taking on new roles including the role of investor. If citizens are to become more enterprising then so should the Council.

The Asset Management Plan 2013 and 2017 which was approved at a recent Executive Board includes in its ten areas of focus the aim of making the Council's portfolio work better. This does not only mean rationalising assets where necessary but also undertake to improve the scale and the quality of the Council's investment portfolio.

In conclusion, this is a unique opportunity to add to the diversity of the Council's portfolio while, for example, the Arena provides benefits such as increasing the cultural offer and tourism in the city. This venture will help meet the city's current shortage of good quality industrial manufacturing and logistic space. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Stuart McKenna.

COUNCILLOR S McKENNA: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, I would also like to speak today on Minute 169 page 57 regarding the Aire Valley Enterprise Zone.

You have just heard from other Councillors about the success of the Enterprise Zone particularly this year and the investment opportunity the report outlines. Not only is this good for the Enterprise Zone and the Council's investment portfolio but the overall outcome is a positive effect this will have on jobs being created for the people of Leeds.

Of the developments mentioned so far on the four sites of the Enterprise Zone there is a potential for hundreds of permanent jobs to be created when the facilities are up and running. In the meantime there will also be hundreds of jobs created in construction phases of the developments. For example, the new development outlined in the report is expected to create at least 70 new jobs.

The Council is also taking major steps to improve the environment of the Enterprise Zone by undertaking a programme of landscaping work. While contributing to being

a sustainable Council it will also create an attractive and high quality environment and further stimulate investment.

At the same time it is creating work for young people as the Council's Parks and Countryside apprenticeships are the ones completing the work. Since November last year they have been planting 147 semi-mature trees and in the next twelve months will plant over 50,000 bulbs and around 2,000 saplings to create new woodland areas.

I would like to point out that the jobs that are predicted to be created within the Enterprise Zone will not all be realised if it was not for the Council's services which help and encourage companies in the process.

For example, Employment Leeds within Leeds City Council's Employment and Skills Services provided a single point of contact to help companies that are investing and expanding or developing a business in Leeds to recruit new staff. Another service, the Business Growth Programme, run through the Council's Economy Development Scheme, provides grant funding to businesses based in the Leeds City region or planning to invest here. Grants of between £10,000 and £500,000 are able to create new jobs and business growth.

We have already helped some of the developments that are investing in the Enterprise Zone within the scheme. The collaborative work between the departments at the Council and the private sector not only help create jobs but also encourage businesses to recruit locally. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I will not spend much time on detail in terms of the Aire Valley. What I will say is the Aire Valley is a great example of planned investment and regeneration. It is a brown field site, the investment got put in in terms of making sure the infrastructure was there and the Council is doing its best to be a civic entrepreneur to attract investment in.

This is in marked contrast to our neighbours, Wakefield Council, who seem to be intent on destroying significant parts of their Green Belt to enable distribution businesses to take hold close to population centres such as my own in Rothwell. That is all I will say on that one.

The main part that I would like to speak to is around the HS2 regeneration vehicle. We had some earlier talk today around HS2 and HS3. One of the most important things is how those routes actually do benefit this city. I have my own perspective as a local ward Councillor because the residents which are most affected by the current route coming into the city are residents in Woodlesford and they are particularly concerned in terms of possibility of that route being realigned.

A lot of information has been drawn in since then into HS2 and now they have given the Council the opportunity to look at the redevelopment of the station, which is coming to the end of its life, but also, of course, will be the main venue for HS3 which, of course, will come across east-west, whereas HS2 comes north-south, but they do have to connect up and how they connect up and how the realignment of that station happens can have an effect on the alignment of the route into the city itself.

The residents of Woodlesford are really keen that the Council that now has this responsibility will report back as soon as possible on their study with the station and, of course, that fantastic regeneration opportunity it could have without actually damaging the livelihoods of citizens, which would be the win-win situation for us because the south bank of the city, of course, is a key area for our regeneration as a city and hopefully the base from which we will celebrate our cultural capital year in 2023. Hopefully the report will come back from the Council before then.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Downes.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 169 page 57 and Minute 172 page 59. I too would like to welcome the Aire Valley Scheme. I think it is excellent that we are moving forward in this way.

I wanted to concentrate more on the other Minute, whereby supporting housing growth and this is also to be welcomed with the use of brown field sites. I think the Council is doing a good job but can also be more creative and would refer to the Elphicke House report of many different schemes around the country for Councils to address housing need by building Council houses in ventures with outer people such as Manchester, King's Lynn, Derby, Bournemouth, Gateshead, Cherwell etc. There are many different schemes around the county which I think need to be welcomed because we do not have the housing stock in Leeds and we need to be addressing that and there are plenty of opportunities within that report that I think we should consider.

The development of brown field sites and housing stock is an important one. We need the right housing in Leeds and I think that to achieve that I personally believe that with windfall brown field sites as we have been seeing over the last ten years or so we can achieve the housing growth that we need, which then moves on to the housing targets that we have which I think have been set too high and I know there is a White Paper coming on that later but there is a very real danger that by having the housing targets high it includes green field sites, in particular in the outer areas, the areas that I represent and through Aireborough, Horsforth and through all of that area. Developers, and obviously the Inspectors hearing when developers were saying we cannot afford to build on brown field sites, Green Belt is much easier to build on, it is more desirable and so by having a higher housing target the Green Belt will be built on first leaving brown field sites undeveloped, so I think by having too high a limit we run the risk of building out the Green Belt sites which are easier and more desirable to build, leaving the brown field sites undeveloped. If the Council can develop those brown field sites and meet the housing targets great, but I think the housing targets are too high and we will not get there. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I speak to Minute 170 on page 57. I think reflecting on Stuart's comments earlier about the route of HS2 into Leeds and the Leader and myself along with Stuart and Councillors Nagel and Bruce have met many of the residents in Woodlesford who are affected by the schemes and, indeed, residents in our own ward. I think the bit that was missing from Stuart's contribution but I am sure he will agree with me anyway, is actually a decision on where the route comes rests with his Government Ministers and they have bottled making a decision in the run-up to a General Election.

I think unfortunately we wanted absolute transparency on this, we were expecting a Ministerial decision on the route. Given the consultation closed nearly 18 months ago we are expecting a Ministerial decision from a Conservative and Lib Dem Government on the route into Leeds and we have not got it before a General Election. I think that illustrates how we need to keep up the work to make sure the route that comes into Leeds, not just for HS2 but also for HS3 as well, is having the minimum impact on local communities.

We are faced with a huge opportunity here. Leeds station has grown immeasurably in terms of the number of passengers that come through it in the morning. We have seen over 50% growth in rail passengers into Leeds over all and some routes into Leeds have seen a growth of over 100%. Leeds station needs to be considerably large. If we were not talking about High Speed Rail, talking about the opportunities we have got, we are looking at a transport interchange in the heart of the city that could be up to 40 million passengers per year. That is the scale of Gatwick Airport, so we need to get it right, we need to get the location right and we need to make sure that actually we have got a transport interchange that is not just helping support regeneration and growth of Leeds city centre but actually is enabling people to make much more easy journeys around West Yorkshire from Leeds. If people are making very quick journeys across the Pennines or up from down south, then they need a high quality transport link to the rest of the area to really make sure the benefit of the investment is there.

We are working constructively with HS2 on delivering a new station for Leeds. I would just like to say we hope the new Ministers that come in on May 7th will be much more sympathetic and not hide decisions away in the way that current Government Ministers have about the HS2 route, because that is crucial to reassuring people they have got the right route into Leeds. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I just wanted to comment on Minute 170 on page 57 relating to HS2.

I know that Alec Shelbrooke – I would have said MP but we are not allowed to say MP any more now – Parliamentary candidate for the Conservatives at the next General Election, has done a lot of work with residents. I know that Councillor Lewis and other Councillors for Rothwell have met with him on occasions to discuss this and the route going into Leeds.

However, I would like to bring it down to slightly more base level the impact of HS2. HS2 is going to have a massive impact on us getting into the city centre. However, bus travel, which is going to be the likely mode of transport for many coming from my ward using public transport into the city centre, is not really there for them to access it in great numbers.

At the moment we have unreliable bus services, many of them missing. Many residents are not able to get to work then, young people who are going to college, going to school are missing out. If anybody is wanting to actually live in one of the Outer North East villages and use public transport to get to the city centre so they can then take HS2 down to London, they are likely to miss that train at the moment because the bus travel is not going to get them in there. It is all well and good

spending billions on a rail line that is going to go all the way up the country, but if you cannot get a couple of miles into the city centre that is a big problem.

In Scholes, Barwick and Aberford – I know this has been raised with Councillor Lewis before – the transport issues are getting worse and worse. First Bus at the moment we only seem to get excuses from. Many residents want to access Garforth station to get into Leeds and I have often said in the past without a dedicated East of Leeds bus as well as a bus that gets people from the villages into the city centre. Many people want to use bus travel to get to local centres such as Garforth to do their shopping, to maybe travel into the city centre rather than actually going all the way into the city centre to do their shopping and all the way back out again, as seems to happen regularly.

Electronic timetabling would be an absolutely revolutionary thing for many of our villages so I am hoping that Councillor Lewis will meet with me in his capacity as a Transport Impresario to discuss what could happen to the city centre and what could happen for the villages of the Outer North East and we can maybe come up with a plan that will help those residents. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I will cycle over!

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Davey.

COUNCILLOR DAVEY: Lord Mayor, like the previous two speakers I would like to comment on the same Minutes. Among the many benefits that have been brought about by HS2 coming to Leeds will be the significant regeneration possibilities that we need to capture.

In Lord Deighton's independent report he highlighted the importance and scale of regeneration associated with HS2 and in particular it is the biggest infrastructure project in Europe. It is safe to say that the impact in Leeds will be considerable.

However, that is not to say that regeneration will happen simply as a result of this new infrastructure. It is now widely regarded that for a successful regeneration scheme to take place it needs to be correctly managed and fostered with many partners in the area.

In Leeds the planned location for HS2 is within the south bank, which provides a major opportunity to regenerate over 135 hectares of land and to impact positively on the city centre and the surrounding neighbourhoods, including my ward of City and Hunslet.

HS2 will make a regeneration initiative of not only national but international significance and locally will open up this area of the city. However, it is important to note that although HS2 will be a catalyst to this regeneration, the Council already has plans to regenerate the south bank area and this must complement that plan.

There have been some successes already, for example, the recently announced development of the historic Tower Works, the Leeds College of Building and improvements to connectivity to the south bank. However, there is still a lot more capacity of redevelopment. With such a large and complex plan as HS2 this will need Local Authorities to establish locally led delivery vehicles.

The Council's proposal for a collaboration with London and Continental Railways will combine our local knowledge and their expertise in rail-led regeneration similar to the project that they did at King's Cross and the transformation of the surrounding area in London.

However, regeneration impact will not be specific to the location around Leeds City station. HS2 will bring benefits across the city region, including a positive impact for our young people on jobs and training and for local companies through the supply chain. To do this it is important to make sure that we have a world class vision to drive growth and regeneration. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Macniven.

COUNCILLOR MACNIVEN: Lord Mayor, I speak on Minute 171, page 58, Leeds Southern Station Entrance – Highway improvement works to Little Neville Street. It is important that all citizens of Leeds have good access to transport. This is particularly important for those who have mobility issues through disability.

Our aim must be to ensure that Leeds has transport that everyone can enjoy and the development of Leeds Southern Station affords the opportunity to particularly cater for disabled people. It is essential that barriers which impede or prevent access to the transport system are addressed in order that all the people we serve can fulfil their potential and play a full role in society.

People with disabilities particularly rely on public transport to access jobs, services, facilities, family and friends. Many barriers identified by travellers are the same but additional different aspects impact on those with disabilities. That is why there has been particular focus on providing the best facilities for people with mobility issues in the design of Leeds Southern Station entrance. Officers have worked creatively to ensure that this development works for everyone.

For example, the constrained space on Little Neville Street has made the design difficult but through extensive consultation and innovative planning, a very satisfactory scheme has emerged. Access groups representing the sector have participated in a wide range of events, including extensive dialogue and engagement activities in a range of formats. These included a specific design workshop on site with representatives from the Council's Equality Hub.

Concerns raised at consultation included the lack of vehicular drop-off and pick-up facilities for people with restricted mobility. This has been addressed in the design proposal that has now come forth. There are many features in the plan which will greatly benefit those with mobility issues: restricted traffic flow, which will provide significant benefits to carers supporting pushchair and wheelchair users and to young people, the elderly and those with mobility issues; parking spaces for blue badge holders; the provision of an extensive range of lifts, escalators and, perhaps even more importantly, level surface access routes will ensure that the southern entrance will be comprehensively accessible.

We should be extremely proud of the strong and real consultation which has significantly and positively influenced the design of this project. I know we in Adult Social Care are. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harper.

COUNCILLOR G HARPER: My Lord Mayor, I would like to speak on the same Minute 171 page 58, Leeds Southern Station Entrance.

The completion of the improved southern entrance to the railway station will be transformational for Leeds. Not only will it open up the station to both the north and south of the city; it will also provide a direct gateway to the south bank in particular. This is an area that has already seen huge regeneration and economic development, including the Tower Works, Leeds Dock and Sovereign Square schemes which will provide, to name a few, 147 new residential units, commercial office space, retail restaurants and bars. The scheme will bring in around £80m-worth of investment, so it is only right that transport provision matches up to this amazing progress.

Everybody knows that we have been thinking for some time about how we can tap into the potential of the south of the city and I think this scheme will go a long way towards this. Connectivity is a massively important issue. Without it full economic growth and development cannot happen. We need to make sure that Leeds is connected as a whole and this scheme will bring a high quality transport network for us as residents and workers alike.

20,000 people are expected to walk through the southern entrance to the station every single day and without highway improvement works these people would be unable to use the entrance safely and securely. The scheme is also about making sure the station entrance presents a suitably attractive image of the city. We need to give a fantastic first impression of what Leeds is all about to ensure that when people first get to Leeds, this matches what is both happening in the city and our aspirations for the future.

We are right to be ambitious with the schemes we deliver. Ambitions lead to success and we have plenty of those left right now. This scheme is the latest part of the success story this Labour Council has delivered with much more to come in the future. You only have to look at the schemes such as the Arena, the Trinity shopping centre, the new KPMG building, our new hotels and the regeneration of the Merrion Centre and Kirkgate Market, not forgetting in the very near future the new Victoria Gate Centre, the John Lewis store, new ice rink at Elland Road, NGC transport system – I could go on with many more. This will also help create thousands of new jobs and apprenticeships which will bring much-needed employment to the people of Leeds.

We must keep driving forward action that will have a positive impact on our city and projects like the new southern entrance to the railway station give you real confidence that we can achieve this. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nash.

COUNCILLOR NASH: My Lord Mayor, I wish to speak on Minute 172 on page 59 and on the report of supporting housing growth.

I welcome this report, which is long overdue, and I congratulate my Executive colleague on its production. We are desperately short of affordable housing all over

Leeds but in my ward of Hunslet, particularly short of family houses. The report draws attention to the needs of older people and the under-provision for them, but this is not the case in Hunslet, where we have too many flats – so much so we have recently demolished a block of sheltered flats, yet we still have sheltered housing vacancies.

Our Housing Department quite rightly gives priority to families with young children and, as we are short of houses, they are put into flats which were not designed for families and are totally unsuitable for their needs. Even the best behaved families are noisy and this is a persistent aggravation to any older tenant living below them. There is the sound of bump, bump, bump up the stairs with pushchairs or prams. Just two days ago I received this typical email through the Labour Group office and it says:

“Miss Smith advises that she lives in an upstairs flat with her son, which should not be, and Housing have reassessed her and she feels she should be on a higher priority. Miss Smith says she has been bidding for a long time but without success and has been contacting the Housing Department but feels she is not getting anywhere.”

This is just the latest of a stream of complaints of this nature.

In the Hunslet Hall area we have just demolished some decent flats which were built only 30 years ago because they were unsuitable for younger tenants and with older people moving away and guess what? A contract was signed when the Coalition ran this Council to replace them, yes, with some houses but also more flats. I was criticised in this Chamber by former Councillor Pryke of the Lib Dems for being against modern accommodation.

No-one can criticise me for not promoting accommodation for older people. 20 years ago my day job was to persuade Local Authorities up and down the country of older people's housing needs, but it is family houses we require in Hunslet. The report does not refer to houses but to housing, homes and units of accommodation. If we are not careful this will be the green light for developers to build more flats.

I want to say this loudly and clear – we want no more flats in Hunslet. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Groves.

COUNCILLOR GROVES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on Minute 172 page 59, Housing Growth and Employment.

Leeds is a growing city with a clear need for new homes, especially affordable homes given that there are around 25,000 applicants on the Leeds Housing Register. The more the housing market is improving, the issue of affordability is worrying for families. Many parents simply never anticipated having to financially help their children with housing, so therefore I am pleased that the Council still runs a scheme with Leeds Building Society to help first time buyers with deposits. I also think housing growth has the capacity to help many more people gain skills and find work.

Given the commitment to supporting housing growth in this paper, there is a desire for those opportunities to go to people living in Leeds. The Sustainable Economy and Culture Board have been looking at the obligations through planning and procurement

and whilst we should celebrate that 14,000 people have found work through this process, we need to further explore how we can use Section 106 more effectively and help the 15,000 job seekers from our city. We should leave no stone unturned to help them.

When the council uses its position to work with businesses and other partners as early as possible, we have the opportunity to implement local labour projects. This often helps those experiencing deprivation and multiple barriers to work. Through our Housing Regeneration Programme we have some real life examples of 41 apprenticeships and a further 28 local people who have secured work in their wards. They were working where they live on houses for their communities, so rather than feeling alienated from the process, they were part of the regeneration and that built massive confidence within the community.

We have ambitions to have continued and sustainable growth in housing. With more confidence that construction will continue there can be more opportunities for local people to work in their own city. The results of the first More Jobs Better Jobs study is due out in May. It seeks to review best practice and help directly support the adoption of best practice across the Leeds City region, identifying how local labour projects can help those experiencing poverty. It will look at national and local policy barriers to help link in development in place before development happens and how that translates to good quality job opportunities.

The Scrutiny Board will continue to look into this important area of work and we will want to ensure that the conclusions of the research are investigated and implemented where suitable. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James McKenna.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor, I am speaking on Minute 172 page 59, Supporting Housing Growth.

Leeds is a city with much potential. There is brown field land in this city that is more suitable for housing. Indeed, developers already have planning permission for more than 9,000 houses at 170 sites. They need to get on with building these homes. They have the permission; they should get started. Thank you John, we all agree on that.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Yes, absolutely.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Yes, there are issues with some sites and this paper helps to explain what we are doing to overcome them. A total of 106 Council owned sites are being made available for housing. We are also offering support to accelerate housing delivery on these sites, helping with applications to funders and looking at opportunities for working together to build new homes.

Having truly mixed sites with the Council looking to buy or help build is absolutely one way we can get building going quickly. We need new affordable homes and if we can use this lever to lever in other developments, then this is going to be good for the city.

I also hope that working with developers will allow us to see a real improvement in housing quality. We have set a standard and we are following them in our own

housing. Those of us who sit on Plans Panel have been demanding higher quality homes and we are now getting the policy to achieve this. Developers seek to understand which way the wind is blowing on this. I hope that they will do more than pay lip service to high quality developments. Planning Panels are taking this issue very seriously.

By moving ahead with the Site Allocation Process, we will be able to look at the phasing of land. This will help us co-ordinate both where land will be used for housing and, to some extent, where it will be used. Developers do not necessarily have the city's best interests at heart and again I think this is something we can agree in this Chamber. The paper shows how we are gathering together a range of tools to help us provide new housing. Developers have to come along with us on this journey, but there is as much responsibility for them as there is for us. We know we want the right homes in the right places – that is affordable homes on brown field land whenever possible and built to our very high, demanding, high quality standards.

We want to see them built quickly but we need to ensure that these homes last to provide for future generations of residents in our city. The paper gives us a good way forward to achieve our potential. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Venner.

COUNCILLOR VENNER: My Lord Mayor, I am speaking on the same Minute. Leeds aims to see around a thousand new Council homes created up to 2018. This expenditure of £148m demonstrates a real commitment to increasing affordable housing. This is an achievement in a time of budgetary uncertainty; however, the need for new affordable homes continues to outstrip supply. There is a desperate need for more affordable housing in Leeds, particularly for families. Right to buy is a massive impediment to this, taking properties from the Council. There were 462 right to buy sales of Leeds Council homes in 2013/14. Right to buy means the Council could be in a situation where it borrows money, builds a new home and has not yet paid this loan off when the tenant buys it. This would leave the Council paying a debt for something it no longer owns. In addition the stipulation that Councils must seek matched funded investment from right to buy sales is openly proscriptive.

Leeds has announced investments of more than £1.5m into building 41 new homes and refurbishing 15 empty properties across Leeds. This is a great example of the Council working in partnership with housing associations and charities. However, many times more properties have to be sold in order to have these investments.

Rather than the one-to-one replacement promised by Central Government, Shelter identified that the figure for England is more like one new home for each ten sold. Right to buy home owners can let their houses or sell them to private developers, thus turning affordable housing stock into market rate accommodation.

Evidence from The Mirror suggests that a third of right to buy properties are now owned by private landlords, who often do not properly maintain them, meaning tenants are paying more for less in a former Council home. There is evidence of this in my ward on the Woodbridge estate, where the poorly maintained, shabby, landlord owned houses stand out a mile.

It is welcoming that political leaders have agreed to support a letter to the Secretary of State for Communities setting out practical changes that would allow the Council to create even more affordable homes. This includes removing the restrictions on borrowing which would enable the Council to build more and better homes which can be paid for by the rent received.

Many Members, including Councillor Gruen, have made clear that they would like to see the end of right to buy. I would too, especially having spent my early career working with homeless people who are often stuck bed-blocking in hostels because of a lack of Council housing stock. However, the letter outlines practical ways to amend the policy.

Stopping Councils from borrowing based on an arbitrary cap can prevent new homes being built. Lifting this requirement will help the Council build even more affordable homes which are desperately needed in our city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Papers are all well and good and coming in here and speaking warm words is all very good as well; it is translating all of that into action and there is a massive, massive disconnect between the words in here and the actions of Members of all sites, actually, but predominantly those in the Labour Group. You say “ugh”, you do not even know what the next line is going to be about, do you?

The point is, and listening to Councillor Nash she, dare I say it, is one of the prime culprits as well because we have a policy, a City Policy contained in the Core Strategy that enshrines something called a housing mix and so every planning application that is considered at Panel should be in conformity to the housing mix – and it is not, so Members are approving on a monthly basis developments that do not conform to our own policies. Indeed, it was only a matter of a few weeks ago that one of the largest schemes in the whole of the city came forward for approval, the Northern Quadrant, 2,000 houses, and what we were doing? We were invited to concur with the view of the developer in terms of the housing mix. That was not what the City Councillors identified the need was. That was not what the people who have just spoken are talking about the need actually is.

We need to wise up, frankly, and a clear instruction needs to go to the Director of City Development and his officers that the policies of this Council are created by elected Members and they need to follow them, Lord Mayor, and they need to implement them and at an early stage developers need to know that it is not acceptable - not acceptable – to come forward with schemes that have four, five, six bedroom houses galore because they do not comply with the requirements, they do not comply with the Core Strategy, they do not comply with the requirements within the housing mix.

It is not that complicated, Lord Mayor, but it is vitally important. I agree with a lot of the comments that have been made opposite. We have got to translate what is a policy of the Council into actual action.

I am interested to hear a Labour Member say about what Councillor Gruen’s attitude is to right to buy. Those of us who have been here long enough know that that has not always been his view, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor Gruen boasts about voting for the Core Strategy and that side did. It is absolutely toxic, certainly in Morley. His acolyte, Councillor Dawson, does not boast quite as much in the Morley area about such matters primarily because, despite the Council's alleged policy of brown field first most of the development that you have got in the Morley area clearly shows a green field first approach. If we take Daisy Hill or Bruntcliffe Road or Owlens Farm and there is another site off Bradford Road in Drighlington, all of them green field sites, all of them opposed by local residents to development, all of them voted through on the basis of Labour votes and that is something that will be debating with Councillor Dawson in and around the Morley area.

Councillor Procter has an excellent point because that we are getting in Morley is not affordable homes, in which case we would probably be less obstructive than we are at this particular point, but what we are getting is executive style housing time and time and time again. That does nothing whatsoever to take people off our housing waiting list. Nothing.

It clearly does not help as well that the affordable housing ratio is down to 15% when it should be substantially higher, certainly in our area and other people's areas as well.

We struggle a little bit to understand how this brown field first approach is being adopted in practical terms in our places. Perhaps green field sites have been saved in other wards rather than ours but we see very little evidence that it actually operates in our particular area.

The bottom line certainly in terms of building new Council housing is there is not a lot of point building new Council housing if at that particular point you are going to be able to flog them to that tenant after five years at a massive discount and never get your money back to rebuild new Council housing.

We have consistently said, and I think we are the only Group that has consistently said that, that you need to abandon the right to buy. You are in a position where you are going to try and retain a healthy Council housing stock and the only way you are going to actually achieve that is to abandon the right to buy and the sooner national parties figure that out, the better. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis to sum up.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I have been used to so many comments I did not think that time would ever come, Lord Mayor!

I suppose I was trying to listen to the many comments. It is a bit like listening to one of the questions we had earlier – by the time you get to the end of it you forget where it started. You are just trying to think what is the kind of common theme here? I think the common theme is actually about a very successful city, a confident city and a Council that is actually doing all the right things in order to grow the city and to make it sustainable and offer good jobs to the people who live in it.

If I can just perhaps pick off the bits, if I can start with the Enterprise Zone. The incentives for firms locating in the Enterprise Zone are not really that huge. It think it is £35,000 maximum off the rates bill so it is not in itself, for a big firm that is not a huge incentive. The Enterprise Zone clearly has to offer something else and the fact that we have managed to entice a major national retailer to site their distribution centre here when there was competition from places like Wakefield and Bradford I think is a sign that we are getting it right, that we are offering a good product and that we are prepared to do the business, and if people read the report it is about Leeds City Council being prepared to do their entrepreneurial bit and actually make the building happen so that it was very easy for that retailer to come on to the Enterprise Zone.

It is all about jobs. I suggest that anybody who has not been to the Enterprise Zone recently goes and has a look. I always think of the Cathedral of St Mark here, the wonderful energy from waste plant that dominates the skyline. *(laughter)*

I think I have been going to the Enterprise Zone on a monthly basis with Roger Marsh from the LEP to have another photo opportunity because there is another firm relocating, there is another firm either topping out or excavating for its new building there and it is really buzzing there.

One of the great things that is happening is not just about sheds. Since we have got the enhanced capital allowance that is attractive to businesses that are doing more than just basic assembly or offering basic distribution jobs. What we are looking at is also, obviously, the second park and ride, and while I am on park and ride – not park and zorb – can I just say that our Elland Road park and ride is heading towards the point where we will be profit sharing with First Bus and the Combined Authority in the terms of our deal. That is because it has been a huge success but we were prepared to take a risk on that, although voices over there were busy telling us that it was a complete waste of money and time and David Blackburn said it is in the wrong place.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: It is in the wrong place.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: You got it wrong, David, as you always do on transport and green issues. *(laughter)*

The other thing that the Enterprise Zone offers is an opportunity for people to get to those jobs and one of the discussions I have been having recently is obviously about the bus services that will be going to the new park and ride but there are existing bus services that we want to persuade First Bus and other operators to take into the Enterprise Zone because it is key to us that there are opportunities for people who live on estates either close to or far way, but we have to make that happen, we have to provide those links.

I think there is a lot of stuff that various people were raising about housing numbers. I will leave that to the debate further on for Peter to discuss. I am sure he will be glad of that. I think one thing that Ryk Downes mentioned was about housing in outer areas. One of the points you may have missed in the paper was the suggestion that we need to acquire properties from private developers in the outer areas where that is the best option, because it is not just about building Council houses in the places where land is cheap. It is about places like Pudsey, it is about places like Otley, it is about the whole city and I think if we do not get that right we will end up in the situation we were many years ago where all our housing was concentrated in areas which were not

necessarily where people wanted to live. For me, it is always about building where people want to live.

HS2, we have got the regeneration vehicle. Patrick mentioned that we are doing that in collaboration with London and Continental Railways. I think that was a very good paper and it is about a very good policy. London and Continental Railways is expert, it is Government owned so we are working with the Government on that one. They have got the right skills to match with our skills but we are not giving away any of our powers to make that happen and that is great news.

Just on the Southern entrance, Christine mentioned the success we have had there. I think that scheme is wonderful, not just because we have actually managed to open up that area and I think this scheme will actually transform the whole of the dark arches in time, but because we are able to do a huge bit of work with the disabled access groups. It was very difficult because Network Rail said, "We would like to help but it just cannot be done" and about a year's work got us to the point where everybody agreed that there was something that could be done. I think that is a story of success for all of us.

I will quickly skim through. One last thing Councillor Venner raised about the role of private landlords in right to buy. There were 110,000 Council houses when I came on the Council in 1986; we do not have half that number now. What is really obscene to me...

THE LORD MAYOR: Red light, Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: ...is seeing private landlords owning ex-Council properties, renting them out at huge cost and everybody pays. *(Applause)*

(i) Standards and Conduct Committee

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. It is now past 4.20, we now move on to other Minutes and we start with the Standards and Conduct Committee. Councillor Nash.

COUNCILLOR NASH: My Lord Mayor, in moving the Standards Committee Report I should like to point out that Members have not received a copy of it. This is because it is so similar to last year's report and includes the same number of rejected invalid complaints against Members. However, the report is available online.

The Committee asked me to use this opportunity to say that the Committee is still here and is committed to high standards of conduct by all public representatives in the Leeds City Council area.

(b) Community Committees

(i) Inner North West Community Committee

THE LORD MAYOR: We move on to Community Committees, Inner North West Community Committee. Councillor Walker.

COUNCILLOR WALKER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking to Minute 34 of the extra pack.

One of the issues always high up on the agenda of the Inner North West Community Committee is bins and household waste. The issue is particularly prominent in the student residential areas which have always proved to have their own unique challenges. It is important that the refuse service is able to adapt to different communities and design its collections to ensure that they are appropriate for the particular characteristics of the communities they serve.

Due to the high turnover of the largely student population in Headingley and Hyde Park, information about bin collection days and correct rubbish for each bin have always proved to be difficult to get across. This has led to problems like bin contamination, bins getting overfilled causing rubbish to overflow on to the streets and bins being left out on pavements. This has always been a real bugbear for the permanent residents in the area, causing obstructions for pedestrians and also for maintenance services who need to access the pavements and the road side.

Headingley Members have worked closely with the Council's Waste Management Service to determine a solution to these issues on parts of Ash Road, the Langdales, the Estcourts, Canterbury Drive and other neighbouring streets. Last year we announced plans to improve the waste collection service for local residents living on selections of largely student populated streets in Headingley. The solution was the introduction of a Waste Management Pilot which specifically applied to the green bin collection. As part of the pilot green wheeled bins were removed from around 600 non-permanent residents who could then opt in to have green recycle bags collected from the kerbside. Bin crews were also instructed to place bins back inside front gardens and yards so they do not clutter up the pavements.

We are delighted that, as a result of the success of the pilot, which has been met with lots of positive comments from local residents, we have had further discussions with the Waste Management Services and they have agreed for the pilot to be extended to cover additional streets in the area.

The initial pilot scheme on Ash Road and surrounding streets has really helped to improve the appearance of the area and residents are happy with the changes, so it is great that the Waste Management Service has worked with us to extend the scheme to other streets. This will hopefully have the same positive results and we will monitor the situation to ensure that it is working as well as the initial scheme. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harper.

COUNCILLOR G HARPER: Lord Mayor, I would like to inform Members about the work taking place through the Inner West Community Committee to support the Rosebank area in my ward.

Over the last several years we have invested thousands of pounds of ward and Wellbeing funding into improving and maintaining the Rosebank Millennium Green. It is a superb piece of inner city parkland which is widely used by the local community. This year the Community Committee has invested in several projects to improve the area, including visual improvements of installing and replacing park furniture, seats and litter bins and also projects which encourage more local people and local groups to get the best out of the park.

The Making Rosebank a Friendly Place Project invested £5,000 into the green space, allowing the installation of several metal seats to provide additional place for elderly people to sit and enjoy the area. The funding was also in use to provide three additional waste bins to help to encourage people to be more tidy when using or walking through the area. For each of these improvement projects we have worked closely with the Rosebank Millennium Green Trust, who do a fantastic job looking after the area and doing their best to ensure it reaches its potential.

Another project the Committee has funded in Rosebank has been the Rosebank Urban Wildlife Oasis. This again is a great local project delivered by Groundwork, which encourages young people in the area to engage in a programme of fun, environmental and educational activities aimed at improving the local area and attracting more wildlife to the Rosebank Millennium Green. This is a project which not only provides some really engaging and active after-school activities to local school children but also puts their skills and enthusiasm to good use by improving the local area and making the Rosebank Millennium Green a much more enjoyable place for everybody to enjoy. If you get the chance to go up there, go and have a look for yourself because it is really good. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pryor.

COUNCILLOR PRYOR: Lord Mayor, I would like to comment on Minute 34. One topic the Inner North West Community Committee has focused on has been employment and skills. At one of our most recent Community Committee meetings we discussed at length ways in which we can help people get back into work, especially those who have been unemployed for a long period of time.

Headingley is often seen as an area that is just completely dominated by students but the population is far more diverse. In fact the Inner North West area has got the highest proportion of people in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance.

We look to signposting, training and ways in which we can help connect people to the jobs market, helping people find real jobs and find stability in life. As Members across the city will know, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find these stable jobs and more and more people are forced on to zero hour contracts and they have had to take support which is pulled from under their feet for the past five years. We as Councillors must do everything in our power to help people, despite this.

The Headingley Work Club provides an environment where people looking for work can get together and share experiences about applying for jobs, interview techniques and CVs and volunteering. The Talent Match programme delivered from the Cardigan Centre is providing support and mentoring for NEETS for up to twelve months. It brings together partnerships of employers, education providers and local charities to help young people find work and community learning classes have over 1,100 courses on skills and knowledge being offered across 250 Leeds venues.

Lord Mayor, over the past five years we have seen that the Tories from the 1980s have never left us and these initiatives show that while the Government abandons the people of Leeds, the Labour led Leeds City Council will not. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Walshaw.

COUNCILLOR WALSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Always a pleasure to follow my Headingley and Hyde Park colleagues.

I want to talk a little bit – and I know Councillor Towler is going to touch on noise and antisocial behaviour but I guess what I want to talk about for a couple of minutes is living side by side and offer a few observations on that and report about a recent incident, colleagues.

Headingley, as you know, is a diverse place, as Councillor Pryor has mentioned. There are a lot of people with very different lifestyles living side by side and that raises a lot of challenges, and as a Council we have to design services that can meet those challenges and we have endeavoured to do so.

Since I was elected in 2012 one of my objectives was to improve how we deal with noise nuisance and that affects everybody. Often it is seen through the prism of student parties in Headingley but it can come from all sorts of sources and it is not just students that have wild parties, believe you me.

Perhaps uniquely in this Chamber I have done two night shifts with the Noise Nuisance Team and it is a really interesting experience. I have never met quite so many inhabitants of Leeds in a state of happy inebriation and I recommend it, colleagues, I really do.

One of the goals we have had since 2011 is to improve the service and we moved it over to the Antisocial Behaviour Team and got it more funding and I would like to pay tribute to those staff members there and to the administration for providing the funding, because the service has evolved from a joke in 2011 to something that residents compliment us on now. If you had experience of the service in 2011 you will see that is a really long road we have travelled on and I am really pleased with it.

How does the Noise Nuisance Service, how does the Antisocial Behaviour Team come into contact with the event that two weeks ago? Social media is used to advertise big parties and it is also used by people to find out when big parties are happening – two sides of the same coin – and that is what happened a couple of weeks ago. Councillors and officers were informed by residents there was going to be what can only be described as an epically large party at a Headingley HMO, a student house. It was not one of the really big student houses with the amazing Tardis-like qualities that houses in Headingley can have, it was a five bedroomed one.

Anyway, when the invite list reached 350 we realised there might be a problem and then the icing on the cake was the promoters were advertising “Bring your drugs”. Fantastic. At that point obviously we have to act and intervene so we took legal advice, we had a notice served on the property before the party happened, of course, which meant that only the residents who lived at the property could be there over the weekend and it worked and we did not have the community disturbance.

I want to point out that it is often students that report these issues to Councillors and to officers, it is not just permanent residents, there is not that divide. It is about your weekend devastated by noise or your weekend not devastated by noise and the divide is somewhere in the middle.

We are willing and we will take action on loud student parties and we are looking into how we address those people who rent out those enormously powerful sound systems – sound systems that when I was a student you needed half a transit van to get a decent sound from; now you need a laptop and a couple of speakers, things have changed radically. Such systems are being offered for hire all over the place. We will take action and we are proud to do that. Thanks very much, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Towler.

COUNCILLOR TOWLER: Lord Mayor, I would like to speak to Minute 35 on the work of the Inner North West Community Committee and I would like to speak about the work being undertaken by the Committee to tackle the problems of noise nuisance in the area, particularly in Hyde Park. This is a large piece of work and has been a real focus for the Committee over the last twelve months.

Although the work is primarily targeted at the areas populated by students, as my colleague has just said it is not always exclusively the case. The Committee has previously funded out of hours noise nuisance patrols during the freshers period, which has had a really positive impact on the target areas. However, given the high volume of complaints and the detrimental impact noise nuisance has on communities, a new procedure for tackling noise from student properties was implemented in September 2014 following consultation with West Yorkshire Police, Unipol and the Leeds Universities.

As a result of the new procedures we now have a dedicated case officer as a single point of contact for all student-related noise nuisance cases. Additional out of hours patrols have also been sanctioned, which are ringfenced to the LS6 area with patrols taking place every night during the traditional freshers period. This approach, with additional funding from the Community Committee, has also led to revised patrol strategies with the Noise Nuisance Teams responding to increased numbers of complaints associated with various other occasions and events in the university calendar.

Prevention is also a key part of the new strategy with proactive visits being undertaken for first time low level complaints to provide advice about the consequences of their actions both in terms of the impact on neighbours and the consequences of breaching noise abatement notices. So far the Leeds Antisocial Behaviour Team has received approximately 400 complaints about separate student properties, the majority of which have received a proactive home visit. Noise abatement notices have also been served on students at 73 addresses following large scale parties. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Akhtar to sum up.

COUNCILLOR AKHTAR: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I would like to thank my colleagues for their input on to this discussion. I share their support for the particular projects they have talked about and it is great to hear such a broad range of issues being covered by the Inner North West Community Committee.

There was a lot covered in their speeches so I would quickly try to sum up on the issues my colleagues have raised. I would like to congratulate the Headingley ward Members and refuse services for the piece of work they have done. Locality working is all about working together to come up with the solution to deliver a better service

for the people of Leeds. The pilot collection in Headingley appears to be working really well and could perhaps pave the way for future changes in other areas in our community in North West.

Can I thank Councillor Towler and Councillor Walshaw for their comments concerning antisocial behaviour. The example they have really highlighted the importance of the Antisocial Behaviour Team, especially in the students area at the start of the term. The work that the teams do in the Inner North West and, indeed, across the city is about making things fair for the whole community and stepping in where people cross the line.

As Councillor Towler explained, an important part of the team's work is around educating students and other residents about the effects of their noise on others and the neighbours of ignoring the rules. It fits with the old saying that prevention is better than a cure. The example highlighted by Councillor Walshaw clearly shows that the Council and the partners in the community safety and the police are not afraid of using their powers in circumstances where the residents overstep the marks.

I would like to thank Councillor Harper for his speech. Rosebank, with its being in my ward of Hyde Park and Woodhouse, is a community asset which is closer to my heart. With Hyde Park and Woodhouse being an inner city ward, it is important that we protect and invest few green spaces, open spaces, that we have. There has been some fantastic improvement made to the Rosebank over the last several years under the watch of the Community Committee and I would like to echo what Councillor Harper has said – thank you to the Rosebank Millennium Green Trust and Groundwork for their continued commitment to improving the area.

On another note, it is great to hear from Councillor Pryor about the work the Community Committee are doing around the Employment and Skills agenda. Getting people into work is one of our key focus areas and it is really important for the local communities. Councillor Pryor rightly mentioned the many different avenues that are locally available for the people of North West Inner to approach the skills training, employment advice and tips.

I hope the Members will agree that there is some great work going on in the North West Inner covering a wide range of issues. I look forward to continuing the great work the Community Committee is doing in North West Inner and, of course, I will look forward to reporting back to the full Council in due course. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Akhtar. I think we are now at 4.40 and I am going to ask Councillor Wakefield to commence summing up.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Before I sum up I would like to join in with other colleagues in wishing those retiring from Council the very best for the future. I have said a lot about our colleagues Councillors Hanley, Morgan and Mitchell on Monday but I am sure we will get an opportunity to say a few words in the future. I would like to thank them for their work and their commitment for representing their communities in very difficult circumstances.

The other person I would like to thank is not here, he has disappeared again. I think he has left the room. He keeps jumping in and out, going round, going for a wee, coming back. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: That's an age thing!

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: It could be. Les has done 42 years and when he was in power I think a lot of us thought, he came with a reputation of what he was going to do was actually privatise all the Council stock, he was a Thatcherite and he was going to really outsource public service. Actually when he got into a position of power, he was one of the best Housing Members we had. He was extremely committed to Council houses, he worked extremely hard in East Leeds and other places that Robert has referred to and actually got on very well with George Mudie. I think George made him more left wing over the years! *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR: You are lucky he is not here!

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: I have got to say, the relationship with George was far better than the relationship that we could ever have with George, they were really old buddies! *(laughter)* I am sorry he is not in to hear that.

If can just go on to sum up. Firstly, just on the last contribution because what we heard today from the Inner West Community Committee from Headingley and Hyde Park... *(Councillor J L Walker entered the Chamber. (Applause))* I was just saying how you and George were the odd couple; you got on better with George than any of us and you probably still do. He made you more left wing and humanised you and you obviously taught him; you made him right wing, yes, it is true that.

Just on the last contribution, I think we heard today a real story about Members grasping the biggest opportunity in decades to turn round Headingley and Hyde Park. You actually saw people tackling unemployment, litter, noise and trying to bring back confidence to there and the evidence is overwhelming because as universities start to invest in student accommodation outside of those areas, there is a massive vacuum and I was delighted to hear such hard work and commitment and investment coming back to that area because those of us like Paul and myself who lived there over 30 odd years ago, we want to see that. We do not want to bring back the old times and the wild parties Paul has had *(laughter)* but we want to actually try to bring back that balance between families and students that made Headingley, and still does, and Hyde Park a great place to live with facilities, amenities and proximity to the city centre. Jim was another wild one that I had to calm down!

To go back to the Minutes, just to start off, I think Richard made some very important points about the Aire Valley Zone. When you pass some of the Enterprise Zones on the motorway, what you see is McDonalds and beefburger places – I do not know whether anybody has seen Sheffield's. You see distribution and actually some of them are struggling. What I think Richard has emphasised, if we are getting high value employment, we are getting robust employment that actually will provide I think, Richard, another 10,000 jobs in the next five to ten years. If you put that alongside the South Bank, 8,000 jobs, Kirkstall Forge, another two-and-a-half thousand, Thorpe Park and other places, all of them are outer city and all of them are near communities with high levels of unemployment.

I have said this before but I genuinely mean it, we have the best opportunity to eliminate NEETS, to eliminate unemployment and to tackle inequality that perhaps we have had for decades and decades. I think the Aire Valley is a good story and Councillor Grahame's example is the one where Richard calls it entrepreneur, I call it civic enterprise but it is actually seizing opportunities and generating money from our assets that probably we would not have done ten years ago.

On the other issues, I think Richard is right, this is a theme how successful the city is. There are two constraints that we have, two major challenges. One of them is housing and when you know within the City Region we have 90,000 people, households, on waiting lists for affordable homes. In this city Peter tells me it is 25,000. If you want to buy as a young person a house in York and Harrogate you have to be on £43,000 a year. In Leeds you have to be on £25,000. You will not be surprised to know the average salary in Leeds is £21,500. Rents have gone up five times more than income and last year the rents went up 8.5%.

I only use that to illustrate that we are actually in a real strong housing crisis and although John is here, this is not just here, this is across the country. It is across the Combined Authority in Yorkshire, it is across the City Region. I have never known such a housing crisis in my lifetime as we have now for young people there. Ownership between 25 and 35 has gone down from 59% to 36%. More people rent than own. I think that tells you a very powerful story of what we need to do so I was pleased when Jim and others and Councillor Venner and Councillor Nash and Councillor Groves were talking about the need to actually provide housing, to actually provide affordable housing.

You are right, if we said we have got 65% of using brown field for housing, we also need that not just in the inner city. I have actually heard a few comments today about shove all the housing in the inner city. If you come out to our way, as James and Mary will tell you, to Kippax and Garforth and areas like that, we are absolutely desperate for affordable homes, wherever they are, to keep the families and the communities in the villages that they have lived in for years and years through families and generations. I do think it is a really big issue.

I will just go back – 65% on brown field, how can we accelerate that? We are doing as you all know, as has been mentioned. One of the things that we missed an opportunity on, or the Government missed an opportunity is to give us more devolution on public assets. We work with the Homes and Community Agencies, we try to identify that but the real, real solution to this would have been to put all public assets into a brown field and give us the incentives that we do. The real responsibility for not building affordable homes lies with the Government. It is as simple as that and we are trying our best to run against a strong current and that is why I think we need to do more when we have a change of Government.

The other one that we have mentioned is transport and before I do I want to thank Councillor Macniven for her comments because here was a good example where disabled people stood up against Network Rail and won, and they won because they had us on their side. We have now got a place where they can be dropped off, people in wheelchairs and pushchairs can be given that.

I have mentioned HS2, the last one given it is the light. Councillor Robinson normally makes some really intelligent comments here. I was absolutely gobsmacked listening

and frustrated about the buses not going out. He never mentioned one thing – guess who is responsible for the worst public service? His Government with actually doing what they did in the 1980s and destroyed public buses, public transport. (*Applause*)

I was absolutely gobsmacked. We do have plans. We have got a very ambitious plan but what we really need to do is bring back public transport to public accountability and get the investment that we keep hearing from it. I move the Minutes, Lord Mayor, thank you. (*Applause*)

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

ITEM 10 – BACK BENCH COMMUNITY CONCERNS

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move to Back Bench Community Concerns. Councillor Gabriel.

- (1) Back Bench Community Concern – The need for high quality planning enforcement and building control

COUNCILLOR GABRIEL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. My Back Bench concern is about having a need for high quality enforcement and planning. This is an issue that is really dear to my heart because I think that planning is one of the things that can actually make or break a community and I think enforcement, when planners put lots of conditions in, then nobody then follows it up and how it then goes on and on that one little issue, I will just go through the little issues to tell you.

There is a shop at the bottom of the road who has got a wall that should be four foot high; he has made it seven foot high. Not very much but then again he should not have done it and it should be brought down. People phone up the Council, complain about it, officers do not respond to their phone calls or emails.

Another concern, there is a sandwich shop again at the bottom of the street who has got shutters on. He is not allowed to have shutters on so all day you have got a shop that is there for 20 years as a sandwich shop that added to the community has now got solid green shutters that now bring the community as if it is looking neglected.

The next three issues are issues that were brought to my attention by the local community at a Save Our Beeston meeting about the PFI on Fairfax Road. They had a generator that was running all night long. Officers did not respond and eventually it was turned off after a week of the local residents not getting any sleep, and the reason why the generator was on was because the night security man was cold, but the community and nobody enforced it. It was us as Councillors that got in contact with the PFI people that brought it to a stop.

The other one is as Asda on Old Lane. We are getting a new Asda. When it was raining the mud on the road was disgusting. They had closed the local footpath down so people could not have access. Things like this, and when people then phone up the Council and say this should not be allowed, the Council office glibly says, “Oh, we did not know they had started work yet”, so then the residents then report at a community meeting actually mocking the Council and saying, “They do not even

know what is going on in their own community. They put the conditions down but they do not even know about it.”

The third one was also another PFI build and this is an unfortunate one because it is the PFI in Holbeck and it is Jenkinson Lawn and it is actually a building site going through an estate, and this estate road is just full of mud. The brewery would not go down and deliver beer to Holbeck Working Men’s Club. You can imagine, crisis! *(laughter)* These are important issues, as you can see.

I feel that we as a community deserve a decent service from Planning and from Enforcement and that Enforcement either need to have more teeth, they need to act quicker and they then need to make sure that people abide by what we are saying. I can see from nodding faces that a lot of people have the same issues. You send emails to officers, you are lucky if they reply. Then if they reply, it is not a satisfactory reply so you email again and nobody responds.

As I said, this is an issue that is passionate to the community as well as myself because, as I said and I need to repeat it, planning can either make or break a community. If buildings are not maintained properly they do not have faith in the whole system so when Planning say these are the conditions, the community laughs because they say “Well, who is going to enforce it?”

I am really passionate. What I think should happen is, because I do not want this to go down a road and never happen, more training needs to go in with Planning officers on how to communicate with us as Councillors, how to communicate with members of the public, if they say they are going to phone back or email back do it because there is nothing annoys people more when people promise and then do not deliver.

Please, Councillor Gruen, would you take that to your department, my concerns. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Khan, you need to get a move on.

COUNCILLOR KHAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I just formally echo every word Councillor Gabriel has said and I will leave that there. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Well done! Councillor Gruen to respond.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Well, this is a genuine Back Bench concern but actually one that I recognise from many wards throughout the city, so I think it is a very well put case.

Let me say in general terms to start off with that in the first three quarters of last year we had 73 enforcement notices, four temporary stop notices, there was an extremely high profile case in Morley that we pursued in terms of a stop notice, for example.

In some cases the applicants or the appellants are very intransigent, go even through High Court action and make promises which are not delivered, and my ward colleagues and I know of one such case which, after seven years and massive intervention through Planning Enforcement, has still not been satisfactorily solved. I know Councillor Gabriel and Councillor Khan know these are not easy issues.

Between October and December 2014 we have issued 23 enforcement notices. Compare that to one in Manchester, one in Liverpool, one in Newcastle, 13 in Birmingham. What I am going to say is, it is not a lack of understanding or a lack of dedication or a lack of effort. It is also, I think now, I can say, our relationship between Planning Services and Legal Services is better than it ever has been in the past.

However, it is still not in our view as elected Members robust enough, quick enough, effective enough or good enough and I accept that challenge that there is more to be done. However, as the Chief Planning Officer will remind me, rightly, we live within very tight resources, a very tight cost envelope and we have to find those resources somewhere. My answer has been you need to find those resources from somewhere else because elected Members, Plans Panels, Plans Panel Chairs do not want to sit every three weeks agreeing the conditions we saw and then their obvious flouting of those conditions.

I accept the challenge, we need to do better. You are our eyes and ears and some of you more proactively than others but please keep pushing us so that we deliver an even better service. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Gruen. I think we will now break for tea. Can we be back for twenty-five past so we can get an early start. Thank you.

(Short break)

(2) Back Bench Community Concern – Heritage Bid at 2 Branch Road, Armley.

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now on to the second Back Bench Community Concern. Councillor James McKenna.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I speak on the Lottery grant that we are giving to 2, Branch Road Armley which most of you will know as Mike's Carpets. When I was elected to serve as an Armley Councillor in 1988 my first piece of case work was to ask Planning Enforcement to remove the abundant signage that was plastered all over number 2 Branch Road. My colleagues and me have written many letters complaining about the signage over the years and it was only in the last ten years that most of the signage was removed. I feel a bit like Angela Gabriel now because I am talking about planning enforcement. The sad part about it in all that time when I was trying to have these signs removed on a Grade II listed building I was actually Chair of the Planning Committee, so it does not leave a room for the rest of you to have something sorted out.

People will know that it is a Grade II listed building built as a Methodist Church in 1903. It has been sadly neglected for nearly 30 years and it is a well-known building along a prominent gateway into Leeds. As I said, Armley Councillors have been trying to resolve this matter for many, many years.

We were therefore delighted when the owner of the listed building received a Heritage Lottery grant of £500,000 which would have been 75% of the cost. The Council were also contributing £25,000 for essential repairs and renovations. This represented funding of 80% of the work necessary. The owner, under the terms of the agreement, agreed to contribute the other 20% for work not covered by the grant.

In late November last year the scaffolding was erected around the building, which I understand cost £30,000 and over £1,000 per day in rental while it was up. You will have noticed the scaffolding is not there now. There appeared to be a disagreement over payment between the owner and the architect and the scaffoldings were removed with very little work done. I am not sure exactly how much the scaffolding cost but I can tell you to date the owner has received £118,000 of the grant funding under the terms of the agreement and very little work has been done. It is public money and we are the guardians of public money and I know Richard is as concerned about this as me and will be commenting.

The owner has so far only contributed £33,000 to the project and he was required to submit information on 31st March, yesterday, regarding when the work will resume. The Council say they expect the scheme to recommence on site in May or June and it is definitely 2015, May and June of that year at the latest. However, we shall see these dates are adhered to, Lord Mayor. Alison Lowe will comment further on this matter and I would urge the Council to use their best endeavours and legal powers to ensure that the scheme is completed in line with the grant funding. It is public money, it is causing a lot of consternation to local people. The money is available, the owner needs to be told to get on with it or strong action should be taken against him. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: I know I have not got a long time but Armley has got a long history as an independent continuous settlement, over 1,000 years. It is even mentioned in Domesday as Ermelai and part of it, part of Town Street, survives from the 1790s. Because of this historical significance much of Armley Town Street is part of a conservation area and when the officers put it forward for a conservation area they talked about Armley having “peerless” individual buildings such as St Bartholomew’s and the library and as most of you will know Armley Mills is also a listed building.

2 Branch Road is really important to us and to Armley people who care about Armley’s historical past, which I think we need to be preserving. Even though the building is only from 1905 it is really, really significant to Armley. It is a former Primitive Methodist Church, it is the face of Armley, it is a major part of its canonical history as well as social history and we need to do something to preserve that building.

Echoing Angela’s comments earlier, let us fight to make sure that the owner does what he should to bring this building back up to use but also get Enforcement to act and act fast if he does not. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis to respond.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was just wondering how much officer time has been expended over the past decade or more, probably a lot more. I hate to think how many emails I have received over the years with the headline 2 Armley Branch Road. You just feel utterly frustrated that we got so far and it was like the caterpillar turning into a chrysalis; you saw that scaffolding go up, you saw the sheeting go over it and thought at long last something is happening with

this building. Then a matter of weeks later you see the scaffolding come down and you still see the same shrubs growing out of the windows and nothing has been done. It is absolutely frustrating I think for everybody, particularly when you think of how the rest of the THI scheme has gone just up the road, and that looks fantastic. There are older 19th Century shops and frontages restored to their former glory – great – but the big significant building remains an eyesore. I thought Alison was going to say Armley has got a history of a thousand years and Mike was selling carpets a thousand years ago! *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: It seems like it!

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: It feels like it, doesn't it?

The bottom line is, as Jim says, that it is very difficult. I think the Council has many times had these dealings where it is with third parties who you are trying to get round the table, often people who are reluctant to do anything to buildings they own regardless of what the rest of us would think was in their self interest, people just do not do anything, or where we intervene actually to benefit somebody else but they almost kick you in the teeth for doing it. This was perhaps one of the longest lasting. We eventually got the THI deal through and effectively it was scuppered, not through anything the Council did.

The bottom line is that there is a month's extension for a deal to be done but this is the last chance saloon for Mike to do something with his building. I understand that he has mended his fences with his architect, though not the contractor that he was using so he has got to get a new contractor in. There is a whole raft of new conditions being imposed on him to deliver what he has to deliver, but the bottom line is he has spent a lot of money, the Council is not going to double pay him for that, that is his loss. If he has got any sense in my view he just has to act, he has to bite the bullet, he has to ponder over why he acted as he has done when all the good officers of the Council and THI have been trying to get him to do the right thing and hopefully we will get some action within the next month. If we do not, it has to be some other kind of enforcement action and that is not going to be good for him either, so he has to make a decision – do I want this building upgraded with a large public grant going into it and we can all go away happy, or do I want to be in a position where I just dig my heels in and we have further action, further enforcement action and that is going to be expensive and painful for him.

The choice is his. I sincerely hope that he will think hard about it and he will comply with the conditions that we are imposing and get on with restoring the building to the condition it should be in. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

(3) Back Bench Community Concern – Overnight parking of HGVs in and around Wetherby

THE LORD MAYOR: We move to the third Back Bench Community Concern. Councillor Wilkinson.

COUNCILLOR WILKINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. For many, many decades Wetherby has been a traditional stopping off place for many types of road users, being on the A1 half way between London and Edinburgh. When the A1 was upgraded to motorway standard a relief road to the east of Wetherby between the motorway and

the town was constructed. This relief road included four stretches of road and five roundabouts and since its construction two of the stretches of road where the verges are not made up, heavy goods vehicles are regularly parking overnight. On one of these sections our Highways Department added kerbs and filled in the verges and this has had a very positive effect. However, on the other section where the verges are open, heavy goods vehicles continue to park overnight and most nights of the week there are around 20 vehicles there.

In an attempt to stop parking Highways introduced a Traffic Regulation Order that made stopping and parking illegal but even this has not stopped parking, nor has the issuing of dozens of fixed penalty notices by the local police.

So what is the problem? This is twofold. There are no toilet facilities in this area and drivers are using the verges and fields as a toilet or relieving themselves in their cabs and throwing plastic bottles containing urine on to the verges, bushes and fields where cattle graze and even worse is they discard plastic carrier bags containing other human waste. This is not only antisocial but also a health hazard. Added to this is the huge amount of litter, beer cans, soft drink bottles, fast food takeaway packaging etc. A month ago at a cost of around £1,000 this stretch of road was de-littered, but it is now just as bad as it was.

The other issue is that they leave very early in the morning, waking local residents as early as 4.00am when they start up their diesel engines. I received an email only last week from a local resident complaining that he, his wife and two teenage children were woken at 3.40am. These houses are only about 20 yards away from where they park. In some cases refrigerated vehicles have their units running all night.

Heavy goods vehicle drivers do a sterling job and play a huge part in keeping our supermarket shelves filled and the wheels of industry turning, and I do realise that they need to sleep or rest but surely not at the inconvenience of others when there is a solution ready and available locally. Only half a mile away is the Wetherby Service Station on the motorway where they cater for overnight parking of heavy goods vehicles with toilets and showers. So why do they not use this facility? Well, some do but a lot do not. Drivers receive an overnight allowance of £26 and it costs £19 per night to park and have the use of these facilities. It appears they prefer to park anywhere they can and pocket the allowance.

As already stated, adding kerbs to one section of the road has stopped illegal parking and I ask that the same be installed in this problem area and allow local residents relief from being disturbed night after night after night. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis to respond.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thanks, Lord Mayor. I have been notified of this as an issue previously but I was not aware that it was a moving issue where we do some work and then it shifts to somewhere else within the vicinity. I am certainly happy to come out and do a site visit not, I hope, at midnight though, to get an idea for myself as to quite what is going on, probably not over the next few weeks for obvious reasons.

It does seem to me to be one of those problems where you can say this is a Highways problem – it is far more than that. We need to involve Mark’s Community Safety people, we need to involve the North Yorkshire Authorities as well, Highways Agency, get everybody. I have that kind of worry that we could easily be for ever chasing a problem, saying “Right, we have got to go and de-litter again” and yes the till keeps on ringing as we keep on doing things that are not really solving a problem.

If you are happy with that I am more than happy to come out. You can perhaps take me for a tour round and we will then look at how we can get this as a joint agency working on how to solve this problem because it must be incredibly unpleasant for people who live nearby. We cannot tolerate that for any citizens within this city and we need to take action. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

(4) Back Bench Community Concern – To raise issues regarding parking at Horsforth rail station.

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now on the fourth Back Bench Community Concern, Councillor Townsley.

COUNCILLOR TOWNSLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Déjà vu. I am sorry for having to bring this back again yet so soon and yet only earlier today I have yet had more complaints about this very same area, and that is the parking around Horsforth Station.

We are all being encouraged to leave our cars at home and to travel to and from the city by public transport. This is commendable as a concept but, quite frankly, it does not work because of the lack of car parking facilities in and around Horsforth station. Certainly though the local residents who can walk to the station from Horsforth and Tinshill but the majority do not. I understand that there will be an increase in the rolling stock because of the newly constructed turnback adjacent to the station which allows a more frequent service between Horsforth, Leeds and vice versa. Councillor Cleasby and I escorted Councillor Richard Lewis and a senior transport officer of the Council around the neighbouring streets to show them at first hand the problem for both commuters trying to find parking spaces and local residents who are blighted by inconsiderate drivers who do park their cars on the street who obstruct driveways.

During this visit we did offer a couple of possible suggestions where we thought additional parking opportunities might be made available. I do not know if there is any response yet, Richard, but I will be pleased to hear from you if there is.

This current situation cannot continue, Lord Mayor. On the one hand we want commuters to use the train but on the other we need more available car parking spaces.

We are aware that drivers come from Harrogate and North Yorkshire and beyond. They take advantage of free car parking on our streets and the West Yorkshire discounted ticket pricing policy. Again as mentioned previously, we still have the Woodside Quarry housing development on the table or, as the developers describe it, the Horsforth Woodside Quarry. Provision has been made available for a multi-storey car park, I understand, to serve a rail halt. This would be an ideal spot for the additional car parking for this route. It would also alleviate the problems experienced at Horsforth. It would also mean direct access from the ring road. Incidentally, the

same vicinity residents on Horsforth Road are already experiencing already similar problems ahead of the new Kirkstall Forge rail station, so this also needs to be taken note of.

We ask again for you to look at this huge problem as soon as ever possible. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis to respond.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I sincerely hope we can solve this problem, Lord Mayor, because I honestly do not want to go for another drive with Brian Cleasby. *(laughter)* It took me several days to recover, Brian! I got a completely different view of you after experiencing your skills on the road!

Seriously, I have not had a response yet. There is a site within the vicinity, for everybody else's benefit, that looks potentially very good if the landowners were prepared to go down that path but I think we have to play that very cagily and you cannot rush people in that situation. That would automatically give us a bit of leeway. The other thing that is on the cards is through the Combined Authority for releasing some land around the station itself but even that is quite constrained to me and the exit is fairly horrendous.

This is a very difficult one. I think all the ward Members up that way have taken a view we do not really want any more residents only parking because all we are doing is just keeping moving the problem away from the station but we are not really solving it.

Let us get an answer from the private landowners. As I said, the Combined Authority is looking at what it can do but you have got an increasing problem and if you do get the London train to finally stop, that is going to make life far worse.

I think the long term issues are perhaps take a fair bit of discussion between us all and perhaps we do have to look at things in a different way as to quite what we can make. I do not think there is anything that is ruled automatically out as being a silly proposal.

It will be interesting to see how Kirkstall works when it comes on stream because it will be a six minute journey from Kirkstall into the city centre. Quite how people use that – I absolutely understand that as with everywhere, where parking is concerned it causes so much hassle. When there was a case recently of somebody getting shot over parking, I think it was in the States, you thought well, it is not surprising. People get very, very irate, they think they have a right to park outside their house under any circumstances; that is not the case but you understand how people do want to access their own homes. It is a difficult issue and I think we just have to look at every single option that is available and find out one that will work for the residents all around Horsforth. As I say, I have been round with you, I can see the problems it creates for local bus services as well as local residents and there is clearly an issue. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

(5) Back Bench Community Concern – Parking on pavements and grass verges

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ann Blackburn, the fifth Back Bench Community Concern.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to know what can be done to stop vehicles parking wholly or partly on pavements and verges. I know this is not only a problem in my ward but is a problem in many areas of Leeds, yet little is done about it unless the vehicles are causing an obstruction.

I have had to contact the police in the past when vans have parked partly on the pavement outside their place of work as they are causing an obstruction on this well-used pavement to local residents with prams and buggies and also wheelchairs, who cannot get past.

The police have contacted the company concerned and it stops for a while but in this case it is a company that is parking its commercial vehicles partly on the pavement and the road is not very wide and they want to make more room on the road for other traffic to get through, particularly as sometimes they are double parked. The company has outgrown its premises but they are still there and they tell me that they do not have the money to move but their parking causes problems for the local area.

There is another case where a local shop which has been selling sandwiches for many years but now has a tea and coffee machine so that where people used to call in for a sandwich and take it away to eat, now they buy a sandwich and a cup of tea or coffee and have their snack in their vehicle parked on the slip road outside. As some of these vehicles can be wagons and they end up parking partially on the verge, this has caused one well-used and parked on verge now to collapse.

I have spoken to the shop concerned but, of course, they are not going to do anything about it as they fear losing custom, so it is up to our Highways Department to build up the verge again and put some bollards there or something to stop the same thing happening again and they have said they will look into the matter and see what can be done.

There are other areas where people just park on grass verges to get their vehicle off the road as they have no driveway and want the verges tarmaced, and some people who have a driveway but park their vehicles on the verge anyway as it is easier to set off from there.

Whatever the case, when the weather is bad the result is that the verges end up being churned up and looking a complete and utter eyesore. Surely we as an Authority can make some bylaw or is there an existing one which we can put into operation that can urge people not to do this and where there are empty garages available in an area, urge them to rent a garage as that is what they are there for.

Also, I would ask if Housing can do something about Council garages that are used to store items instead of a vehicle so that we can get them back into use for what they were meant to do – house vehicles on the estates and proactively advise them accordingly. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson to respond.

COUNCILLOR DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think certainly the last three concerns have had a running theme, have they not, around parking and the issues of parking and it is one of those I think that as ward Members probably cross the piece we can all relate to in one form or another. We have all got the same set of issues.

In terms of where we stand in the law and enforcement, as things stand at the moment, as we are aware, pavement parking is not illegal outside London but as has been pointed out, where there is an obstruction, where a car is blocking a dropped kerb, where there are incidents where you are blocking somebody's access to and from their own property we can and will take action.

I do think it is fair to say, and it has probably been a common experience of us all, without wanting to be critical of partners within the police service I do think a little bit of a grey area for a long time about where responsibility lay. I had a really good example (not for the person it happened to) in my ward. Garforth Station, a lady parked her car over somebody's drive and when she was asked what she was doing her reply was, "I am in a hurry" and then she came back at five o'clock to find her car had gone because it had been towed away. In the most extreme examples I have had some good results working with West Yorkshire Police but it is a mixed picture and I think part of it is a genuine twofold problem.

Firstly, I do not think there is a clear enough understanding of where responsibilities lay between the Council and West Yorkshire Police and secondly, it has to be said, when we have all got Community Police Teams working in our area we want them to prioritise and sometimes the priorities that they are acting upon, let us be perfectly frank about it, take priority over this issue.

There are things that can be done and certainly should be done. I think the narrative I have been having with West Yorkshire Police this year is very much along the lines of where we can enforce let us do it, where there are clear breaches let us act upon them and we are starting to see a slow change in behaviours around that.

There are certain things I am less inclined to look at and one of the things that is often put to me is, at least if you do not want a churned grass verge tarmac it over, put some flags on it. I am really reluctant to do that and speaking to somebody from the Green Party, we have issues certainly in my ward around flooding and the last thing we want to do is create more and more hardstanding, tarmacs, flags, concrete. That is not going to be a solution that I think is going to have a long term part of our picture.

It really is about, I believe, speaking with the police and other agencies and saying look, this is where we all stand, these are what our responsibilities are. Often I get delegations coming to see me, not least from a guy called Victor Jackson who does a lot of work with blind and partially sighted people and it is a huge issue for them. We did a piece of work a few years ago around bins on streets and access to pavements for people but it has never really got the amount of momentum and I certainly think it is something that is worth looking at.

Just finally, looking at the light, there has been some investment through the HRA Environment Fund, I know you have had a £30,000 investment in your ward around the Bawn area, but clearly there is more work to do and it is something that is certainly on my radar. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

ITEM 11 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – PLANNING MATTERS

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. We are now moving to the final segment of the meeting, which are the White Papers. The first White Paper is in the name of Councillor Carter, but Councillor Andrew Carter is unwell and therefore is not here this afternoon.

Under Council Procedure Rule 12.5(b) Councillor Carter has given authority to Councillor John Procter to move White Paper 1 on Planning Matters. Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Leader of Council shouts over “It’s promotion”. I am not sure about that!

Lord Mayor, I am please to be moving this White Paper motion in this Council Chamber today because it is of vital importance to all Members of Council and, indeed, all the future citizens that we hope to represent in Leeds and that is namely where people will live. We touched on some of these matters earlier on in the meeting.

Not only is it important that the City Council provides the right number of houses – and I say the City Council provides, of course we are not volume house builders so all that the City can do is allocate land for volume house builders to provide the right houses in which people can live.

We have always had the view that the figure arrived at of 70,000 was a number that was way, way too high. I know there are Labour Members who jump readily at examples within their own ward and quote examples of people they may either know or in their surgeries who have not been able to either get a house or afford a house. Let me tell you, by allocating land for 70,000 houses it is not going to bring that day ever closer for any of those people because it is, of course, all about people being able to afford the accommodation at the end of the day.

How do we arrive at the 70,000 housing figure? The City Council commissioned several pieces of work and the Scrutiny Board I chaired at the time looked into the numbers. On the evidence that was provided one would think that there was no other alternative. There were other alternatives in fact, Lord Mayor, and what we now know and was not made clear to us at the time by officers, and that is true for Members on this side and I suspect other Members, certainly the Labour Members were unaware, that there was a very heavy weighting in the make-up of those numbers and so it was not purely the number of the Office of National Statistics and the population growth, nor was it then the other element that plays an important part, the Household Formation Projection. It was actually the third element that caused us, as it were, a problem and this is the element which most people really do not understand, can I say, Lord Mayor, and that is something called the Econometric Modelling that was done.

What that effectively does is it will spit out a number of jobs that are envisaged will be created, but our advisers do not pick a number, they present a range. What happened in this instance in Leeds was that the top of the range was selected, Lord Mayor, and that is why we have 70,000, that is why we have, as it were, a problem.

You can say creating jobs is a great idea, I agree it is. The result of the policies we adopted in this Council, though, will need the importation of approximately 40,000 people, that is presuming everybody in this city will have a job already, into the city. The other sub-policies mean that people are not permitted under the terms of the policy and its analysis to commute, so therefore you have to build the houses to accommodate the additional people in the city of Leeds.

That is where the problem arises from, Lord Mayor, that is why the Core Strategy has the number in it that it has but that is also the explanation as to why those of us who deal in these matters on a regular basis in Planning just could not for the life of us understand where the numbers came from in the first place. It was a choice, Lord Mayor, that this city made. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: I formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, my amendment seeks to adjust what was Councillor Carter's original, which is now Councillor Procter's motion without changing it very much except to mention the outcome of the Cottingley Springs planning inquiry which may have been made known after he had drafted his motion.

The Office of National Statistics seems to be staffed by bean counters rather than forecasters. They do well when carefully counting mountains of statistics such as the 2011 census returns but their projections have tended to be unreliable and should be treated with caution. They are like people who can add, take away and multiply but cannot quite manage long division.

For projections we need to look elsewhere, perhaps to those in our universities some of whom have a proven record of reliability, though our best option would have been to have built the 2011 census returns into the LDF Core Strategy when they were published in the spring of 2013.

It may seem a quibble but it is a fact that the LDF Core Strategy New Dwellings Building Target is 74,000. 70,000 would be what was left after taking account of demolitions so you still have to actually build 74,000. As a staunch defender of the Green Belt and green field land, I am sure that both Councillor Carter and Councillor Procter will have rejoiced at the trouncing of the Cottingley Springs planning application which failed all national and local planning policy tests including failing to match the LDF Gypsy and Traveller Housing Accommodation Policy H7, which was totally and amicably re-written at a special LDF hearing last May.

The days when the city Council gave two choices to gypsies and travellers – Cottingley Springs or unauthorised encampment – must be at an end. In Morley in 2010 we supported the Nepshaw Lane gypsy and traveller site and that was the first private site in Leeds to get planning permission without going to appeal since at least 1990. At Kidacre Street in Hunslet, which was originally intended as a short term stop gap pending the expansion of Cottingley Springs, we gave it a three year life when it went to City Plans Panel last October.

Every Member of Council should read the Cottingley Springs Report. Some of the Council's evidence and some of the asides in cross-examination seem to show a bias against gypsies and travellers which may have amounted to the kind of discrimination against minorities which public bodies should be especially careful to avoid. The refusal was made on clear planning grounds by an Inspector, not on a whim of Eric Pickles.

Kirklees Knoll dealt with green field PAS land rather than Green Belt and it was a tortuous and hard fought battle and all credit to those who saw it through. Planning Officers expressed their true professional opinions and Member of the public fought alongside them. Unfortunately, although some of us tried hard at Panel we were not able to save the smaller piece of PAS land across Calverley Lane just to the south-west which was the subject of a separate application.

We are having a bit of a holiday with regard to housing targets as the LDF Core Strategy Inspector did eventually agree to allow reduced annual building targets in the first phase of the LDF. Unfortunately the other side of that coin is that annual targets in the latter phases have been increased to try to still get to 74,000 by the end of March 2028 and they have been inflated further by carry forwards arising from failures to meet even the reduced annual target. Really we need to be concentrating on affordability rather than chasing unattainable inflated targets.

My Lord Mayor, I move the amendment which I believe adds to and strengthens Councillor Carter's original, which is now Councillor Procter's, without taking anything away from it. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Varley.

COUNCILLOR VARLEY: I formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Well, Lord Mayor, I am moving the amendment on behalf of our Group and reflecting on the last six months and the last three Council meetings, I thought what are the events that have happened in this city? We see the average debt for housing association tenants in arrears has increased massively because of the bedroom tax; right to buy has continued apace, depleting our stock further; Shelter have confirmed that only one affordable home has been created for every ten sold.

We are making massive progress with our Housing Growth Strategy and we have not had a single comment from the Opposition on any of that in the last six months. The comment we have had in the November meeting, in the January meeting, even in the Budget meeting is, "Can we talk about site allocations please?" and "Can we talk about housing figures please?" I know it is meat and drink to Councillor Leadley and you can tell by the way he throws himself into this amendment how thoroughly he is enjoying the details of every last projection and every last quantile and quartile of every last nought and figure in every single line.

I am saying to you, let us elevate this debate to what it is actually really about. I have to say, Councillor Procter, we happen to disagree on the timing of some of this. The

Scrutiny Board has been involved closely throughout all of this and they have played a very great and significant part.

So where are we? We have a Core Strategy. That Core Strategy everybody is euphoric about when Kirklees Knoll gets the nod in our favour and everybody says “Well, it is our strategy haven’t we done well? It is our five year land supply, haven’t we done well?” Well actually, no. It is our Core Strategy, it is our five year land supply because we are the ones who voted for it. You guys either abstained or kept your hands down or voted no.

I have promised on a number of occasions that we will monitor and review and I have come out recently to say the latest statistics, which is one set in a series of statistics, gives sufficient rise for us to have instructed officers to review the assumptions that were made and come back to us as a Council in the same timescale as the site allocations to tell us whether any further action is required.

What more do you want us to do? Do you want us to tear up the plan that has just given us the biggest success, the first massive and major appeal that we have won when a few years ago every appeal was lost? Do you want to tear all that hard work up? You do not. Actually there is more that we have in common, certainly with the Conservative Group and our Group in terms of the need for a plan. There is more that we have in common. Let us just forget the short term politics.

It is not our concern in here what happens to Alec Shelbrooke and what happens to your friend in Pudsey. That is not our concern. Our concern is we shall build homes, as the Leader was saying earlier on, affordable homes for people who need homes. Let us do that and let us just keep our nerve and see what the statistical review comes up with and then take the appropriate action. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Rafique.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: I formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I just initially say on behalf of my Group and myself a personal thank you to Les Carter. I appreciate it is his last meeting today. Les has been a feature of the Council for as long as I can remember and has been a very good friend to Leeds, a very supportive friend to Leeds and I think Council will be a diminished place when he is not with us any longer. Thank you, Les, on behalf of all of us. *(Applause)*

I think it has been clear from Day One the numbers were wrong. We said it at the discussion around the Core Strategy, we have continued to say it and at the time of the Core Strategy there was a vote in favour of the Core Strategy when we supported Tom’s amendment which effectively would have delayed the process for a month which would have allowed us to get some more accurate figures.

Anyway, unfortunately, we are where we are and we have accepted a principle for development within the city which will, in my opinion, unless we do something about it, take away from the citizens of Leeds a considerable amount of Green Belt and will cause a considerably large number of very expensive houses to be built.

I think there is a slight discrepancy in the view between what is the Core Strategy, what is the SHLAA, what is the five year land supply, because actually they may be inter-related but one is not dependent on the other, so a five year land supply was gained as much by simply pinning down housing developers into saying whether they would develop sites they already had planning permission for rather than actually going and taking on new sites.

Again, we have touched on the issue of affordable and on more than one occasion I have said this Council has been lamentable in its drive to provide affordable housing for people in Leeds. We have never met our targets, we have always – and I am not including myself in this – been persuaded that our policy was onerous on developers and that we should allow them to produce a reduced take on affordable housing. We cannot really complain about the lack of affordable housing in Leeds – why? Because it is our fault. We have not been robust enough with developers to say to them “Our policy is affordable housing at X% and it varies across the city, that is what you will provide. This is a non-discussion point.”

I notice the light has gone red, Lord Mayor. We will be supporting the review because we think it is a sensible way forward. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Just to be clear, the press release that I have that quotes Councillor Gruen, it does not go as far as you have just said today. Are you now saying that you are carrying out, in tandem with the Site Allocations Plan a review of housing numbers? Even to prove that people like John and I are wrong. Are you currently carrying out a review of that?

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: Do you want me to answer?

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Because looking at this that was not what you said so I am just looking for clarity on that because it makes a difference to what I am going to say. What I was going to say is that you gave an answer to Councillor Procter earlier on that it is going to be in the autumn before the information is coming back on the Site Allocations Plan. Surely we have enough brain power both within the Council and within the city to get an analysis carried out in tandem at the same time, and if it turns out to be the same figures at the end then the Site Allocations Plan has to go ahead and I would then have to say right, I was wrong. OK? I am willing to accept that that is a possibility.

Provided the figures that he comes up with are sustainable and deliverable I think we have got to explain that to the public because there is a great deal of mistrust going on in the public. If you take Aireborough as an example, where can development go in there? The A65 is absolutely clogged up. They have got no more brown field sites left because they have had them developed over the years, they have taken them, maybe reluctantly in some cases but they have taken the development at the end of the day so how do they explain that to the residents there as to what they are going to do? How do they explain the wider City Region issues in terms of the problems that Bradford are causing because they have not done what Leeds was congratulated on doing, is the duty to co-operate so that we can all work together in those particular areas.

The Inspector, yes, he agreed and said that the Core Strategy was deliverable. What he did not say was that the other scenarios would not also be deliverable, so you have not explained why the other scenarios are deliverable that were put forward at the time.

What I would say to you is that you took at face value the RSS figures which were centrally produced by the last Labour Government and you almost took them word for word to come with the same figures. I think the evidence is now there that there is at least a question mark over these particular figures and what I would ask you is to clarify that what you said is exactly my interpretation, you are going to carry out in tandem now and that possibly some Green Belt sites are going to be saved as a result of this. Thanks very much, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I am speaking in favour of Councillor Gruen's amendment and more specifically against the other motions which say, and I am paraphrasing, "Following the most recent Office of National Statistics Household Projections we want to tear up years of work and start again." They fail to acknowledge that the projections are simply predictions and will, of course, continue to change in the future over 20 years.

We know, for example, economic forecasts are never exactly correct and the same goes for this prediction and others. This suggestion is therefore to have a new plan each time a new prediction is made and start again, and I will repeat what I said in full Council on 12th November. In five years' time our projections will all be wrong, guaranteed. What do we do in two years' time when your projections that we come up with again are wrong? It is frankly madness to operate policy on those terms. No forecast can be relied upon as concrete evidence but should be used carefully along with other evidence.

Let us look at the system we are working under. We have to pick a figure and have that figure approved by an Inspector – not a range but a figure, and this is under your Government. This is the root of the cause of all the discussions we are having. As we said in Council many times now, the process is very lengthy and it will cost the taxpayer dearly each time we go through it, and while we are discussing and revising as a wholesale review, as he suggests, the Green Belt becomes open for applications which we would find very difficult to defend at appeal.

We all welcome successfully upholding our cases at appeal recently and that is in no small part down to the adopted Core Strategy. I am very happy this new prediction is adding to our evidence base and we will use it along with all the other information that we currently have, but we already know it does not take account of employment growth and it requires careful examination as it was based on a recessionary period. Our officers need to evaluate this properly and come back to us with any recommendations which we can then consider.

This is what we have always said we would do. Councillor Gruen in the Wetherby News, 23rd September, said, and I quote:

“We have said we commit to building in an earlier review to take account of any new information such as changes in population and household forecasts, the latter of which are not yet available.”

I have said it before that the Opposition want to have the best of both worlds. Following them will only lead to a bit of chaos, which we all in the end will pay the price of. We should carry on with the plan we have agreed and for that reason I am supporting Councillor Gruen’s amendment to carry on with the work we are doing. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Walshaw.

COUNCILLOR WALSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Once again we are talking about Planning and I am very happy to follow Councillor Charlwood speaking about this.

I think we can all agree in this room that planning matters and what is planning in this context? It is what, where and when, really, is it not, in terms of housing. Why does this matter? We all know we have got a lot of developers and landowners circling the proverbial goldfish bowl of Leeds, looking to take big bites out of us and build what they want where they want and when they want, and I suggest they are not interested in building communities but I suspect every Councillor in this Chamber really is.

How do we address this? At all times our priority since I have been on the Council, since I have been a member of the Planning team, as it were, our priority has always been to provide this city with a Core Strategy that is fair and sound, a Site Allocations Process that is progressive and beyond all that, sound figures, sound econometrics, sound household numbers that the Government can look at and have their Inspectors judge.

Good and OK and that is important. What does that give us as a city? That gives us planning armour and at all times it is beholden on us as the administration to keep that armour as strong as possible so that we can help our communities manage growth and manage development – again what, where, how and when is really important to our communities. We see that in our email inboxes, in our mail bags all the time, don’t we? That is important, armour is really, really important.

As Councillor Gruen pointed out, these are our numbers and this is our Core Strategy and we voted to have that really strong planning armour and I am looking over at the Opposition Benches and all the parties there voted to have much weaker planning armour, or potentially weaker planning armour because the one thing we do not do, absolutely do not do, is we do not act on a no evidence basis. As Councillor Charlwood and Councillor Gruen have pointed out, this administration at all times is going to be evidence-led and that is important, is it not? We have to be evidence-led. These latest figures, as Becky pointed out, are one more step along the road of having an improved evidence base and that is to the good, and we will, as Councillor Gruen has pointed out, review these numbers in due course and that will lead to a review of sites. Of course it will, that is responsible, sensible Local Government and that is what this administration is all about.

I think it is important that we get this message across to our communities that at this point now speaking in this Chamber, this city is better prepared to face the planning

and housing challenges that at any point in, what, the previous decade, two decades? We know we are on this side of the house anyway.

Just one final point, as we are running into a General Election, 2015 and there is even a hashtag that is GE2015 - very modern. One thing we need to do, just a final point, is we need to prevent developers and landowners banking land, banking commissions which holds back housing growth in this city which makes it harder for us to build the communities we want and channel development exactly where we want. Guess what, there is a way we can end land banking and we can end hording of permissions – we can all vote Labour in May, how about that! *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: And double the number of houses we are going to build.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Firstly, if you would indulge me, Lord Mayor, I would like to just say something about Les Carter. The first chance I have had today and I will not have it again.

Believe it or not, Les, the first ever White Paper motion I put, the first Green Party White Paper motion to this Council was, unbelievable, seconded by Les. I have got to say I regretted it as soon as he opened his mouth but he did it.

Les and I have got what you might call fairly different views on politics.

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Cars!

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Your Mercedes, yes, but the fact is I think Les has been a great guy for this Council and I hope you have a really good retirement. I have to say that. *(Applause)*

Going back to the housing figures, this is episode four of the serial, isn't it? I would be a lot more confident about this if I could have the confidence that this went forward. Councillor Gruen will talk about brown field first and all that and we all agree with that, but I will go back to when we introduced UDP and we put all this Green Belt land on deposit to take it out of Green Belt, and I have a field in my ward that a developer put a planning application when it was on deposit, we turned it down, the then Secretary of State who happened to be from Labour at that time, we said it was premature, the Secretary of State OK-ed it, we have got houses on it. We had houses on it when the Inspector was making his judgment on whether it should come out of the Green Belt. That Inspector said it should remain Green Belt but there were houses on it.

The fact is, whatever we put on deposit is development land. We can try and say all right, brown field first and try and sort of stage it, but at the end of the day the Secretary of the State and the Inspectors will have the final say. If those figures are too large, which obviously they are and the evidence says that, then that is wrong. If we can have a review at the same time and make sure that the land we do not need is safeguarded, then we can move forward.

I do not know if Peter said that, it sounded like he said that when he was speaking. I hope it is right because the fact is all of us, we do not want to put land in the hands of volume developers that is not needed and I think that goes across everybody in this Chamber.

Please accept the Tory motion. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter to sum up.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is right that we should listen closely to the words of Councillor Gruen. I am still not quite sure, despite listening closely, quite what he said.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: It is a real skill.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Indeed, and honed over the years, but it is a very important point and clearly one that we want clarifying urgently.

The amendments to the motion to not add to it, they do not particularly detract from it but actually you could have all agreed and supported the motion in actual fact if we believe what Councillor Gruen actually says.

Councillor Charlwood picks on an interesting point, the ONS projections were done in a recessionary period. She has been listening to the officers in this Council too much and not paying enough attention to the national stage. I have got a very helpful email which I am happy to pass to Councillor Gruen from the relevant department and the then Ministers but, more importantly, the civil servants actually give the guidance and even a person to talk to in Central Government who will give this Council the guidance on how to look at that precise matter in terms of recessionary planning.

What is clear, however, and what the note from Central Government does clearly state here is that a House of Commons Library note, which is all your officers are relying on, is not the policy of the Government. The policy of Government is clear that all the latest information should be used when forming a plan. That is clear and that is what we firmly believe we should use, Lord Mayor.

What we have seen here though, I think, today, is a clear division that I have alluded to before. We see Councillor Gruen, who I know is supported in some of these matters by the likes of Councillor Dobson, Councillor Wakefield and other Members who represent outer areas who find it very challenging to accommodate housing developments on Green Belt land in particular and strenuously protested their case when it came to site allocations; then we have Councillor Charlwood and Councillor Walshaw and other Labour Members who think 70,000 is just fine and we should just get on and build the 70,000, perhaps a few more besides. The Labour Group on this Council needs to get their story straight. If it is Councillor Gruen's version you need to support what he is saying; if he is saying we are having a review, an early review in parallel with site allocations, that is what we have been calling for and we would be delighted to support him if, indeed, he did say that. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, we are now going to move to the vote.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Recorded vote, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Recorded votes.

(A recorded vote was held on the amendment in the name of Councillor Leadley)

THE LORD MAYOR: There are 90 Members present, 15 voted “Yes”, 15 abstained and 60 voted “No”. That amendment is LOST.

We now move to the vote on the second amendment in the name of Councillor Gruen.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: There are 90 Members present, 60 have voted “Yes”, 20 abstentions and 10 “No” votes, so that is CARRIED.

That now becomes the substantive motion and we now we will take the substantive motion in the name of Councillor Gruen. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 12 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to the second White Paper in the name of Councillor Judith Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you. The stark reality going into the coming election is that young people have been systematically let down by the Coalition Government across the country and here in Leeds. Economic figures released yesterday confirm that our young people are bearing a disproportionate burden of austerity imposed on them over the last five years. On top of the headline grabbing tripling of tuition fees, slashing of Educational Maintenance Grants, we now have higher unemployment figures for young people, a massive upsurge in zero hours contracts, temporary unsustainable jobs with more and more young people not knowing from week to week what pay them will bring home if, indeed, any at all.

We see the results of this as we have heard earlier, ever increasing delay for young people to get quality housing, higher incidence of serious stress-related conditions and health problems coupled with an increasing number growing up in poverty.

Leeds is proud to put the needs of children and young people at the heart of its growth strategy, building a compassionate city matching the needs of our business and public sector partners with the needs of our existing and future workforce.

I am delighted that OFSTED recognised our approach and commended us for it. Developing a clear understanding of the future jobs being created and the skills that will be required has been a top priority for this Council, understanding the additional needs of our most vulnerable young people, enabling them to successfully access training, apprenticeships and the workplace.

The Leeds economy is forecast to grow at 2.5% for the next five years, creating up to 40,000 jobs. The business services and digital sectors are predicted to grow most rapidly. Manufacturing remains an important sector with about 30,000 jobs. There

will be new opportunities requiring increasingly higher levels of skills. However, middle tier jobs are projected to decline. As a result, low pay will be an increasing problem and the rungs on the ladder of career progression are moving further apart. We must, therefore, not only equip our young people with the skills to access the labour market but also the skills and ability to progress within in.

We have proved time and again, for example with the Devolved Youth Contract that, given the resources and power we need, we will massively out-perform programmes controlled from Westminster, a critical factor in our case for more devolution, a call for an end to top-down domination from Westminster.

The long list of policies from the Opposition is, I have to say, predictable. We have gathered in a strong, solid evidence bank of what works in Leeds. Through our child friendly ambitions we are making a difference in Leeds and we are asking the Government to recognise our achievements, to build on our success and to enable us to transform the life chances of our young people, giving us the freedoms to put the needs of children and young people at the heart of everything we do for the benefit of all the people of Leeds and to help realise the ambition to be the best city in the United Kingdom. Government (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Smart to second.

COUNCILLOR SMART: I wish to formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb to move an amendment.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Just before I start I would like to add my own small tribute to Councillor Carter, who is my room mate upstairs. I say room mate, he affords me a very small desk in the corner but he took me in when nobody else would have me! (*laughter*) Lord Mayor, he also allows Councillor Cohen into our office on a very, very small desk with a very, very small chair.

It is typical of Les, in all seriousness, the fantastic advice and support he gives to new Members whenever they come on to the Council and I will never forget how kind he has been to me over the years and he will be sadly missed from our Group and across the Council, I am sure.

Lord Mayor, listening to Councillor Blake there you would think she was living in some kind of fantasy land. You would imagine that prior to 2010 we lived in some kind of social utopia where all was well in the world and everyone lived on above average incomes. It is as if all the dire predictions they have wrongly made over the last five years had actually come true. They predicted mass unemployment – that was Balls; that the economy would flatline, do you remember that - that was Balls; the deficit would go up - that was Balls; they said youth unemployment would go up - that was Balls; they said there would be riots in the streets – that was Wakefield but it was still Balls.

Lord Mayor, it is a nonsense, the economy is improving, the economy is growing. This Government has done more than any in generations for young people. It is absolutely absurd for Councillor Blake to stand there and decry a world that just does not exist. In the real world things are actually happening. There are 500,000 more apprenticeships than there were under the last Government. There are many, many,

many young people who are unable to access the jobs that are available. Why is that? Why is it that those people who spend their entire education under a Labour Government are not equipped with the skills they need to get on in the world of work today? It is because they failed miserably, they left a massive debt for all of those young people to repay. That is the worst legacy and the worst start you can possibly give to our young people, to leave them a trillion pounds of debt to pay off not only over their lifetimes but probably over their children's and their children after that.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Now who is in fantasy land?

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Lord Mayor, one thing Councillor Blake has proved, and the OFSTED report is incredibly welcome but many of the improvements we have seen have come from Central Government initiatives. We applaud the success of the Families First Initiative.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Zero hours contracts, bedroom tax, child poverty to name a few.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: They talk about zero hours contracts, Lord Mayor – would they like to tell us the names of the 36 Labour MPs that employ people on zero hours contracts? Let us hear those names because it is Labour all over, they say one thing and do another. They are the biggest hypocrites in the world.

Lord Mayor, the worst thing that could possibly happen for the young people in this country is a Labour Government that would take us back into recession that would borrow more, would spend more, would waste more, would put up taxes and would plunge the country back into recession.

We have heard only this week they do not trust people to have a say on Europe, they do not trust people with anything. They want to take more and more control. The idea that they are going to give more control to this Council – they had 13 years to do all these things and they did nothing. What powers were devolved under the 13 years of the last Labour Government? Nothing. Everything that has come down, we are making progress.

Lord Mayor, as I said earlier on today, the best thing that this country can do is stick with the long term plan of a Conservative-led Government and contrary to what Councillor Walshaw said, vote Conservative on May the whatever date it is!
(Applause) Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR S BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am supporting Councillor Lamb's amendment. Firstly, I would like to congratulate all the staff in Children's Services who have been working so hard with our families and children, which has been officially recognised by the OFSTED result being graded as "Good". This is an impressive result in the national context of more children entering care in the challenging economic times.

Reading Councillor Blake's White Paper one would think that the Coalition had done nothing to improve the lot of our children in Leeds. Perhaps I can remind her of some of the Liberal Democrat policies of early intervention, which made a real difference to

our families and children and which has made a positive contribution to the success of Children's Services in Leeds.

In Early Years we increased the number of free child care hours to 15 for three and four year old children and introduced free nursery places for the 20% most deprived two year olds, expanding this to 40% a year later.

Free school meals were introduced to ensure that the Reception and Year 1 and 2 children of parents on very low incomes had at least one hot meal a day, something that was linked to better concentration levels.

We have the lowest number of NEETS in Leeds since the financial crisis compared to the Labour Government's figures, which were rising at a rate of almost 2% year on year. This drop in NEETS is due to the increase in the participation age to 18, the Youth Contract, the Work Programme, the introduction of work placements and the increased number of apprenticeships.

There are 5% more school leavers eligible for free school meals entering university since 2009 and in the most deprived areas the chances of getting into university have risen by a third in the last five years, due to a doubling of the good GCSE grades by poorer students.

Leeds has benefited financially from early interventions, receiving over £6m for the Troubled Families Programme which helps to turn families' lives around; £4.8m from the Innovation Fund; and an impressive £90,278,000 between 2012 and 2015 in Pupil Premium payments which improves the attainment of our most disadvantaged young people.

That is a total of over £100m from this Government to support our children in Leeds.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Everybody so far has been nice about Les Carter so I am going to remember the first time I was a timid newly elected Councillor and spoke in this Council Chamber. Les was sat over *there* somewhere and I was sat over *there* and Les made every effort by pulling faces, waving his hands around and doing whatever he could to try and put me off my speeches. With that memory of how Les welcomed me to the Council Chamber it is a great pleasure to wish you a long and happy retirement! *(laughter)*

Turning to Councillor Blake's White Paper, and I wanted to speak particularly about the need to have improved transport services to help people, particularly young people, into work. I think starting off looking at some of the facts about how do we actually, on a very, very practical level get people back to work, I think it is looking at some of the services for job seekers. 60% of job seekers have said if the train service is worse their chances of getting a job would be less. 77% of job seekers have no access to a car and when you get on to people looking for work aged between 16-24 that rises to 87% of people looking for work have no access to a car. That is why it is absolutely crucial we have a strong transport network in place.

Job seekers also need affordable transport as well and I think we have looked at an era where certainly bus fares have risen by 26% recently and the Government has just stood by and let that happen. This is the background we look at, this is some of the barriers people find when they are getting into work and that is why we need to have a strong and positive transport system to help people do that.

Again, I think it is also looking at some of the issues about accessibility to work as well and how actually transport networks work in this city. Again, you might think that Leeds city centre is the best place in Leeds to get to in terms of public transport but try, as Councillor Selby was telling me about some of his constituents from Seacroft, try getting from Seacroft to the city centre if you start work at six in the morning and you cannot do it because the buses are not running at that time in the morning. We need, to get people back to work, the kind of transport system and the kind of investment that we only see in London in this country and that is why we need to bring it about here.

Moving on to what the White Paper said about actually how we need to have the powers and responsibilities to be able to make things better, we have shown we can do lots of things better. Judith talked about the Youth Contract and I talk about travel. The Government sat by and let bus fares rise year on year and they have even accepted that their own changes to bus service operators grants would put bus fares up by 7%. What have we done? We have acted locally in Leeds as a Labour administration - from September everybody under the age of 19 will travel on the buses for half fare, whether they are at school or college or whether in apprenticeship or work. This is a Labour administration making a difference. *(Applause)*

We have also kept the scheme going we have got so that unemployed people get access to free Metro cards to get to interviews and get to work. We have made bikes available for free for people getting into work, getting to things. That is because we can demonstrate we are able to deliver and we are able to deliver on what needs to happen locally to make things better for young people trying to get in work.

Not only is it an argument for this Labour administration but it is also an argument for devolution. It shows we can make things work on a local level. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harington.

COUNCILLOR HARINGTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The work of Children's Services in Leeds begins with two basic questions: what is it like for a young person growing up, and how can we make that life better? On the journey for the child from childhood through to being an adult we want to have as many good things in place to make that journey happen as well as possible.

Of the five outcomes we say that we need to have in place to make sure this happens, one is to do with health, mental and physical. It is the mental health I think that we need particularly to be concerned about. Three children in every classroom are likely to have some kind of serious mental health problem. Of the ten issues that faced Childline this last year, four were to do with mental health. The Helpline had to organise in the last three years and triple the increase of counselling sessions for people affected by self harm and the sessions for people contemplating suicide doubled.

The needs are rapidly increasing but the money for CAMHS (the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) has been cut. In the last four or five years since 2010, £50m decrease in real terms, 6%. CAMHS has a 0.6% share of the NHS budget. Not surprisingly, the head of NSPCC has said that child and adolescent mental health has been wilfully neglected.

So, what to do about it. The Times newspaper, as you may have seen, has organised a campaign Time to Mind and its manifesto has been highly praised by Simon Stevens, the head of the NHS. He has highly praised this manifesto. Some of the key points in that are, one, research. Apparently there has not been any detailed research into the prevalence of mental health amongst young people since 2004, which means that commissioners are often dealing with data that is over ten years late. Too many young people with mental health issues are sometimes being dumped in police cells or in wards which are for adults or too far away from home. Parents and young people need to have frontline services available 24/7. Training needs to improve for tier 1 services – doctors and health visitors and also teachers as part of their training. Young people exposed, of course, to bullying on social networks need to have training from primary school onwards as to how to cope with all that.

So, a huge amount to do and at the moment the Government is not doing it, but is it Central Government's job in the first place? Leeds has shown how good it is to be able to look after the most needy children so why not give us the money so that we can provide a CAMHS service which is really fit for purpose? As it says in the motion, freedom should be devolved to local services, so give us the dosh and we will deliver. I support the motion. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pat Latty.

COUNCILLOR P LATTY: Lord Mayor, in speaking in support of this amendment I would like to begin by complimenting the staff of Children's Services on the achievement of raising their service to the "Good" rating and also the leadership "Outstanding." It has taken a lot of hard work and they deserve the highest praise and our most sincere thanks for a wonderful achievement.

Childcare should be above politics and as you will not find a much less political person than me – and I really hate the way that this White Paper has had to bring national politics into it and implies that our Government does not have a genuine commitment to improving outcomes for all children and young people. To suggest that the next Government needs to undo the damage caused over the last five years is to suggest that measures we have introduced and results we have created are a figment of our imagination. What about Pupil Premium, free childcare, free school meals, a youth unemployment rate reduced by almost 32% and NEETS reduced from 10% in 2007 to 6.7% in 2014 in Leeds?

Whilst the Council has had some impact in these areas, these are all policies and achievements driven by the Conservative Government. (*interruption*) Sorry, the Coalition. That the economy has generally improved since 2010 does seem to me to question the theme of the White Paper that young people are worse off under the Conservative Government...

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Just keep being a nodding dog, it is all right.

COUNCILLOR P LATTY: ...the Coalition Government, sorry! How can that be when unemployment is down, incomes generally are rising and in fact prospects generally are rising compared with how things were in 2010.

I will just apologise to my colleagues the Liberals, I am sorry for missing the Coalition.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: They are used to it, don't worry.

COUNCILLOR P LATTY: Lord Mayor, whilst I am delighted to congratulate the Department on its success, the inspection result is excellent news but you cannot argue that over the last five years the Government's efforts have had no impact on Leeds. Lord Mayor, I support Councillor Lamb's amendment. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I welcome the motion from Councillor Blake but more to the point I welcome the amendment from Councillor Lamb because actually it should be that we put childcare and Children's Services front row centre.

The OFSTED report is a great achievement for this Authority but more can be done. I agree with Councillor Latty who has just spoken, changing this into a political agenda now right before an election and taking advantage of this report has it has come out is actually pretty low politics.

The motion from Councillor Blake mentions, and I am going to quote from her motion here:

“Council recognises the unfair disproportionate burden young people have to bear for the financial crisis.”

It goes on to mention poverty and debt. They may want to recall the debt and the deficit that this country is in at the moment. Regularly we are hearing from all parties that it is only with a growing, strong economy can we actually have the money to invest in other services, whether that is the NHS, whether that is childcare or whether that is anything else and that is why we are seeing over 100 business leaders today coming out and backing the current policies supported by the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats in Government.

I am actually a little bit amazed at Councillor Smart and Councillor Pryor backing the motion from Councillor Blake, because as two fellow young Councillors we are going to be the ones having to pick up the bill from the baby boomer generation. We are going to be the ones having to balance the books going forward.

I just mention very briefly some of the policies that have been opposed then by the Party opposite: £18bn investment in schools; over two million apprenticeships created; protecting the school budget; help for first time buyers, especially young first time buyers to get on the housing ladder; raising the personal allowance which is shown that will have a disproportionate effect on young people to anybody else in the

market, so those people keeping more of their own hard earned money; childcare, help for more free childcare.

Councillor Blake mentioned ending the top down from Westminster approach. Councillor Harington there said “Give us the dosh and we will deliver.” It is interesting that you are supporting localism in this sense but actually devolving from Westminster when it comes to academies and free schools are being dogmatically opposed by the Party opposite. There should be an approach of letting a thousand flowers bloom in the garden, whether those are State schools, whether those are academies, whether those are free schools. It is what works for local areas.

The Pupil Premium has put more money into education, into Children’s Services than ever before and it is going up again next year. I would hope that those are the things that we should be debating rather than any party politics. Coming together to actually make a difference for children in this city should be the priority of all. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: I will start by saying one thing, if things are so great under the Tories why are so many children and families living in poverty? *(hear, hear)* Young people are nearly three times more likely to be unemployed than the rest of the population, the biggest gap for 20 years. The number of people who are 16-24 who are NEET has increased by 8,000 in the last three months alone, with an unemployment rate of one in seven, according to the Office of National Statistics.

Here in Leeds we fully understand the consequences of being NEET. I can mean long-term unemployment, poverty and ill health and more than this, it can lead to a cycle of poor life chances. This underlies the imperative getting it right for this generation to ensure the success of the next.

We have shown through the Devolved Youth Contract that we are far better placed than the politicians in London to help local people into work. In Leeds we have over 75% of NEETS moving into and on to education, employment and training once they have undertaken the programme, almost double the national average. We are calling for devolved funding to the Local Authority to commission all of the employment and skills services for 16-24 year olds, including IAG, Job Centre Plus Services, also devolved responsibilities from the Skills Funding Agency and education funding agencies and DWP commissioned programmes to support the long-term unemployed to re-enter work.

We are calling for the tools, the power and, most importantly, the funding to be able to lead this vital area for our young people. This is the legacy that you are leaving behind. Nationally hundreds of Sure Start Centres have closed, 281 in the first two years of the Coalition; impact, vital support for young children and families, particularly the most vulnerable, has been lost. The number of teachers has fallen by 10,000 over that same period; impact, this deprives children and young people of expert support. The introduction of the English Baccalaureate has meant that lessons in subjects such as art, music, PE, RE, DT, PHSE and drama have been cut; impact, young people are missing out on a broad and balanced curriculum and access to creative subjects in which they may have excelled. Children and young people no longer have the right to be taught by qualified teachers; impact, parents are rightly

losing confidence in the quality of their children's education. Abolition of the Educational Maintenance Allowance has left thousands of young people without the vital financial support they need to stay in education; impact, the Coalition's own Child Poverty Adviser described this cut-back as a very bad mistake. The Coalition has decimated post-16 funding; impact, in Leeds we have lost around £6m. What message does this send out to our young people?

So, what the Coalition really mean by "all in this together" is, only if you have the vote. (*Applause*)

COUNCILLOR LYONS: Speech of the day, that.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thanks, Lord Mayor. I do not know where to start, really.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Don't bother then!

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: The meeting started off so positive, it really did, and as someone who was in charge of Children's Services in the city when it was called "inadequate" and knowing how awful that made not just me feel but the staff that also worked within that organisation, and I have to say in that organisation how the vast majority of people that were working within it were working at that time...

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Yes but they are not under your leadership.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...and the improvement that has been made has been in investing in the consistency and it has been investing in partnership, and that partnership is about actually building on what you can do with National Government alongside Local Government, what you can do with your Party colleagues on your benches but also on these benches, encouraging everybody to get involved in some of those structures within it like Scrutiny, like the Corporate Carers. I felt great at the beginning of this meeting and it felt like a celebration of the city as a child friendly city and I will actually say at this point, because it was missed out earlier by a lot of the speeches, Councillor Blake has shown real leadership in this and I think she does need (*applause*) to have the credit for that.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: We did not miss it out.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: I know what it feels like to be a leader in that situation.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: How do you know?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: For you to be in that situation to actually turn round and say, "Do you know what, what we have got now is good" is fantastic.

We just had a diatribe then from Councillor Dowson who basically has ended the day saying, "Do you know what, this city is an awful place for a child to grow up in. Look at what they have got to face, look at the terrible things that that Coalition has thrown at them."

COUNCILLOR: She did not. No she did not.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: That is what you are saying. That is what you are saying.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Do you know what, that is the last thing we need. What was it off Judith Blake earlier...

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: We have done it despite you, not because of you.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...she is great as a city leader. In terms of being someone who talks about the national debate I am afraid you let yourself down a lot. You talk about how the Opposition's amendments are predictable. Well, do you know what, they are predictable because we have put some real investment into children nationally...

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Not according to them, they have done it.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ... and that real investment nationally has actually paid dividends locally and it has been in those areas...

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: They never mentioned you, it is the Conservatives.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ... that your Party should have been making those moves when you were in charge in this country. It is all about narrowing the gap between the poorest and the middle classes...

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: They said it is the Conservatives.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ... so instead of throwing statistics at us about overall outcomes and overall budgets, you should actually be celebrating your children in this city actually being able to equalise their outcomes in the long term thanks to the Pupil Premium. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake to sum up.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Lord Mayor, it is great to see that the Tory-Lib Deb Coalition is still alive and well in Leeds.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: We are getting ready for May in this Chamber.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Do you know what, the big thing, I cannot get over the complacency, particularly of the Tory Group on this Council and the hypocrisy that ran through so much of what they said, and the awful thing for me, being in Opposition when we went into the "inadequate" OFSTED was that awful denial. Member after Member on this side of the Chamber stood up in here and told them that it was failing and they buried their heads in the sand and said they had been told by officers that everything was going fine and it was not and look at what happened.

Let us just have a think about this. The list that they put out, again it is the same thing. They list Pupil Premium as though oh, we are putting all this money somewhere, it must be OK, but why, therefore, isn't the Pupil Premium closing the

gap in attainment nationally? It is not happening. OFSTED are really concerned about it and raising it wherever. Why are so many young people struggling with debt and why are so many young people growing up in poverty? An estimated 32,000 in the city of Leeds alone, and we know the devastating impact that poverty has on our young people growing up.

I said before we have got a strong evidence of what works. The real hypocrisy is that all of the things that they are saying they are giving back to the City of Leeds they came in and slashed and took away from us. They took away our Early Intervention Grant, our Area Based Grant, all of the grant that goes to those areas of highest need. They took it out and redistributed it around the country so Leeds has woefully got less than it needs.

We are asking for more money for Early Intervention, we know it works. We want proper investment in our post 16 which has been decimated. Adult education has been cut by 24% and we want a Labour Government to bring in proper investment in vocational training raising it to equal status with academic qualifications and restore fully funded consistent qualified carers advice for all our young people and as of today all of us can stand up together and say when we are back in power we will ban zero hours contracts. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move to the vote. The first vote is on the amendment in the name of Councillor Lamb. *(A vote was taken)* That is LOST.

We now move to the motion in the name of Councillor Blake. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 13 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – HEALTH BUDGET DEVOLUTION

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

COUNCILLOR LAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am not going to say anything about you, Les, as I thanked you in the tea break, so it is a love-in.

Moving on, I bring this White Paper to Council so that we can as a Council discuss the merits, the challenges and most importantly the improved outcomes I believe this White Paper would bring to our residents. It is a plea to this Council, and particularly the administration, to work with whoever the next Government is, a chance for this Council to set out a road map to devolution.

I was not originally going to make any political points in this White Paper but then I saw the Conservative's amendment. Tagging a Mayor on to something as important as healthcare devolution really is not on and I ask you to use your influence to remove that road block to our road map.

Of course, I know and understand that there will be Members in this Chamber that will wish to make a valid contribution with regard to the funding process and the nitty gritty of devolution, and I shall leave them to do that. I will, however, say I am much more interested in improving the health outcomes of all our residents and particularly those disadvantaged by income, disability or age.

Connecting the dots of various interventions like housing, education, employment and open spaces should be what devolution looks like. Indeed, our colleague, Councillor Illingworth, when he was Health Scrutiny Chair, was always reminding the Committee, the Commissioners and the providers that this was the way to help the poorest move the fastest in improving their health outcomes. I am pleased that his successor, Councillor Coupar, has continued where John left off.

Devolution means increasing and improved decision making, local responsibility and accountability and a chance to respond faster and more effectively, a chance to meet the needs of residents and really transform services for them. Residents would, for the first time, have a strong voice in a strong partnership.

This Council has already taken some steps towards integration and programmes of change like the Leeds Transformation Programme, the Leeds Care Record and the Health and Wellbeing Board have made strides towards integration, but there is still much work to do. A devolved Health and Social Care budget would mean for the first time this community would have the opportunity to go to the next level and provide for comprehensive integrated care. Whether acute and primary care, mental health services or children's and health education and promotion, we have the chance to improve population health. Health services aligned with social care would be decided here in this region by the people living and using those services.

Of course, I am not naïve enough to believe that there would be no challenges to be overcome and that is something a commission would look at, as well as the benefits. These challenges include adequate funding as well as governance, resource allocation, communication and engagement as well as the impact on workforces. The NHS does not need at this time further upheaval and instability so we would need to be careful not to make the mistakes of the past in recreating the numerous top-down organisations that I have gone through over the last 25 or so years.

Yes, there are risks but there is also the potential for enormous benefits and I ask this Chamber, this Council and this Leadership to be bold not timid, to be brave not fearful. I leave you with a quote from one of my daughter's favourite films and one I have therefore seen many times, the Princess Diaries;

“Courage is not the absence of fear but rather the judgment that something is more important than fear. The brave may not live for ever but the cautious do not live at all.”

I think that sums up our responsibility to at least have a go. I move this paper.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley to second.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: I formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Neil Buckley to move an amendment.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I wonder if, just before I address the Liberal proposal, if I can just correct something which Councillor Dowson referred to very briefly when she said the Conservative Government is going to leave

behind a legacy. Can I just reassure the Chamber that on May 8th there will be no change and the Conservative Government will still be where it is now. *(Applause)*

In proposing this amendment we have no argument with the Liberal motion as far as it went when we first saw it written down. It looked to us like plain common sense. We are not with them on the subject of possible regional Mayors and so I think we are going to have to disagree on that particular point. We would argue that entrenched opposition from the Labour party to almost anything new is preventing the people of the Leeds City Region from getting what they deserve, and this particular point needs to be highlighted.

Why should Leeds always play second fiddle to Manchester? As a Yorkshireman it pains me to even have to ask this question. We should come before Manchester every single time.

Let us just remind ourselves in all this process what Manchester has actually received. £2bn for skills, training, transport and planning. We need all those things. Transport alone – for Heaven’s sake, we just need these proposals. Total control over business rates – we need this. The biggest prize of all which has already been referred to, £6bn for complete control of Health and Social Care.

Taking full control of the whole NHS budget would enable the Council to join up Health and Social Care in a way not seen before. The point is, it would make it better. Setting Health priorities locally for local people, directly relevant to them and what they need – not what we say they need, what they say they need and want, bringing together all the services now scattered across NHS England, GPs, CCGs, Councils and what about the Leeds pound? We have discussed this at some length at the Health and Wellbeing Board. This is a classic way in which to make that work. What better way could there be, notwithstanding the ridiculous proposal from Mr Miliband to cap profits at 5% but that is going to have to be a discussion for another day.

Imagine local control of our Health needs. Free at the point of need, yes, fine but harnessing all our potential service providers to make the system better. More accountability, more personal control, more accessibility. The whole project, including a type of regional Mayor, not a city Mayor, has been embraced wholeheartedly by Labour Councillors in Greater Manchester because it is for the benefit of the people, not Council bosses.

The administration in this city should show some leadership and vision on this and get on with it. Do not miss the opportunity. Stop moaning and start acting because the Government has opened the doors to the cage. Just walk through them and there is no point waiting till May 8th to see if there is going to be a change and you can do a deal with your people because there is not going to be a change and I move this amendment. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second formally.

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

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In 2013 Leeds was recognised as leading the way nationally for the integration of Health and Social Care around the needs of people, not organisations. It was also the only city to achieve that status. However, whilst our achievements across the NHS, Local Authority and Third Sector partnership in Leeds were recognised by the Coalition, they have been slow to offer their side of the offer for Pioneers. Only around information sharing has the Pioneer programme made any real progress and that too has been led from Leeds by professionals from Leeds City Council, Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust and Leeds North CCG, amongst others.

Our other asks of the national team for freedoms and flexibilities to better deliver health and care services within this city have been ignored by this Government. We have the skills and expertise, strength of relationships across the partnerships in the city and have proven already that we can lead the way nationally. The news that Greater Manchester had Health and Social Care spend devolved to it was interesting but we should look more closely at what they have actually got.

The existing Health and Wellbeing Boards in each of the Local Authorities will remain, with an overarching Health and Social Care Partnership Board which is comprised of NHS England, Health Commissioners, Health and Social Care providers and regulators. Alongside this Partnership Board will sit a Devolution Programme Board. There is not one single elected Member on this Board, which is made up of Chief Executives and National Directors of NHS organisations. Who will call the shots? Who will make the difficult decisions about spend? Who will be held accountable for those decisions?

In terms of resources, what is the Manchester offer? The agreement gives them a five year budget settlement which offers some clarity and some stability of the resources available over that period and also should enable longer term planning, but there is no anticipated additional funding. There is no up front investment of the kind that is needed to ensure that community provision is put in place before resources are moved out of the acute sector, the sort of up front investment that the Health and Wellbeing Boards, the King's Fund and others have been calling for. There is still an expectation, as with the Better Care (so called) Fund, that transformational change can and will take place within existing resources. Of the £6bn Health and Social Care spend in Manchester in the announcement that was made last month, over £4.5bn is already being held by Local Authorities and CCGs at a local level. The remaining £1.5bn is allocated by NHS England but spent on providing GP and other primary care services and specialised services in the Greater Manchester area. Discussions are already under way to devolve GP commissioning and some specialised services to local CCGs across the country.

It is not yet clear what additional powers over spend devolution offered in Manchester will actually bring.

What we need for our City Region is the devolution of real powers to move spend around the Health and Care system to make it work more effectively for the people it is there to serve. It is right that those decisions should be taken at a local level, enabling more local control over the way in which our Health and Care system develops to meet the needs of people here in our City Region, giving prevention, tackling the social determinants, care closer to home and mental health the focus they so desperately need.

The powers we are seeking are those that we sought two years ago when we were recognised as integration pioneers. It is frustrating, to say the least, that the Tory-Lib Dem Coalition did not deliver on their part of that arrangement and we are now seeking those powers over a broader footprint.

To achieve that aim we need Central Government to place its trust in greater local partnerships and democratic control over decision making and for them not to create additional tiers of bureaucracy. I move the Labour amendment, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: I formally second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb to comment.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, I do not think there is a Member in this Chamber who does not think we should have more power devolved to us in this community. We have had many debates and many will recall and probably still shout at me, I was one of only two Members who voted in favour of having an elected City Mayor. I think at that time Councillor Carter spoke strongly in favour of having a City Region Mayor and he has done so many times since.

We have seen the changes to Manchester, we have seen the moves on Healthcare and I think there are two reasons why we have not had the same level of power devolved to us in this city and this City Region. The main reason is that the Labour Leaders of the Councils across the City Region just cannot get their acts together and agree on what it is that they want. The second reason is that the Labour Party collectively say one thing locally and another thing nationally and it is difficult to know exactly what their position is. I think collectively here together we all agree, but why is it that Manchester has got this devolved £6bn and we do not? You have to look at the two different Labour figures at the heart of this and the completely different messages that they are giving to try and understand what is going on.

You have on the one hand the Leader of Manchester City Council, Sir Richard Leese, who is pushing this forward, doing a deal with the Government, a Conservative Government, a Labour Leader doing a deal with a Conservative Government to get devolved powers...

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: You forget your Liberal colleagues again.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Well, it is a Conservative Chancellor that is pushing it forward – to get devolved power for their area, the kind of things you are talking about and then at the same time the Shadow Health Spokesman, Andy Burnham, has spoken out against it saying he is concerned it could lead to a Swiss cheese NHS where some bits of the system are operated to different rules or have different powers or freedoms. Sir Richard responded, “That is absolutely not the case. The discussions we have been having are within the existing five year mandate of NHS England. The NHS will stay the NHS in Greater Manchester.”

The question is, do we believe the Labour Leader of Manchester City Council or the former Health Secretary who presided over mid-Staffordshire and tried to cover up all sorts of other things, and the guy who introduced what he calls privatisation of the NHS on a much bigger scale than this Government has? Which one is right?

The truth is, Lord Mayor, we need to really get serious. We cannot talk and have everything in perfection. Councillor Mulherin tells us this is how it has to be. There comes a point where you have to take a deal that is on the table. You have to give up some things that you do not like and accept some of the things that you do like.

We cannot take big decisions about transport, about health, about infrastructure on our own. We have to work with the other cities in the City Region. We need a major figurehead for that and we need to get on and do a deal. The Labour Leaders in the City Region need to get their acts together. Lord Mayor, I am pleased to support Councillor Buckley's amendment. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The NHS has always been an undemocratic organisation, it has not been accountable in any shape, way or form. It is generally run by bureaucrats and we welcome anything that changes that and delegates the decision making down to a lower level. We would go further, we would delegate Health down to the City Council level and we think that at that particular point you would have a direct responsibility and direct democratic control over what goes on in our own back yard, and that has got to be a big positive. Even if you do delegate down to the City Region level, it is very difficult for ordinary folk to know what sort of opportunities they have got to influence the outcome and get involved in the decision making that affects them on a day to day basis, because at this particular stage it just does not happen in any shape, way or form.

In terms of democratising the NHS I think that is a good step, it is a step on the way towards getting local people more involved in that particular process but we have still a long way to go. We prefer things to be delegated down to local level and an even more local level if at all possible. Ultimately one size does not fit all. What might suit other places in Yorkshire does not necessarily suit us and it is a question of making sure that that decision making goes down to as local a level as possible. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I thought we were in danger of violently agreeing with each other when I saw the White Paper from Sandy Lay, but I think the comments from the Tory side, particularly from Councillors Lamb and Buckley make this not a really serious debate because it is.

The reason why we are putting an amendment in was to draw you to the small print and some of the challenges we have to make this a successful package. It is not devolution, it is delegation as it stands.

Given that Leeds has a successful record of integrating Public Health with better outcomes, it has got a successful record as Councillor Mulherin said of being status, it is now recognised, Leeds, as a pioneer and a leader in integrating Adult Social Care

despite all the constraints and, of course, it is successful in informatics so that we are now sharing primary and secondary care records. That is more progress than Manchester has made.

If we want to talk about devolution I think we should answer the two questions that Manchester have not answered yet. I welcome it because I welcome it being back into Manchester because it is nearer people and it is nearer decision making but it is not devolution yet, and there are two reasons. One, we have two leaking buckets at the moment. We have a Health Service that is not properly funded and we have a Local Government Grant that has been cut by 43%. It seems insane to do the biggest transformation in the National Health Service records since 1948 on the back of this slashing of the Adult Social Care budget and, indeed, the Health Service.

The thing that is a huge challenge is there is no extra money and, what is more, we in this place have £633m short. The governance is, as Councillor Mulherin said, actually the National Health Service no elected Members.

I could go on but unfortunately I do not have the time because there are real issues about governance, accountability and responsiveness as well as, no-one has asked the question can you buy it? If you want devolution I think there are two issues. Firstly, the Mayor issue is a red herring. In November we were told to be bold and ambitious and be imaginative and go for everything, which we did. The person who has let the people of Yorkshire down is actually George Osborne. The person who has reneged on his promise is George Osborne and the Tory part of the Coalition. If we want a Mayor, what I have not heard from you, if you want an elected Mayor, why are you frightened of consulting and allowing the people of Yorkshire to make that choice?

I am happy to go with any governance model as long as the people of Yorkshire are consulted. If you want devolution, I think we need a Labour Government. If you want the Health Service properly funded, let us get a Labour Government in on May 8th. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Truswell.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Lord Mayor, Councillors Buckley and Lamb are inviting us to walk blindly into two colossal elephant traps. The first trap is funding. Councillor Buckley's pig in a poke amendment talks about Leeds receiving significant health and social care funding but we know Leeds is receiving significantly inadequate NHS funding. For 2015/16 Leeds CCGs have received the minimum funding. It represents a 0.3% real term cut – yes, a cut and why? Because the Tory-Lib Dem Government says Leeds is above target. In other words, they say Leeds is getting too big a share of NHS funding. Is that the basis on which you want to negotiate devolution? I think not.

It gets worse. The Council and NHS have made a future projection supported independently by Ernst and Young and that projection shows a shortfall – wait for it – of £633m in combined Health and Social Care funding over the next five years. Is that the basis on which we should be negotiating devolution?

Lord Mayor, we used to talk about the NHS winter crisis. This Government has managed to have a winter crisis all year round, month in, month out. No wonder waiting times for inpatient, A&E and cancer treatment are soaring.

The second elephant trap is the Tory quest to fragment the NHS and dump responsibility for Government cuts on Northern Authorities in particular. Lord Mayor, we have a National – a national – Health Service. Never let us lose sight of that word “national” and that is what Andy Burnham was talking about. Devolution must never become a byword for postcode lotteries. It must not lead to a fragmentation of a national health service. We must not be duped into doing the Government’s dirty work for it and that is precisely why Councillor Mulherin’s excellent amendment represents a sensible and measured approach – not a headlong charge over the cliff like a bunch of lemons – or lemmings, as I should have said! *(laughter)* I was right first time!

Let us be clear, all today’s weasel words are the Tories desperation at their lousy NHS record. Suddenly Jeremy Hunt is throwing money at it hand over fist. It is like that historical figure running round the battlefield shouting, “A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse.” He ended up buried under a car park in Leicester. *(laughter)* Let us hope the same happens politically at least to Messrs Hunt, Cameron and Osborne because if we do not bury the Tories they will bury the NHS. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Lord Mayor, devolution exhausts me, it really does, because we get it because we have a different perspective. I think we are far closer to the grass roots in terms of how things are delivered on the ground. The fact that there has been a Coalition has meant that the localists had a go, so the Liberals came in...

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: They do not even acknowledge you.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ... and Nick Clegg – this was the intention – got patted on the head and said, “You go off to the Cabinet Office and you take on a few of your schemes” and, of course, one of the schemes that he came up with was devolution. Actually, a few of the civil servants actually caught on and thought, do you know, Local Government under Eric Pickles, they have delivered amazing results at the same time as having less and less money to work with but they still delivered and they have been more efficient. Let us see what else they can do for us.

Unfortunately, what that was was one bunch of national civil servants actually thinking local civil servants do quite well and they believed in the delivery of our employees. What they have not yet done is persuade the politicians to actually believe in us as politicians, as equals. This is the problem because whenever you have someone in charge in Westminster they always think, “I want someone who looks like me to run things in the provinces.” It is a little bit like the Raj. They start creating things like Police Commissioners. A committee of Councillors cannot obviously be as accountable or come to as good decisions as a single person who gets elected for a term and now, of course, it comes down to the Mayor.

All that good work, this is what really disheartens me, that did take place through the Cabinet Office by Nick Clegg and the others actually all joining together and talking to Leaders and talking as equals could all be put at stake now by, I have to say it is George Osborne. It is. He thinks right, they have got a taste of it, now I am going to actually put some conditions on it and I am going to make them look like I want them to look and maybe we might get a Tory as Mayor in the North West. It is never going

to happen, I am sorry. *(laughter)* It is never, ever going to happen so why does he keep banging on the same drum? Please, put Lord Heseltine out to pasture finally.

Yes, let us have our Health spending because Hilary Benn does not want to give any fiscal powers away to Local Government, that is something you have got to take on board. Andy Burnham actually wants to draw in that excellence that we have already delivered locally in our social care and actually centralise it along with the National Health Service, so we have all got to play our part within whichever party we are in to actually make sure that that is not the agenda that happens after this chance that we have been given. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lay to sum up.

COUNCILLOR LAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. An interesting debate, pretty much how I thought it would play out. I think, Keith, you are right, as is Lisa. It is all about the detail. It is about funding as well and that is why our party is proposing £8bn extra if we were to go back into Government for the NHS.

Neil, I do not think we are going to agree on the need for a Mayor. Tagging a Mayor on to something like Health devolution is a bit like the American legislature where Congressmen go and tag on little things on to bills that make absolutely no rhyme or reason or sense, and I just cannot see it. If it was a Health Mayor, of course, you could argue that that would be of relevance but fiddling and adding an extra layer of bureaucracy when we know that our communities have no appetite for a Mayor, I think is, as Keith says, a red herring.

Paul, you always speak passionately about the NHS, of course. I am a big fan of the NHS as you would expect but I also need it to be flexible to community needs and the idea for the Commission would be to flesh out what those needs are for Leeds, but we are going to have to accept that if you want local needs, our needs are going to be different to those in Manchester or in York or there will be people who will say there is a postcode lottery unless you are just going to have a State run National Health Service with no input from the public voluntary or charitable sector. I think the last 20 years have shown that we do need some help from those organisations, whether they be private, charitable or voluntary.

That is about it, I think!

I have just been pointed out that, Lisa, your amendment says you do not want another level of bureaucracy and then you call for a quango to be set up. I am going to sit down! *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Councillor Lay. We will now move to the vote. We are now going to vote on the first amendment in the name of Councillor Buckley. Recorded vote.

(A recorded vote was held on the amendment in the name of Councillor Buckley)

THE LORD MAYOR: There are 86 Members present, 15 voted “Yes”, no abstentions and 71 have voted “No”, so the amendment is LOST.

We now move on to the second amendment in the name of Councillor Mulherin.

(A recorded vote was held on the amendment in the name of Councillor Mulherin)

THE LORD MAYOR: There are 86 Members present, 72 “Yes” votes, no abstentions and 15 “No” votes, so that second amendment is carried and becomes the substantive motion.

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

We just have not quite finished with Council business. For twelve months I have been asking Les to keep quiet a bit but now I am going to allow him to speak.
(Applause)

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: Lord Mayor, first can I say I do not want to keep you delayed in this Council for more than half an hour! *(laughter)* I have been asked why I am standing down at this particular time. I realised that to vote in the first election I stood in you would have to be 60 today and after 42 years on this Council, there are quite a lot of you, some of you probably were not born and a lot of you were in school, so I think it is about time to move on to something new.

A lot of kind things have been said, some that I missed – I will have to read them, if I still get a copy of the verbatim, Keith – but some I did hear. I just want to say thank you very much indeed. Time flies. I will tell you what, 42 years has gone like *that*. It has not seemed a long time, it has gone like *that*. I think there is only Elizabeth and Andrew were on the first meeting – is that correct? I think it was Elizabeth and Andrew were on the first meeting.

I would just like to say thank you and I would just like to give you four things which a pal of mine, those who remember him, called Paddy Crossey. Paddy was a fantastic man, a wonderful man. When I first came on Council he gave me four rules to remember.

The first one was, because we had no mics, speak to the furthest point in the Council Chamber so you will be heard. I sat there and I know my first speech I was talking to the Lord Mayor two yards away and nobody else could hear in the Council! Speak to the furthest point.

The second one, he believed this very, very deeply. In a democracy, remember the people who sit opposite are your Opposition, they are not your enemy.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: They are!

COUNCILLOR J L CARTER: They are the people who sit behind you! *(laughter)* Another thing, this Council Chamber gets a little bit heated and I have heard one or two things today and thought my God, I never did that but I obviously did. You have got to always remember when you are speaking and you are throwing insults all over the place that we have got to live and walk out of this place together so it has always got to be a little tongue in cheek and everybody should know that. It cannot be just insults, insults and insults and forget it.

The final point is, most of us are elected on a Party ticket but the thing that we have got to remember, our first duty is to the City of Leeds.

Thank you all for your help, your support, your friendship.

(Standing ovation)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you for those wise words, Les - 42 years too late though! *(laughter)* You should have told us before now?

Before we go, can I wish everyone who is standing in the local elections well and those retiring have my best wishes for the future. Thank you all for attending the meeting.

(The meeting closed at 7.40pm)