

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday, 11th November 2015

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC HALL,
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR
(COUNCILLOR J CHAPMAN)

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 11th NOVEMBER 2015

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon everybody and welcome to today's Council meeting. Can I just remind Members that the meeting is to be webcast and can I ask people to make sure that their phones are turned on to silent. If, however, anybody is waiting for some emergency call, please do keep your phone on for that.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: I attended the Armistice Day service at the War Memorial this morning and I was very pleased to see such a wonderful turn out from Members and the public both today and also on Remembrance Sunday, the weather not being particularly kind to us on either day.

I would like to congratulate Lizzie Armistead on winning the women's road race world championship. I have written to Lizzie to congratulate her and to invite her to a civic reception at the Civic Hall.

I will also be hosting a civic reception on Monday 16th November from 12.00 noon to 2.00pm in the Civic Hall to formally congratulate the Yorkshire County Cricket team as well as the Women's team and the Girls' Under 15s and Under 13s on winning their respective county championships.

As you may be aware, sadly, Lord Denis Healey, former British Labour Chancellor, passed away on 3rd October 2015 after a short illness. Lord Healey was an Honorary Freeman of Leeds. Could I ask that we all stand for a minute's silence.

(Silent tribute)

ITEM 1 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 16th SEPTEMBER 2015

THE LORD MAYOR: If we move on to Item 1 on the Agenda, Minutes of the meeting held 16th September. Councillor Charlwood.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

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

ITEM 2 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 2, Declarations of Interest. Are there any further declarations to be announced?

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: Lord Mayor, I would just like to declare a pecuniary interest and it is from the South and West Plans Panel and it was a personal planning application.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Any more? Thank you.

ITEM 3 – COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move to Communications. I shall first ask the Chief Executive if he has any communications and this will be followed by Councillor Andrew Carter who has asked to make a communication to Council, so that will follow the Chief Exec.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. First of all, just to report to Council that Jane Ellison, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health, responded to the Council's Public Health White Paper on 16th October and that has been circulated to all Members.

Secondly, please can all Members fill in the questionnaire on the Boundary Commission Review that has been put on your desks today and return them to your Group Offices by the end of next week at the latest. I think some Group Offices have an earlier deadline.

We believe a hundred per cent return rate will send a strong message to the Review about the hard work you all do on behalf of your constituents, so if you could all fill them in we would be very grateful. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. This morning I received in the post a copy of a letter sent to the Chief Executive by the Regional Director of Ofsted dated 29th October. It is now 11th November. I understand it is a letter similar to the one sent to Sheffield, the contents of which were made public in Sheffield on 3rd November.

By the way, in case anyone thinks it is a confidential piece of correspondence, I have looked very carefully at the letter and everything else that came in the post and there is no "Confidential" on it.

I am disappointed, to say the least, that a letter which I will say this about, it is highly critical – highly critical – of standards in a number of areas in primary schools across Leeds and it tasks the Chief Executive with responding to Ofsted as to how he – not you – intends to put right what they see as serious deficiencies.

My Shadow Education spokesman was briefed last Thursday by officers of the Department and was promised a copy of this letter. It is now nearly a week and he still has not received it but I received this in the post this morning.

Furthermore, I had a briefing only a matter of days ago with Councillor Blake on another issue and she must have known about this and saw fit not to inform me. I have to tell you that Leaders of Council in my experience, including myself, privy to information such as in this letter, would have immediately communicated it, good, bad or indifferent, with their opposite numbers and I am disappointed, to say the least, that was not the case.

It is not my intention to read out the letter except to say one paragraph:

"However one compares outcomes for pupils' attainment at Key Stages 1 and 2 in Leeds, its performance whether against national or regional figures is weak. This is frankly inexcusable."

I think that sort of communication sent to the Chief Executive, to the Chief Executive of this city and this Council, not just the ruling administration, should have been communicated. I do not intend to read the rest. I hope I will get some reassurances from the Chief Executive as to how this will now be progressed. Thank you, my Lord Mayor.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. We will make sure that there is a full briefing given to all Group Leaders in the next 48 hours and we were in the process of briefing Members and responding to the letter which was – it is slightly unorthodox, I would say, that it came to me individually and was copied to other people other than people you might have expected it to be copied to, but I can assure Councillor Carter and Council that we are taking it extremely seriously, we are responding to it, we sought a meeting straightaway with the Regional Director of Ofsted, myself and Nigel Richardson, and we will respond to this absolutely in the way that you would expect us to and we will progress from there.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Is that all right, Councillor Carter?

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: It will have to be, Lord Mayor.

ITEM 4 - DEPUTATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Deputations.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. To report that there are three deputations: one, Headingley residents for the protection of Headingley Hill; two, Leeds Skyline Service users; and three, Leeds Against the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I move that the deputations be received, Lord Mayor.

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)* The vote is CARRIED.

We now move to the first Deputation, Headingley residents for the protection of Headingley Hill.

DEPUTATION ONE – HEADINGLEY RESIDENTS FOR THE PROTECTION OF HEADINGLEY HILL

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 SALMON: Thank you very much my Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors. I AM Joe, Joe Salmon, I am a Headingley resident and this is Chris Porren who has accompanied me, from Weetwood, and I would like to talk today about Headingley Hill Fields. Just in case some of you were unfamiliar with Headingley Hill Fields, if

you are coming out of Leeds City Centre through Headingley along the A660 you go past Woodhouse Moor on your left; just before you reach the Original Oak pub and the Skyrack, on your right you have got St Columba's Church – the meadows behind that, that is Headingley Hill Fields and that is what I have come to talk about today.

Headingley is in deficit of all types of green open space. Leeds City Council's own documents recognise that allotments, gardens, open space for sports and all types of areas of natural beauty and amenity are all lacking within the Headingley ward.

Roundhay has its own park, Bramley has its own park, Armley has its own park, Potter Newton has its own park and yet Headingley ward does not have its own park. That is why I think it is very important that the Council recognises Headingley Hill Fields as the valuable green space that it is and protects it as such.

It is clear to anybody who actually looks at the area, it is beautiful right now, there are some horses grazing in those meadows, it looks very idyllic, something you would see in a watercolour painting. That is clearly valuable green space and it is packed with the natural beauty and practical benefits that green space provides. I think it is very important the institutions of Government recognise not just the benefits to people's mental wellbeing that green which is something that is obvious to anybody who has taken a walk in the park when they feel down or depressed, but also that we recognise the practice benefits that green space provides in terms of things like flood prevention, maintaining and protecting our green space is key when it comes to protecting people against the horrors of their homes being made unliveable because of flooding. Maintaining and protecting green space is key when it comes to ensuring that we have clean air to breathe and this is a really important point for Leeds to take on as a city. Leeds is one of nine cities identified by the World Health Organisation as failing to meet the minimum standards for clean air. That is a fact you have to take a moment to sink in, Leeds currently does not meet the minimum standard set by the World Health Organisation for clean air.

Because of that I think it is incredibly important that we recognise Headingley Hill Fields, those meadows, as protected valuable green space which should be cherished. It is in reality not part of the existing urban area but it is in fact the last remaining piece of green space within Headingley ward and it is the last part of the historic Headingley Moor to still exist and it needs its protection treasuring.

Leeds City Council does very well in terms of providing documents for ensuring the protection of green space and ensure not just its protection but actually we work to enhance access to it and so forth. Those documents certainly do this Council credit but they are dependent on the will to follow through on those documents and also the correct recognition of this green space where it exists.

That is why I would like to ask for Council today to recognise Headingley Hill Fields as the green space that it is and protect it as such.

I hope I have not waffled too much, thank you so much for listening to me this afternoon. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I move that the 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 second that, Lord Mayor.

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

MR J SALMON: Thank you very much.

DEPUTATION TWO – LEEDS SKYLINE SERVICE USERS

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 R J COOKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors. My name is Robert James Cooke and here in a supporting role is Stuart Beswick, Harriet Hughes, Jacqueline Maturla and Jonathan Simmons.

My name is Robert Cooke and we represent the BHA Skyline Service users group, who currently receive HIV support and care from the BHA Skyline for equality in health and social care here in Leeds.

I must draw your attention to a very personal matter that came to my attention recently. A very long-standing and most crucial service to myself and hundreds more is under threat due to funding cuts provided through Leeds City Council's Public Health Department and the doors may have to close in March 2016.

The above mentioned service is provided at BHA Skyline and is life-changing for over 400 people of all backgrounds that are living with HIV in the Leeds areas.

The service offers a safe and personal space in which to be educated, supported and adapt to living with HIV and the problems which the condition can bring. I have personally been using this service for around 15 months and when I first arrived there I was not in the best place in my health and mental wellbeing. The levels of care, support and guidance is second to none and with such guidance comes education and a better understanding of what it is like and can be like living with such a terrible medical condition.

I have seen people who come to Skyline for the very first time and after a short while begin to flourish and become more stable in their personal lives. The service not only offers a safe space, but also enables people to build their confidence and self-esteem, thus allowing them to reintegrate and participate in community, also helping them gain employment, education and, when times may become low, receive that valuable support that is needed.

There are currently over 1200 people in Leeds living with HIV and while there has always been a well-respected HIV service in Leeds since the 1980s, Skyline itself was founded in 2007 and is the only one of this kind. I fear that people who have and will be newly diagnosed with the condition will have nowhere to go and that does worry me, not just for myself but for everybody concerned. The levels of knowledge that the staff have and has been built up at Skyline is too good to be disposed of. People rely on them and would have nowhere to get the vital support that is needed.

HIV not only changes people's lives, it has a massive bearing on people's mental wellbeing, with some people getting so low that the sometimes find themselves unable to cope with the condition and have difficulty staying on treatment and trying to live a longer and more fulfilling life.

Leeds Skyline supports all the different communities in Leeds regardless of gender, culture or sexuality and the support groups and sessions reflect this. For instance, meeting with HIV positive women has given me a better understanding of what stigma and prejudice they may face and the issues that may become difficult, and obviously stigma is a big thing with HIV. Many of the women look to the BHA Leeds Skyline service as a safe, confidential, appropriate and accessible place to meet other women, to support each other with social exclusion, HIV information, mental health, physical health and much more.

Skyline is the only place where people can openly talk about HIV and how it affects them on a physical and emotional level and meeting others has helped them come to terms with this diagnosis. Many people I have met talk about how stress and anxiety have been difficult to live with, but the support and CBT (therapy) available from Skyline has improved their situation and, more importantly, their future. The threat of closure means more people now and in the future will be left in sheer isolation, without appropriate and consistent lifesaving care and support.

I am asking you all in this room today, in summary I am asking three things for the Council to do for us:

To consider and decide not to cut the service, as more people now and in the future will be in need.

To look at the potential impact to any changes made to the service in light of the city's state of HIV infections, the needs of people already living with HIV as a long term health condition and on Public Health.

Finally, to ensure there is consultation with the service users before a final decision is made about the service.

I must personally thank you on behalf of the group. Thank you very much.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I move that the matter be referred to the Director of Adult Social Services 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 now call for the vote. (*A vote was taken*) the vote 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 THREE – LEEDS AGAINST THE TRANSATLANTIC TRADE AND INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP

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 KEMP: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, good afternoon. My name is Joe Kemp, this is Mia Kelly, Rose Merby and Thomas Darton. We are here from the local campaign group, Leeds Against TTIP. We are here today to talk to you about TTIP, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. This deal between the EU and the US is being sold to us as a Free Trade Agreement that will stimulate the economy, job market and increase prosperity. Academics from such institutions as Tufts, LSE, Ghent and Manchester have already discredited these predictions. TTIP is currently being drafted in secret, with over 90% of the advisers being consulted representing corporate interests. There is little talk of this in the press and no opportunity for us to have a say in what is contained within the agreement. This is a global trade deal that will have a local impact.

TTIP looks to standardize regulations between member states. This means the EU is bargaining with our country's regulations. We maintain high food standards and do not want to adopt some of the more dubious practices from the US such as the hormone treatment of meat. In the pharmaceutical industry TTIP could place new restrictions on less expensive generic drugs and force local health services to pay exorbitant prices for life-saving medication. Under TTIP our labour standards could be pushed into a race to the bottom as our markets become more exposed to competition. For example, we could be in competition with some US states where unions are illegal.

TTIP could also tie our hands at a local level. The European Commission has stated that it wants TTIP to open up local procurement to international competition. It could threaten to restrict local contracts which benefit local businesses and the environment. For example, if Leeds City Council wanted to ensure that all its schools sourced local food then a food service competitor could complain, with legal backing, that they were being disadvantaged.

Another one of the ways in which TTIP will allow corporations to play by their own rules is something called ISDS (Investor-State Dispute Settlement). It would allow corporations to sue governments over projected profit losses through a private court system at the tax payers' expense. If a corporation's profits are affected, for example by environmental laws or minimum wage legislation, then a law suit could be brought against that country. This has already happened in 2013 through a similar trade agreement - when the residents of Quebec voted to protect the environment, a fracking company successfully sued the Canadian Government for \$250m. The IMF has stated that ISDS will significantly hinder a country's ability to recover from a financial crisis.

If TTIP is agreed, local planning regulations, such as Lancashire County Council's recent denial of planning permission for fracking, or Councillor Sobel's similar motion, would be extremely difficult to push through, due to the risk of being sued for future losses of profit, and because of the pressure to harmonise energy legislation across the Atlantic.

Jude Kirton Darling, MEP for the North West, recently gave us an update on the negotiations. We were very glad to hear that Labour has clear red lines when it comes to TTIP - for example MEPs will vote 'No' if the NHS is not explicitly exempt from the deal. Though this is somewhat reassuring, we know that the establishment

of a Regulatory Co-operation Council will mean that areas like pharmaceutical regulation and the approval of new drugs could be more open to corporate influence. This could affect the price of medicines, and the economic feasibility of local health services, even if they were to be theoretically exempt from TTIP. It may also include 'ratchet clauses' which could prevent Leeds from ever rolling back on privatisation, even with the new powers gained through devolution.

It is now becoming clear that this will not be representing the interests of citizens but corporations. This Agreement is being constructed in an undemocratic way and will itself undermine our ability to decide how we want to live. It is essentially a shift in power. Is it fair to lock us as citizens and a country into a contract that we have had no say in writing?

As Councillors you have been elected to represent our views. This is why we are asking you to declare Leeds a TTIP-free zone. 26 Councils in the UK already have, including Sheffield and Bradford. Over three million EU citizens have signed a petition against TTIP and many MEPs have come out against it too. We are speaking loud and clear, and we say no to this damaging trade agreement.

Thank you for your time. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I move that the 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 second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I now call for the vote. (*A vote was taken*) the vote 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 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD – SAFER LEEDS STRATEGY 2015/16

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 5, Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR M DOBSON: I just move it, Lord Mayor, in terms of the Notice.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lay.

COUNCILLOR LAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I shall be speaking on the importance of neighbourhood policing in helping to achieve a safer Leeds.

NPTs help produce community tolerance and respect, help reduce harm and help protect property and the rights of citizens. Neighbourhood policing teams

continue to enjoy the overwhelming support of our communities. They offer community support and local knowledge when working with the communities, businesses, schools and other statutory organisations to help to deliver lower crime and safer communities.

It is therefore disconcerting to hear that, relieved of the moderating and ameliorating hand of the Lib Dems, the Chancellor wishes to undermine this with plans to reduce neighbourhood policing funds yet again in this month's Autumn Spending Review.

Arguments have previously been made that some reining in of police funding was necessary post-2010 to help bring public spending under control and to help produce the leaner, fitter, more focused police service we see now, but it is no longer 2010. Here in 2015 the time has come to provide the police service with some stability, some confidence in funding and the confidence to move forward.

I am urging Members, particularly those to my right, to campaign to stop the cuts proposed in the upcoming Spending Review. When former London Met Chief Lord Stevens, a cross-bench peer, starts a campaign and petition urging the Government to listen to the public and police officers to drop plans for drastic cuts and protect visible, locally responsible neighbourhood policing, you know things are coming to a head.

Why does it matter? I think it is no coincidence that since the introduction of NPTs we have seen such large falls and improvements in crime reduction and confidence in our police service. At a Local Authority level, when I look at the Safer Leeds priorities this year – and I will ignore the fact that we are now seven months into that year – so much relies on our neighbourhood teams. Whether reducing ASB, preventing exploitation or identifying those likely to become involved in criminality through its school programmes, NPTs are a crucial, fundamental part of Safer Leeds.

Of course, the most visible part of our NPTs are our Police Community Support Officers, so I note elsewhere in the full Council pack that discussions are taking place between the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Council with regards to funding of PCSOs, and once again, although I know it is difficult, I make the plea that we do all that we can to protect the funding of the eyes and ears of our PCSOs. So much intel comes from PCSOs who are embedded in our communities, that to not support them would be short-sighted.

Finally, they are also a vital link for us elected Members. Regular meetings with my NPT inspector, his sergeant and our PC means that I am better able to understand my community and by extension better able to represent them.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can you bring this to a close now, you have run out of time.

COUNCILLOR LAY: I have finished, Lord Mayor, thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I just want to speak briefly too about the Safer Leeds Strategy Report.

First of all, to welcome it and give it the support from this side of the Chamber and to acknowledge the work of the partnership in two significant successes – the ongoing reduction in domestic burglaries and the increasing success of the Leeds

Antisocial Behaviour Team, and the level of satisfaction that Leeds citizens are experiencing from the work of that team.

It is worth noting that the overriding outcome that the Safer Leeds Strategy is looking for for the people of Leeds is not only to be safe but to feel safe and I would echo what Councillor Lay has just been saying about the role that the PCSOs play in that feeling safe – the fact that they are on the streets, they are a presence and we must protect that element of ward based PCSOs.

The other item in consultation with residents that is mentioned in the report is that our citizens are not feeling particularly safe on the street because of road safety issues and we are not talking necessarily about the highways issues of whether there is a zebra crossing or whether there is a traffic light. It is more about the impact of some road safety issues that affect behaviour. There is really an element of antisocial behaviour. The speeding in residential streets, particularly the new 20mph zones where there are still lots of elements of speeding there often by known people, local people who are known. It is the inconsiderate parking on pavements, blocking pavements for people in wheelchairs and parents with pushchairs etc, and this is real antisocial behaviour. Although there is a passing mention in the report about this, I just do not feel that there is a real ownership from Safer Leeds; it is sort of passed on to Highways and I would like to see an outcome mentioned in the report, an outcome when this comes back to Council to show the effect of this strategy of how these antisocial behaviour road safety issues have been addressed.

Finally, just coming back to the PCSOs, we do hear that the funding coming from the Commissioner will be reduced next year and he is looking for a bigger contribution from the Council. If that larger contribution is not made the number of PCSOs will reduce dramatically and the whole concept of ward-based PCSOs will go and they will simply become a force to be reactively deployed in the same way as police officers are now with a real detriment to the feeling safe of our communities.

We do understand the financial pressures that the police and the Council are under but it is that Front Bench that sets the priorities and makes the choices. I do urge the administration not to take a simple short-term view on this and that every effort is made to maintain those five PCSOs per ward and sustain the hard work done...

THE LORD MAYOR: Could you draw this to a close?

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: ... and hard won successes that have been achieved over recent years. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. We are commenting on the impact Neighbourhood Policing Teams do have on Safer Leeds and particularly from a Morley point of view.

There is no doubt the Neighbourhood Policing Team has been a great success, certainly in the Morley area. It has driven down crime levels. It has also meant that the local communities that work with the Neighbourhood Policing Teams feel a lot safer and come forward and are part of the solution, so it is a virtuous circle.

What we would want some assurance about is the fact that if the number of PCSOs is cut, that Morley is not dealt with unfairly. The Town Council and the Parish Councils in the Morley area already provide additional PCSOs. We would be most disappointed if that is seen as an easy option to cut Morley's policing further because

we are already paying for more. We want to make sure that there is fairness and that the ward based PCSOs remain ward based PCSOs and are not shuffled into other areas of the city. It would be a great pity if we found the outer areas – and I am not just talking about Morley at this particular point – had their PCSOs removed and shifted into other areas, generally other areas with Labour representation. This has to be a fair allocation of whatever resource we actually get.

We do think the Neighbourhood Policing Teams are running as efficiently as possible, we do think that the Government needs to think again in terms of cutting any funding towards the police service. At this particular point the community's confidence in the policing teams is going up. That is unlikely to continue and crime levels are unlikely to continue to fall if we are in a situation where the number of police officers and the number of PCSOs is actually reduced.

We are looking for some assurances in terms of the ward-based PCSOs that those of us who represent an outer area are still going to get our fair share and specifically, when it comes to Morley, that we are not going to be discriminated against primarily because we already have additional PCSOs that are financed by the Town and Parish Councils. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. As you would expect, this particular report came to the Environmental Housing Scrutiny Board for consideration. It was then followed up by a Community Safety themed meeting which took place on 13th October and, as you would naturally expect, amongst many other things, PCSOs and the future of them in our city was focused upon. Unfortunately and completely understandably Councillor Dobson was not able to be at that particular meeting.

What we were slightly concerned to find, however, was that the information that was supplied to the Scrutiny Board from the police we were only permitted to see if it was received on pink papers, which I think many Members of the Board found frankly astonishing. I would like to tell you that there is something terribly confidential and terribly interesting in these pink papers, but there is not. It was clearly at the liberty of the Board not to accept them as confidential matters but to bring them into the open. We were not permitted to see the papers, bizarrely, until we had actually resolved to take them *in camera* and then they were distributed, which again flies in the face of all of the procedural arrangements of this Council.

In short, Lord Mayor, there is a very big issue on the horizon in terms of the future of PCSOs in this city and the quantum of them and I hope we can have some clarity today. I understand that that is not wholly in the gift of this Council but, nevertheless, attempts that have been made by our Scrutiny Board to pursue this matter in the form of a working group have been somewhat frustrated. Again I am not for a minute suggesting that that is Councillor Dobson, but these matters need to be progressed urgently. The worst thing possible would be for a paper to emerge in the general Budget proposals of this Council without full consideration being given to the future of PCSOs first. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Dobson to sum up.

COUNCILLOR M DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Some points that I would like to cover there. First of all, Councillor Procter, quite right I was not at that meeting and I did get the feedback regarding the incident around the papers and what should be in the public and what should not.

I think what I am going to perhaps offer to Councillor Procter is, PCSOs is a hugely important issue, it has to be discussed, it has to be brought to Scrutiny and, of course, it is on that trajectory anyway. What I think we will do, if Councillor Procter is agreeable, I will sit down in the not too distant future with him and Sam Miller and we will look at what is actually appropriate to going into the public domain and what is not and reach those agreements perhaps ahead of it going to a formal Board setting.

In terms of Councillor Lay I think the case of PCSOs across our wards is very well made and very well heard on this side. I am going to be answering a question a bit later on when I will give a back story around some of the finances that actually are going to frame this piece of work next year and at this stage say that we will be retaining five PCSOs across 33 wards with the best will in the world I believe to be probably an unrealistic objective at this stage, but more on that later.

Councillor Bentley, yes, it is about setting priorities, is it not, and I think part of the problem we have got is where do those priorities lay. If we are going to have less uniformed police officers and less fully funded by the PCC or part-funded with Leeds City Council, if there is going to be less in number, what are those priorities going to be. There are lots of issues that come into our inboxes every day around inappropriate parking, low level antisocial behaviour that as ward Members we would all like to see those issues tackled. The reality is, will they be in the new regime or will we be basically front line fire fighting, and that is my biggest concern because over five years we have seen a massive reduction in burglary in the city but a little bit of it is due to recording techniques but the reality is those numbers are just starting to creep up that little bit.

Let us not throw away the baby with the bathwater. In the Safer Leeds Strategy the work we are doing with domestic violence, the work we are doing to reduce noise nuisance, and we have done that through efficiencies, we have done it through genuine partnership working, I think there is a good story to be told around Safer Leeds, what I think is one of the strongest partnerships in the Council between the Council and the police service, but it is fair to say that the time they are a-changing, things will not look the same next year. That is a conversation we will have to have as a collective. I have already given Councillor Procter my assurances that that will be heard fully through the Scrutiny process and any forum that Members want to discuss with my privately.

Councillor Finnigan, privately I will tell you and publicly I will tell you, we will not be looking to cherry-pick or deprive any area but we have to look at this on a sensible basis. Part of that will be about need and it has to be need driven in terms of policing, Lord Mayor.

I move the Strategy. (*Applause*)

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

ITEM 6 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD – GAMBLING ACT 2005 STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 6, Councillor Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I second that, Lord Mayor.

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

ITEM 7 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE –
NOMINATIONS FROM SCRUTINY BOARD (ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES, PUBLIC
HEALTH, NHS) – WEST YORKSHIRE JOINT HEALTH OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 7, Councillor Charlwood.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Selby.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: I second, Lord Mayor.

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

ITEM 8 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE –
COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF GUISELEY

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 8, Councillor Blake.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, I would like to comment on this particular item particularly as, of course, it refers to my ward but also I think it draws attention to the need, and perhaps not always the fulfilment of the need for true and proper consultation on these sort of situations.

The proposal for a Town Council in Guiseley came before the General Purposes Committee very, very early in this year – it might have been the end of last year, I am not quite sure, I cannot remember totally – but it was the result of a rather peremptory and short consultation following a petition which had the requisite number of signatures, with the result that it almost met with the General Purposes Committee's approval but luckily it went on to the back burner and this gave time for an awful lot of contact from the residents of Guiseley to the point where it became obvious when this item returned to General Purposes that there was no appetite whatsoever within the ward for a Parish or Town Council for Guiseley to the point where the General Purposes Committee looked at it and in their wisdom said really and truly nobody wants this.

That was the correct outcome whereas had we not had the time for the amount of objections from residents which was the case with, as I say, the rather peremptory consultation that took place, then we might well have had a different result but I do think that this illustrates that people cannot just be simply asked a

question and three weeks later we take that as read. People generally speaking take a while to realise just what it is they are being asked to think about and to come up with their true feelings. In this case, I must now congratulate colleagues and the General Purposes Committee for coming to what I believe is the right conclusion and a conclusion which has been borne out by the fact that ever since that conclusion was reached, I have not received a single complaint from anybody that it was a wrong decision. On the contrary, I have had an awful lot of contacts from people who said what a wonderful decision it was.

I would urge fellow Councillors to urge this resolution that we approve the General Purposes Committee's resolution. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake to sum up.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think Councillor Latty has highlighted the complexity of the process in this regard, particularly with reference to the number of proposed polling districts that were first submitted and I think it became very clear to the General Purposes Committee that when two of those original polling districts would not be included in the boundary that it was quite a different proposal to the one that was first submitted.

Of course, it remains within the gift of the people of Guiseley if they so wish to petition again and to go through the process again on different boundaries. That is entirely within the local decision-making powers of the local community, as it should be. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

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

ITEM 9 – REPORT ON THE LEEDS AWARD

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 9, Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Lord Mayor, this item on the agenda is one that I hope we will all give our unanimous welcome to. I think Kevin Sinfield has really taken a part of the heart of so many of us in this room. The Leeds Award is a very special award and in consultation with the Leaders of Council we felt that the achievements of Kevin really merited achieving this honour that we have as our gift to bestow upon him.

The decision was then ratified by the Chief Executive because there was a very special event that Leeds Rhinos actually undertook, which was the ten year celebration of the formation of the Rhinos' foundation and I had the great pleasure of announcing at that event in the Town Hall that the city was going to honour Kevin Sinfield in this way.

I think all of us know and understand the achievements of Leeds Rhinos. We have spoken about it in this Chamber before and particularly at the end of the glorious season we have just had.

Kevin actually is not a Leeds lad but he has a great expression about his affection for Leeds. He always says, "Oldham is my town but Leeds is my city" and I think that is a wonderful way for him to express the fact that he has not let his success on the pitch or his subsequent fame go to his head at all.

He came to start playing with Leeds Rhinos at a very young age, I think he was 13, in his early teens and became captain at the very young age of 21. The qualities that he has of leadership, of an ability to inspire the most incredible determination of all of his fellow players against all the odds to keep coming through, keep coming through and winning and winning, is absolutely exemplary.

Those of us in this Chamber have other reasons to thank Kevin and it is because of his extraordinary work off the pitch, working with Children's Services in the city, supporting the work of the Rhinos Foundation, helping those most in need and we had a moment where we approached Kevin and asked him if he would be one of our role models working with us on our work against domestic violence and abuse. He went into what we were asking in such detail and agreed, of course, to be an ambassador for us.

I have tried on numerous occasions to encourage Kevin to take some personal appreciation of what he has done and he, every single time, refuses. He is so self-effacing and always refers to the fact that he is just a member of a team who happens to be the captain. He is an exemplary figure, such a role model for young people in this city. I hope you will all join me in really celebrating the fact that we have been able to award Kevin the Leeds Award. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to give my Group's support for this particular award. Kevin Sinfield has been an exceptional positive ambassador for the city and he symbolises everything that is good about the city, about fair play, about hard work, about the capacity even under pressure to behave in a positive and sports-person way. It is well deserved and we as a group wish him well, even if he has turned to the dark side that is rugby union! (laughter)
Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake to sum up.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I do not think I have anything further to add, Lord Mayor. I am delighted that we are moving ahead with this award, subject to the vote.

THE LORD MAYOR: Of course. I will now call for the vote. (A vote was taken) The vote is CARRIED.

ITEM 10 – REPORT ON APPOINTMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 10, Councillor Charlwood.

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

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) The vote is CARRIED.

ITEM 11 – REPORT ON THE ELECTORAL REVIEW
OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 11, Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I move the report, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I second, Lord Mayor.

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

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE REPORTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Community Committee Reports. We will now move on to Community Committee Reports and consideration of each report will last for no more than ten minutes.

If we could begin with Item 12, Councillor Ritchie.

ITEM 12 – REPORT ON THE INNER WEST COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR RITCHIE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am pleased to move the report for the Inner West Community Committee in my capacity as Chair and, most importantly, it might seem the right time to be able to do so after last time's mistake.

It is fair to say Inner West Members and officers have embraced the themed meeting structure and the 2015 themes are detailed in the report at paragraphs 8-22. To ensure these are not merely talking shops, a spreadsheet of clear objectives and subsequent tracking has been developed, this instigated by my predecessor in the role, Councillor Caroline Gruen.

This excellent initiative is being rolled out to other Community Committees and ensures measurable outcomes are delivered on these key community priorities.

The Wellbeing and Youth Activities Fund continue to provide excellent value and deliver vital projects and activities, largely delivered by Third Sector partners and volunteer-led projects.

The highlight for me has to be the Bramley Park Run. For a £3,000 Wellbeing investment towards set-up costs, in the 20 or so weeks it has been operating nearly 3,000 runners have participated over the hilly 5k course, supported by around 400 volunteers in that time. It works out at an ever-decreasing 90 pence a head. It is great for the health and wellbeing of our community, introducing a number of previously non-active residents to active sport and I would like to record the Inner West Community Committee's thanks to Graham Fisher for instigating the event alongside the Park Run team.

I have to say I was delighted with the enthusiasm shown by my Inner West colleagues towards the Champion roles when I approached them for areas of interest at the start of my Chair role. In a moment Councillor Lowe will speak about the project delivered in her role as Health and Wellbeing Champion, but first Councillor

Venner will speak on a fantastic project which began as an idea from the Environmental sub-group and was picked up and delivered by Kirkstall Members, led by Councillor Venner.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Venner.

COUNCILLOR VENNER: My Lord Mayor, I am speaking on Minute 36 of the Inner West Community Committee Report about the Hawksworth Wood anti dog fouling campaign, which built on the success of the Garforth Dog Watch scheme.

The Inner West Community Committee combined with local residents, Hawksworth Wood Primary School, Housing Leeds, the police, HAVA, who have £1m of Lottery funding to spend in Hawksworth Wood, and the Hawksworth Wood Residents Association to tackle the issue.

We delivered an assembly at school about the health risks to dog fouling and the children then took part in a poster competition to encourage dog owners to clear up after their dogs, and the winning entries were made into 18 metallic signs which are displayed around the estate, funded by HAVA. The School Council also wrote a letter about the health risks of dog fouling which every child took home and we compiled a leaflet publicising the campaign to go in the doctor's surgery which included the children's writing and pictures.

The highlight of the campaign was a family fun day and dog show which brought together over 100 dog owners and included categories of waggiest tail, cutest dog, best young handler and best sausage catcher, though I am sorry to have to report that one of the illustrious judges, Councillor Ritchie, confessed to eating some of the sausages himself after I told him I had got them from Marks and Spencer's! *(laughter)*

Working with children on this issue has been an absolute joy and they are thrilled to see their posters made into signs. More importantly, using children to change the hearts and minds of people on the estate and carrying messages home from school to their families has been a success. The campaign has had an impact and people are reporting an improvement. The next event will be a dog chipping event on Friday, which is another opportunity to bring dog owners together.

I am now working with Councillor Mark Dobson to look at how we can roll out elements of the Garforth scheme and of the Hawksworth campaign out across the city and I would be delighted to speak to other Councillors if you would be interested in an anti dog fouling campaign in your ward. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I cannot compete with the sausages or the dogs, I am afraid. I am going to tell you about the success of Inner West Community Committee to lead on reducing health inequalities and improving health outcomes for the people of Inner West, Armley and Bramley in particular and hopefully more widely than that as we go forward.

Working together with our Health Improvement Specialist, Tim Taylor, we have set up a scheme called PEP, Patient Empowerment Project, which is the first social prescribing scheme I think in the region but definitely in Leeds and it serves to spur on the other two CCGs, South and East, and now Leeds North, to also tender for social prescribing contracts because of the success of the PEP.

The Patient Empowerment Project works very closely alongside GP practices to provide social prescriptions rather than just medical prescriptions, so when a patient comes in with mental health difficulties, depression or some other difficulty and the GP is really struggling to find a way of helping that person because the person has other social issues, PEP staff come in alongside the GP, support that person to access local community activities and resources so that they can look at other issues in their lives and deal with the feelings that are leading them to go to their GPs. It has been really successful, we have been doing some work with a GP surgery in Bramley and the frequent flyers, it is a horrible term but it does tend to give you a flavour of what we mean, those people who attend GPs constantly, the numbers are dramatically reducing. It is a brilliant example of putting in investment at a local level and having a brilliant impact for local people, for GPs and hopefully for hospitals too.

Brilliant work; thank you, Tim Taylor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ritchie to sum up.

COUNCILLOR RITCHIE: Thanks to Councillor Lowe for that report and clearly the Inner West Community Committee benefits from Councillor Lowe's professional expertise in this field.

Thanks to Councillor Venner. Your enthusiasm for the project was crucial to its success, in particular engaging with the schools in the street sign designs and treating the dogs at the dog show to no less than Marks and Spencer's sausages is really very nice!

In addition I would like to thank all the other Champions and Members for their commitment and continued support for the Inner West Community Committee. I will be looking to work with the Champions and relevant officers to develop these vital roles over the rest of my term, tapping into the successful models that exist in other areas of the city, in particular the Outer East.

Another area of innovation for the Inner West Community Committee is the official induction training programme developed for our nine community co-optees from across the three wards. They all take an active part in the sub-groups and bring important intelligence direct from their communities. It is a role I am delighted to promote and encourage, having cut my teeth in local Government as a co-optee myself prior to my election in 2014.

Going forward, the challenges for Inner West are to encourage a greater attendance of the general public at our meetings. Social media clearly has a crucial part to play in this and a good start has been made in this respect, particularly on the Facebook site.

I was pleased to hear last night at the Housing Advisory Board that the tenants' groups are keen to develop direct links with Community Committees and I welcome that initiative too.

I will finish by thanking the Area Support Team who provide a first class service, facilitating the meetings, co-ordinating the different services and somehow finding gaps in everybody's diary to bring things together; this, alongside the bureaucracy of Wellbeing applications and the Chair still wearing the 'L' plates. Keep up the good work. *(Applause)*

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

ITEM 13 – REPORT ON THE INNER SOUTH COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 13, Councillor Gabriel.

COUNCILLOR GABRIEL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to welcome this report of the South Inner Area Committee. I am going to go a bit off-piste here because I want to go back to the history of how it was when I first became a Councillor. I have been a Councillor now for 18 years. When I came to the Civic everything was done on committees and you had a committee and you had a Chair and you concentrated on one piece of work and you were very specialist and you spent all your time here in this building talking to each other. Members of the public very rarely interacted.

Then we got CITs which was a bit of a tokenistic way of saying we are going to support the community; then we progressed a bit better and we had Area Committees with very few delegations, but we are gradually bringing the Council to come out of its silos and to talk to the community.

Now I feel as we have got Community Committees this is the way forward, and I think people have to stop talking about the old days and how it was so much better then because this is the future.

Just to let you know that out of the last five Area Committees we have had we have engaged with over 210 people ranging from young and old and different members of the community. One of our Facebook pages which was advertising jobs for Asda, for the good work that Kim has done, actually reached 41,008 people – that is just one Facebook page, so the way that we have to work in the community in the future is actually talking to our people because, as you can see here, there is hardly anybody here from the community. I know it is on the web page but not many people read it. I think the way forward is actually Community Committees and with the boundary changes coming on I think that this is the way that we are going to make sure we keep 99 seats in this community. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Truswell.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In seconding Councillor Gabriel I have been told – sorry, asked – to say a few words about Middleton skate park that opened in July.

The project began over two years ago when a local residents' organisation, Middleton Community Group, asked young people for their priorities; a skate park came top. To progress this we as ward Members set up a Youth Partnership Group which I chaired. It involved Middleton Community Group, local church, Third Sector organisations like Health for All and Hunslet Club and the police. The Area team co-ordinated and serviced the partnership, Youth Services did a brilliant job in engaging young people for us and Parks and Countryside project managed the eventual construction.

That broad partnership provided a really credible base when it came to making funding applications. We received advice that providing a decent skate park capable of future expansion would cost a minimum of £75,000. We secured a total of £46,000 from Housing Leeds, the Inner South Housing Advisory Panel, Section 106 money and the Community Committee. That funding, together with the credibility of the partnership and demonstrably close working with young people, enabled us to secure a further £50,000 from Mondegreen (who, as we all know, administer the

landfill tax credit grant) £5,000 from Green Leeds and £5,000 from Jimbo's fund. That gave us a total of £106,000 and it meant we were able to incorporate almost every single feature that young people had requested and, to cap it all, a Panel of young people received presentations of the five tendered designs and we went with their recommendation.

Lord Mayor, I think it is fair to say that this is an excellent example of engagement, of partnership and of putting the principles of a child friendly city into positive practice. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Davey.

COUNCILLOR DAVEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Commenting today on the Annual Report of the Inner South Community Committee. We hear regularly in Council about the work Members are doing across the city with older people and it is certainly a big focus for Members in Inner South.

In March this year there was an incredibly successful celebration event attended by more than older people, providing a day of entertainment and fun, as well as sharing information about services available locally. That kick-started the work but we are well aware how much more we need to do.

I am sure everyone in this Chamber knows that older people are particularly susceptible to social isolation and loneliness as a result of poor mobility, low income or loss of friends and family and it is perhaps at this time of year that relationships that we have with our most vulnerable older residents are at their most important. As we head into the winter the risk of people becoming cut off from their communities increases, bringing with it concerns about the detrimental effects of isolation on health and wellbeing.

With loneliness having an impact on blood pressure and being closely linked to depression, it is vital that we as a Council foster a thriving Third Sector to tackle these issues at source rather than end up seeing more and more people using NHS services, which is neither a positive experience nor useful when it comes to health budget concerns.

That is why the Inner South Community Committee has allocated £8,000 for bespoke projects to support individuals who are at risk of becoming isolated, with a particular focus on helping those most in need and enhancing local capacity to assist them.

We have set up a scheme in which individual organisations can apply for up to £1,000 with consortia or organisations working together able to apply for up to £4,000. Engagement with public health is a prerequisite for receiving any funding.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can you sum up, please?

COUNCILLOR DAVEY: I hope that what is delivered will have a real long-lasting impact. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gabriel to sum up.

COUNCILLOR GABRIEL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would just like to sum up briefly by thanking all my colleagues and the Community Champions for all the help and the support they give us; thanking Patrick for standing in as the Older People's Champion after Judith became Leader and obviously had other things to do, but she is still involved with the Community Committee; I would like to thank officers

because without their help, support and guidance it would be a much harder job, so thank you, everybody. (*Applause*)

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

ITEM 14 – QUESTIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: I will now move on to Questions. We have Question Time for a period of 30 minutes when Members of Council can now ask questions of the Executive. Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Will the Executive board Member confirm that he will instruct Council officers to cease using the term 'PAS land' to describe safeguarded land, bringing us into line with the terminology used in the rest of the country?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In the Site Allocations Plan, sites safeguarded for longer term development needs beyond the plan period are simply referred to as "safeguarded land". This reflects the terminology used in the current National Planning Guidance. This is covered in policy HG3 and explained in the supporting text in para 2.60, which is page 25 of the publication Draft Plan. The term "PAS" is used in reference to existing sites which are allocated as protected areas of search in the UDP, so this term will continue to be used until the Site Allocations Plan formally replaces the UDP upon adoption.

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

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, thank you, Lord Mayor. Will Councillor Lewis accept that the terminology "PAS" has caused and will continue to cause confusion when all other Local Authorities refer to their protected land in the terms he has already outlined? Will he further give me an assurance that when we finally conclude our current Development Plan, officers will be instructed that protected land means just what it says and that we will comply with the guidance in National Planning Policy guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework, i.e. that protected land may be – may be – considered for development in the next, the subsequent, Local Plan.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Safeguarded land actually is referred to by many different names in many different places and there are terms like "white land", "protected open land" and in the National Guidance there is "safeguarded".

I think my take on this is that we do not want to use any terminology that is unhelpful to ourselves. I think that is fairly obvious. Equally, I do not want to say here that we will adopt something that causes some other problem. I want to be assured that what we are using as a term is useful to us and it is understood to mean the same thing to all Members of Council and that we are all absolutely agreed as to what we are talking about.

Let us have those discussions. I have not got a problem with that and I equally want to have a discussion about the other points that you have raised, Councillor Carter.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Lay.

COUNCILLOR LAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Paula, not her real name, has recently written to me. Paula lives in Yeadon and Paula is concerned about the St Anne's service and she wants me to ask, can the Exec Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adults reassure Council about the future of St Anne's alcohol rehab service in the light of recent speculation about its closure.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am delighted to see that Councillor Lay has been inspired by the new Labour Leader. *(Applause)*

St Anne's alcohol rehab service is commissioned by Adult Social Care with public health funding. Members will be aware that the Government intends to make in-year cuts to the public health grant in Leeds. Last week the Department of Health finally announced that this will be the £2.8m cuts to the Leeds Public Health budget that we had anticipated as that was the most administratively easy way of doing that for the Government. Although it will be very difficult to achieve I can assure Councillor Lay that St Anne's alcohol rehab service, like BHA Skyline whose service users came to a deputation today, have not been considered by Public Health to be part of those in-year cuts. However, none of us yet know what will happen to the Public Health grants for 2016/17. We hope to get an indication of the direction of travel as part of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review announcements in a few weeks' time and the specific public health allocation for Leeds will be announced in January 2016.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary question?

COUNCILLOR LAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Yes and thank you for that, Lisa. Can I ask then, with hindsight, do you think writing to the affected services and thereby raising the fears and anxieties of staff and users was the right thing to do?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Adult Social Care, as commissioners of the St Anne's service, informed them of the current budget uncertainties as part of the Third Sector Compact. They wanted to ensure that they had sufficient notice that there was an uncertainty about the future funding.

St Anne's contract is due to end in March 2016, therefore decisions have to be made and they have to obviously plan ahead for the potential outcomes. This scenario is not unique to St Anne's and I want to emphasise again that no decisions have been made regarding the Public Health budget for 2016/17 as we do not yet have clarity on what that budget will be.

I also want to emphasise the very high regard in which the St Anne's service and BHA Skyline are held by myself and the Director of Public Health and the Director of Adult Social Services. I also want to emphasise that we want to provide clarity to providers at the earliest possible opportunity, so I am hoping that when we get some clarity at the end of this month we will be able to start those discussions with providers.

Just a last thing to say, I realise this is not the most satisfactory way of dealing with the situation but it is not of the Council's making. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Caroline Gruen.

COUNCILLOR C GRUEN: Does the Executive Member with responsibility for Community Safety have concerns about Police provision for next year?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR M DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Yes, a lot of concerns, Councillor Gruen, and I think really the concerns that I have are really framed against what I was saying earlier around some of the massive improvements that we have seen in the city both in terms of neighbourhood policing, the way we have had a very visible PCSO presence and actually through integrated partnership working through the Safer Leeds Strategy, some of the real innovations we have been able to bring forward in the last few years working in partnership.

Of course, the problem that we do have is that things will be changing and they will be changing rapidly. If you look at Leeds as a district in terms of its budget for uniformed policing and PCSOs, in 2012 it was running at £95.5m. From April next year we are looking at £76.5m – a big funding gap in terms of uniformed officers. That actually equates to some quite startling numbers. In the Leeds district we had 1,008 (*sic*) uniformed officers. By April 2016 we are going to be looking at about 1,029, a reduction of some 57 officers. PCSOs, again, for some of the reasons we outlined earlier but I will go into a little bit more detail rather than numbers, does continue to cause concern. From 294 at the core, the police service in Leeds are telling me that actually in reality through not back-filling posts or when people have moved on from the service or moved actually to be full police officers, there are actually around 230 on the streets. Out of that, 165 are funded by us with the PCC on a 20/80 split.

The good news, the positive news around that is our 165 are in post in our communities in the arrangement that was previously made last time round but, as I say, that finishes in 2016 and then the position around PCSO provision will look very different indeed.

Clearly there are discussions ongoing with the PCC and the police service about the future of this but not only have we got to recognise a reduction in the West Yorkshire Police budget of 30%, we have also got to look at the elephant in the room which is the Autumn Statement and further in-year cuts that could be built into that.

Where does that leave us? At the moment we are having discussions with the PCC but there is a big question mark around what can be delivered and why and when because at the moment we are somewhat in the lap of the gods to the wills and whims of the Chancellor come the Autumn Statement.

Leeds does remain committed to its PCSO service and if we do move to a joint funding arrangement, which seems to be the direction of travel, these are the sort of numbers that we can talk about in broad terms, I cannot pin it down exactly but it could leave a city the size of Leeds with something in the region of 200 PCSOs, and that presents problems because in the communities we all know that they have been the eyes and ears, they have been the reassuring presence, they have been the people who talk to us, they have been that real fantastic interface between us and uniformed police officers and they have been invaluable.

That will probably change; certainly the numbers will change but then I have other concerns because looking at the police service in the whole, we have done fantastic work with burglaries. I have mentioned it earlier but it is worth saying again; a 60% reduction in five years. Yes, recording techniques have changed, as I have said, but I am worried that that great trend will just start to taper off or could even get worse.

I do not want to sacrifice some of the really important work we have done around some of the partnership things, such as Inner North West, an area that many of you will know well and certainly bombard my inbox with complaints around such issues as noise nuisance. Through genuine partnership working we have gone from a situation in one ward in Inner North West where in 2013 we served two noise abatement orders – two. Last year we served 225. Same staff, same people but working collectively. If those people are suddenly taken out of the system, does that good work unravel?

Yes, I have a great deal of concerns. There will be conversations. None of this will be done in isolation of Members, it will not be done in isolation of Scrutiny and it will be a joined up, collective conversation, but I think it would be wrong in the here and now if I did not flag this up as a major concern for this Council, for West Yorkshire Police. Mark Burns-Williamson was talking about it in the Yorkshire Post only yesterday and certainly as a city these are serious, serious challenges that could set policing and community safety back in this city which none of us want to see. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gruen, do you have a supplementary question?

COUNCILLOR C GRUEN: No.

THE LORD MAYOR: Question 4, Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Executive Member please update Council as to when the Elland Road Match Day Residents Permit Parking Scheme will be introduced on the identified roads in the Wortley area?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Further consultation should be taking place with ward Members in the next few weeks. As Councillor Blackburn knows, that does not guarantee that the proposals that are advertised are necessarily to the satisfaction of people who live in the area so we may face the issue of objections. That may lengthen the period of time it takes to implement the scheme so I do not want to give a date on that. However, you will be formally consulted within the next three weeks.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary question, Councillor Blackburn? No. Question 5, Councillor Heselwood.

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: Can the Executive Member for Resources and Strategy give an assessment of the impact of the proposed Trade Union Bill on the Council's relationship with Trade Unions?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Trade Union Bill which was introduced recently is an attempt by the Government to restrict the activities of trade unions, activities which I do not believe are a problem in Leeds. In the last five years beyond national days of action there has only been one piece of industrial action in Leeds which included a handful of employees and there were no issues with picketing during that action.

I think it is also worth reflecting that Leeds has a positive relationship with the trade unions and we have worked together at times of very savage Government imposed cuts to reshape the workforce to avoid no compulsory redundancies; we have had five Council-wide collective agreements and we have worked together on the Early Leavers Initiative and also reducing agency and overtime spending. This is all as a positive relationship with the trade unions which I believe this Bill would restrict.

We would also like to continue to deduct trade union subscriptions where Council staff request that as we do for health and cycling and other schemes in the Council. My assessment is that the Bill thinks there is a problem that is not there and I think our MPs have better things to do with their time to deal with some of the real serious problems this Government has created. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary question? Going on to question 6, please, Councillor Harrand.

COUNCILLOR HARRAND: Thank you. Will the Chair of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel update Council on the present state of negotiations between the police service and the fire service about the development of the site at Weetwood, which have been going on for 18 months and seem to be getting nowhere?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. By way of background I should say that West Yorkshire Fire Service, West Yorkshire Police and Leeds City Council jointly submitted proposals approximately 18 months ago to DCLG to secure grant funding to provide a redeveloped joint combined facility on the site. Unfortunately, this bid was unsuccessful. Following that unsuccessful bid clearly West Yorkshire Fire Service are still keen to co-locate on that site with West Yorkshire Police.

Following your request I raised that question in the July meeting. Councillor Amanda Carter was witness to that. I was told that before any decision could be made there would need to be the completion of the police estate strategy which, fortunately for you, came online yesterday and I have taken the trouble of printing this out for you, Peter, and you can have a copy.

Following the announcement of the Comprehensive Spending Review which we will find out about on 25th November, the police currently understand that more of their funding is to be cut and so this estate strategy has been re-reviewed and they will clearly have to make some more efficiencies than previously expected.

The estates team have discussed the West Yorkshire police estate with each District Commander and a representative from each Local Authority in West Yorkshire with a view to identifying joint efficiencies and to ensure the estate is utilised in a manner that meets the needs of the changing face of West Yorkshire Police and of a reduced workforce in the most efficient way. Any decision taken on

the estate will have a business case assessed and will be judged against the estate strategy and will take on board the views of communities and key stakeholders.

Specifically for Weetwood, discussions with West Yorkshire Fire are ongoing and no business case to request to consult regarding any proposals has been submitted to date.

My view is that you have a look at this, you take this back to your board, you have a conversation about what you want to consult on, you propose a timescale for that and we start the consultations damn quick. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harrand, supplementary?

COUNCILLOR HARRAND: That won't do, no, sorry. You anticipate these questions and think I wonder what the reply will be. You think either it will be, "Yes, we are getting on with it and it will not take us long now", or "The whole thing has been abandoned." What you do not think is, "We need more consultation, we need more reviews, it is going to take a lot longer."

There is facility under the Localities Bill going through the Commons at present for the Police Authority, Police Commissioner, to take over the Fire Service. If this is the way it is going to be we have all got great doubts in the Fire Service that we are going to be properly looked after.

Will you go back to whoever you need to go back to, tell them that no more delays are acceptable, will they switch the blue lights on and get moving because it has taken long enough already? Will you go back, that is the question.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can you respond, will you go back?

COUNCILLOR LOWE: My response is that it is not my job to go back. As I have just said, it is your job now to go back to the Fire Authority, talk about what you are going to do next based on that strategy, start the consultation process and when you have done that if you have got a problem please come back to the Police and Crime Panel.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: What use are they?

THE LORD MAYOR: Question 7, Councillor Townsley.

COUNCILLOR TOWNSLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Could the Executive Member for Children please update Council on the status of talks between asset management and Leeds City College regarding the potential acquisition of the Leeds City College Horsforth campus site for educational purposes?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you. The Council has been liaising with Leeds City College in relation to a number of sites, including that in Horsforth. However, as Members will be aware, the Local Authority is not funded for site acquisitions. However, news hot off the press. Following a recent discussion with the Education Funding Agency we are aware that they are seeking to acquire land in areas of need and the Council has drawn their attention to the site in Horsforth and has facilitated contact between both parties to facilitate further discussions.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary question?

COUNCILLOR TOWNSLEY: Yes. That is very good to hear but would you therefore agree that both Councillor Cleasby and my suggestion of a Sixth Form College use of this site, which could free up to anything to 2,000 places, should be scrutinised?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you. I know that officers in Education have been asked to provide what the demand is in the area to the Education Funding Agency, so they are currently collating the needs and they are presenting that information to the EFA so they can make the decision of whether they wish to acquire that site. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Question 8, Councillor Sobel.

COUNCILLOR SOBEL: Does the Executive Member with responsibility for housing growth feel that Council tenants are on a "high income" if they earn £30,000 a year?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Oh absolutely, absolutely. In the recent consultation paper Pay to Stay: Fairer Rents in Social Housing, the Government states that social housing tenants outside London with household incomes of £30,000 and above will be required to pay up to market rent for the property they live in.

Just to put that into some kind of context, on the back of a fag packet that is about eight quid an hour, if a couple are working in a Council property, or you could say perhaps one of the couple would be a fork lift driver and the other one would be a teaching assistant. Have you got a problem, Andrew?

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Your maths is deplorable.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I am sorry that you are so worried about what your Government is doing. We are very worried that the threshold of £30,000 will absolutely penalise Council tenants on quite a low income and I will just give an example of that, perhaps quoting the Pudsey area. This is based on the assumption that increased rent will equal market rent and we have no reason for thinking otherwise. We have done an analysis. Net weekly income of a couple in a three bedroom Council property on £30,000 income £380 currently; net weekly income after the rent increased imposed by Central Government will be down to £288; reduction in household income per week £92; reduction in Council income per annum, £4,784. We will have tenants who, you can imagine the guy being asked if he wants to do overtime if he is on £29,999. "No, I do not think I can do any overtime because that might take me over the limit and put me into absolute poverty on a scale that is almost unimaginable."

What I can answer in this question is actually about the impact that this has on housing growth and on our ability to build homes for people, because what the Government is doing through the Pay to Stay proposals and through the forced sale of what they call higher value Council properties is, they are reintroducing the Housing Revenue Account system that we got rid of only four years ago that everybody, I think everybody in this Chamber and most people in the House of Commons realised was a total nonsense and John Healey did a huge amount of work to overturn that and actually the Coalition pushed it through in the end because of you, Stewart, yes, absolutely.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: What happens when they are not there?

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: What they will do is they will have a guesstimate of how many tenants we have earning over £30,000 and they will have a guesstimate of how many properties we have that are of higher value that we should be selling, and what they will do on that guesstimate is that they will just extract income out of Leeds City Council's Housing Revenue Account and we would not be able to deliver the number of homes that we should be delivering for the people of this city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Sobel, do you have a supplementary question?

COUNCILLOR SOBEL: Councillor Lewis covered my supplementary question in his response.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Gettings.

COUNCILLOR GETTINGS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Against a background that in our city we have thousands of wonderful young people, my question is, in a child friendly city how important is it for the City Council to acknowledge young people's achievements and to hear their voice?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think it is absolutely vital and it is certainly the underpinning principle of our strategy and of our ambition to be a child friendly city.

Since I have taken on this role I have been lucky enough to go to a number of awards ceremonies and events to celebrate the young people that we have in the city and I know Councillor Gettings is a regular attendee at many of these events.

Just a few of the ones that I have been to recently. The Stars Awards, which was celebrating and recognising the success of our looked-after children. We have got the Child Friendly Leeds Awards which is coming up in January which will be held at our very own City Varieties. The Care Leavers Conference last week where we heard some remarkable stories of young people who are leaving care now and what they managed to achieve with the appropriate support and attention and many, many more.

I think by empowering young people to have a voice in this city we really can respond to their needs in the best way possible. I know that two of the twelve Child Friendly Leeds Wishes were developed following consultation with thousands of young people and directly reflect this vision and aim and these are recognised young people who are active citizens, volunteer their time and help out in their local communities and children and young people express their views, feel heard and are actively involved in decisions that affect their lives. I think without this underpinning principle our ambition to be a child friendly Leeds would not be as real as it is now and without this principle we would not be able to support the children in Leeds in the way that they deserve. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Do we have a supplementary question?

COUNCILLOR GETTINGS: Yes, Lord Mayor. If we think young people's voices should be heard, rather than just listening to selected views from Youth

Councils or Youth Forums, although that is very interesting and important, as all our young people attend our city schools and all have access to a computer, should we not consider setting up an online questionnaire to find out what it is like for young people to grow up in our city and what we, the Council, should do to make their lives better?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you. I think we need to look at all ways of how we engage with young people. As a regular tweeter and presence on social media I know how important the internet is in engaging with young people in different ways and I think that we really need to look at all our options.

I have been doing a little bit of discussion with the guys at Children's Services about how we do communicate with young people and I know that every Breeze card has an associated email address and perhaps this is something that we need to look at further, at how we use that information.

At the same time there will be some young people who may feel this is a difficult way to communicate and I think what we need to be is imaginative and look at all different ways of communication. I know when I was at the Breeze events last year we had a survey which went out on tour which was a video survey so people could go into a video booth and do a survey. That was around whether we should bid to be the European Capital of Culture. I filled a survey in and apparently it was ruled out of order because I was too old.

I absolutely agree that we need to look at all different ways to communicate and I am certainly going back to officers at Children's Services and look if we can develop this further. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dunn.

COUNCILLOR DUNN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Will the Executive Member for Communities comment on the importance of investment into the new Horticultural Nursery at Whinmoor Grange?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Yes, thank you, Councillor Dunn. I think the investment in the new nursery at Whinmoor Grange is extremely important to the development of the service.

The development of a new nursery at Whinmoor will give better support for horticultural activities than ever before. It will be able to support over 50 In Bloom groups across the city. It will be able to provide a key centre for the city's 30 horticultural apprentices. It will support the Feed Leeds Initiative by growing beginner packs for fruit, vegetables and herbs. It will provide an education resource in supporting schools, the public and community groups. It will give an improved financial model and income generation opportunities as well. It helps the city develop horticultural sponsorship opportunities already worth in excess of £200,000. It will help to provide an opportunity for community groups and the public to purchase surplus plant materials.

It should give us greater efficiency. It should provide a facility that is more efficient in design, accessibility and production, and it should create opportunities for cross Council trading by maintaining the current production capacity on a site that will be 40% smaller in footprint. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Do you have a supplementary question?

COUNCILLOR DUNN: Can I thank Councillor Coupar and I have no supplementary, Lord Mayor. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: We have now reached the end of Question Time. The red light has come on, so sorry about that.

ITEM 15 – MINUTES

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now turning to page 11 to Item 15, the Minutes. We are now moving on to the item to receive and comment upon the Minutes of the Exec Board Committees established by Full Council and Joint Authorities to which the Council makes appointments.

Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I move that the Minutes be accepted.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I second, Lord Mayor.

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

- (a) (Executive Board)**
- (i) Employment, Enterprise and Opportunity**

THE LORD MAYOR: We are now on 15(a) and will now consider the Minutes, which will end at 3.30 or thereabouts, in order that we will have other Minutes that will follow until 4.10.

We are now on Employment, Enterprise and Opportunity. Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on the Equality Update and I must say that by and large it is quite a good report. However, I want to ask that all Council officers, and particularly Highways and Parks and Planning Officers as well, are reminded to bear in mind disabled people when they carry out work in the local community.

I say this because I have seen various cases over the years in my ward where quite clearly this has not been thought about. One such incidence is on a local park, New Wortley Rec, when we have quite a few paths into the main entrance of the rec and officers asked could some of these be grassed over, they did not have the money to tarmac all of them and we had no problem with that, but when we saw the plan and went to have a look, they did not leave paths so that anybody in a wheelchair or, for that matter, anybody with a buggy, could get from the entry to the park up into the main entry of the park because it is hilly, basically, so they left the paths where the steps were but they did not have a path where somebody could get in a wheelchair. That was something that, yes, Councillors made them aware and the plan was altered but it is something that officers need to be aware of.

Also about street furniture, street lighting. Telecommunication companies have to go through planning, again I am sure we have probably all got cases where they put their equipment on Council property many a time on the side of a pavement but if this pavement has at the back of it another area that belongs to a business or a shop front that is open, then in effect to the public it looks as if the equipment is bang in the middle of the pavement. There would then in some cases be a problem if the shops went and fenced it off because in one case in my ward, near the Asda in Oldfield Lane, if you did that then the wheelchair user would end up being at the side of a main road, pushed into the road.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blackburn, you have run out of time.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Sorry, so just bear it in mind, please. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hussain.

COUNCILLOR G HUSSAIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am also commenting on page 270, Minute 69, the Equality Update.

This is a terribly important paper and something that I am proud that Leeds is taking seriously. We are all lucky to live in a welcoming and diverse city but we need to continue to work hard to ensure that Leeds offers opportunity for all. I would like to outline just a few brief statistics.

In Leeds we have over 140 ethnic groups. The number of Leeds residents born outside the UK has increased from 6.7% of the population in 2001 to 11.5% in 2011. There are over 170 different languages spoken in our schools. We have a relatively high level of working age adult population in receipt of incapacity benefit and employment rates for people using our mental health services are significantly below average.

We also have a higher than average number of people identifying themselves as Jewish, Muslim or Sikh. The sheer diversity of our city underlines the importance of ensuring that the benefits that Leeds has to offer are accessible to all.

This report outlines progress we have made to continue to improve our services since attaining excellence rating of the Equality Framework for Local Government in 2011. As the Local Authority we have a key role to play and we are working hard to make sure that our organisation is as representative as possible.

We know that we are making progress but equally we know that we have much more to do. We do not have enough women or people from different ethnic backgrounds or people with disabilities in our most well paid positions. We are aware of this and are determined to do something about it.

We know that we need to be a welcoming and accommodating workplace and our Be Reasonable project reminds us of the requirement to make reasonable adjustments at work for people who need them. The figures I reported earlier show why we need to lead by example and I am hopeful that the work we are doing will ensure we keep our excellence rating. This is something that we truly are committed to and will benefit every single resident of Leeds. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Towler.

COUNCILLOR TOWLER: Lord Mayor, I am also speaking on Minute 69, page 270 regarding the Equality Updates and specifically the Equality Framework Reaccreditation that we will be looking at to achieve later this month.

As I hope you are all aware, we achieved an excellence rating in 2011 but have been working hard since then to ensure we keep that rating. As Councillor Hussain has highlighted, we know we still have improvements to make, which is why a lot of our priorities for this new framework build on the progress made against the previous ones.

We have six key objectives in our Best Council Plan and our new Breakthrough projects all have a strong equality theme. Some of the areas we will be focusing on for the forthcoming year are a Council Tax support scheme to help people into work, promoting Community Committees and the role of Community Champions, expanding services that support families to resolve the problems that impact on the welfare of children and rolling out a city-wide network of community hubs designed to join up services to tackle inequality. I hope you can all recognise just how seriously we take the equality agenda.

The reassessment of the Equality Framework will take place later this month and peer assessors will be interviewing various stakeholders, reviewing evidence we submit and they will also be attending our Equality Assembly Conference on November 26th. The Equality Assembly is a form of people from across the city who represent the diversity of Leeds. The theme of this year's conference is how do you access Council services. We want to know how people have their say, how they think we could make this easier and how we can make our services more accessible. It is only by engaging with the residents of Leeds that we can continue to improve and continue to work towards a truly equal city whose benefits and opportunities are accessible to all. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dawson.

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: My Lord Mayor, I am speaking on Minute 69, page 270, about equality in our city.

A starting point on this is does inequality matter? Many economists say not and the late Lady Thatcher said that if the rich got richer, everybody would benefit – the trickle down effect, it was called. There is another view on inequality that it actually hinders growth. Michael Bruno, Chief Economist of the World Bank, said, “Reducing inequality not only benefits the poor immediately but it will benefit everyone through higher growth.” United Nations Development Programme which published the Human Development Report said, “The United Kingdom unfortunately has an exceptionally high degree of inequality.” We are one of the most unequal societies in Western Europe and growing more unequal.

Two examples of this. Executive pay. In 1979 executive pay was around 20 times greater than the average worker. By the 1990s it had risen to 60 times greater than the average worker, and now it is 180 times greater than the pay of the average worker. Just look at the wealth. Today the five richest families in the United Kingdom are wealthier than the bottom 20% of the entire population. That is just five households with more wealth than 12.6 million people. That is almost the same as the number of people living below the poverty line in the UK.

David Cameron told the Conservative Party Conference he wanted to devote much of his time in office to an all out assault on poverty. The Prime Minister said he would tackle deep social problems, boost social mobility, he promised to end discrimination and finish the fight for real equality. These are fine, fine words but

remember Dave first and foremost is PR man. Why worry about actions when you have got words?

John Locke, the 17th Century philosopher, said actions speak louder than words. Let us look at David Cameron's action on Working Family Tax Credits. They will reduce the living standards of some of the poorest and hardest working people in Leeds and in the United Kingdom. Is this an all our assault on poverty by reducing the income of the poorest?

The Government should have a strategy to reduce the deficit that does not hit the poorest the hardest, one thing that really does ensure work pays. From 2010 to 2020 an extra 1.5 million working adults are expected to fall into poverty. We have a duty to make sure our services and our workforce reflect the diversity of our city. We need to be absolutely sure that a life in Leeds offers everyone the same opportunities, that no-one finds themselves disadvantaged and sidelined. That is why the Equality Framework and the Improvement Priorities are so important, more so now than ever. The actions this Council is taking speak much louder than David Cameron's words. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jarosz.

COUNCILLOR JAROSZ: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on the same Minute. I would like to use my three minutes to update the Council on the work of the Members Champions Equality Steering Group, and I sit on that group with Councillor Anderson, Councillor Golton and Councillor David Blackburn. It is chaired by James Rogers and I think we are quite a select little group.

Our function is to support the Equality Agenda and engage with communities, particularly through the Equality Assembly and essentially to make sure that this agenda never slips from anyone's mind.

I am not sure that you are all aware there are nine equality characteristics. I wonder how many you can name. Everybody knows race, gender, disability, sexual orientation – they are fairly well covered – but there is also transgender and, one close to my heart, age, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and carers, so there are a wide range of characteristics that need our attention.

At each meeting we focus on a different department and how they are meeting the Equalities Improvement priorities. We question everything and I mean everything. There is a focus on ensuring that all groups listed are now considered - that is that very specific needs are met and that any unintended consequences of change are identified.

I cannot emphasise enough how important I think our group and our role is. I would like to take this opportunity to thank both James Rogers and the officers of our Equalities team for their fantastic work. There is an unrelenting focus on ensuring that we do not just meet our duties because we have to, but that considering the equality impact of decisions becomes just as normal and second nature as considering the costs of them.

I see the light is on so I will just say we are proud of the progress we made but we will continue to make further progress. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am also speaking on Minute 69, page 270, and I just want to spend a few moments talking about the work

that I have been doing alongside Councillor James Lewis as my portfolio lead on improving the diversity of the Council itself and not just serving the communities of Leeds.

I chair the Inclusion and Diversity sub-committee which has been in existence for about 18 months now and the work of the sub-committee is to challenge departments and directorates to improve the representation of their departments so that we are much more inclusive of the citizens of Leeds. We have some quite poor stats, I am afraid to say. We only have 6% BME staff, for example, 6% of our staff declared themselves as carers which I know is woefully low and less than 2% of staff have disclosed their sexual orientation, which I think is obviously a very poor record.

We are doing some work across the whole Council to improve the experience of current staff but also to be much more inclusive of the citizens of Leeds so that our representation across the nine protected characteristics improves. As part of that work I have been working alongside the Chief Exec to talk to BCLT about what they are going to do as individuals and I am pleased to say that people have really taken the challenge and are now agreeing personal targets with their line manager for equality and diversity across the Council and we are getting some really brilliant innovative ideas about how individual heads of departments, directors, are going to take a leadership role in improving the equality performance of the Council including the representation and then exploiting the talents of the city of Leeds for the benefit of the citizens of the city but also the Council itself.

Lots to do but some real progress and a real will, I think, not just from Tom and his colleagues at the top but also across the Council to make things better so that we will be in Stonewall's top 100, we will get recredited on the Equality Framework, we will get Investors in People again, hopefully eventually Investors in People Gold, we will be the best city to work for and the best city to live in, so hopefully you will all support us in the work that we are doing. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Rafique to sum up.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I thank all the Members for your very valuable contributions. Councillor Blackburn, I think you made a point about access to Parks and Countryside in the Scrutiny meeting which I attended along with the officers and we made a note of that and that will be passed on to colleagues within Parks and Countryside, so everybody, particularly those members on the community who have disabilities, get access to those vitally important areas.

In terms of the highways access, again I think you have got a valid point there. When works are being carried out, I know in my locality where I live there is some work carried out and officers and contractors do take care but there might be some lapses and I think we need to make sure the message goes out to all the contractors and the officers who actually oversee the works that pavements are not unnecessarily blocked and people do get access, particularly those who have got wheelchairs and mums with kids.

In terms of where people outside of shops, obstructions and all of that, it is a difficult one. I can think of an area on Roundhay Road when I sometimes go and shop, not too far from where I live, and there is obviously a pavement and then there is an area the shops actually own, so we can investigate and see where people actually do it unnecessarily to see how we address that, so we will look into that.

Councillor Hussain, you are absolutely right to point out that although we are making considerable progress, this is not something we can afford to slow down with. The sheer diversity of Leeds is one of the things that makes it so attractive for people to settle here. We are fully committed in ensuring Leeds is a caring and compassionate city and we need to lead by example and influence our partners and employers and other service providers in the city.

Councillor Towler, you picked up on the accreditation process which will be taking place later this month on 25th and 26th November. We are all working extremely hard to ensure we keep our excellent rating. I can tell you that people in terms of officers, Tom Riordan, the Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader, Exec Board Members, Chief Officers, middle managers, staff on the front line, our stakeholders groups are all being interviewed and are all taking part in that process at the end of this month, so we take that very seriously and we are hopeful that we will get the excellent rating again.

The Equality Assembly Conference which Councillor Towler mentioned promises to be an informative and lively discussion that I am personally looking forward to hearing how people really view our services and how they think how we can enthuse. Councillor Smart, we will be speaking about the Children's Mayor and how indeed how we engage with the young people in the city as well and taken their views on board.

Councillor Dawson, quite rightly you underlined the disproportionate impact of austerity measures on already vulnerable groups. I think 26% of people in the country live below the poverty line. In Leeds the figure is 22% but that is still a long way to go. This reinforces the role of Council in ensuring that we continue to do all we can to provide opportunity for every resident of Leeds. For example, we are working to enhance the skills and capacity of staff in our community hubs to support those with mental health. We have over 30,000 people in Leeds who claim incapacity benefit or what is now known as Employment Support Allowance, and 50% of those people actually suffer from low to moderate mental health problems, so although we are doing some work on that and we are looking at some European funding to see how we can expand that work in the future, so we are hopeful on that.

Councillor Jarosz and Councillor Lowe, can I thank you for all the hard work your groups are doing and the contribution you are making in each of your groups to push this agenda forward. Councillor Lowe, I completely agree, I think Leeds' population ethnic minority BME population is at 19%. Our workforce is not even close to that, it is not representative of the community, let alone people in higher positions from the different nine characteristics of equality. We have got a lot of work to do on that front.

I think in terms of our priorities from 2011 to 2015, much has been done going forward from 2016 to 2019, we have got a lot to do particularly in terms of workforce representation, hate crime, domestic violence and financial hardship, but we are not resting on our laurels. I think there is a big challenge ahead and we will continue the hard work we are doing and not rest until those objectives are achieved. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

(ii) Health, Wellbeing and Adults

THE LORD MAYOR: We now go on to Health, Wellbeing and Adults.
Councillor Lay.

COUNCILLOR LAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I shall be speaking on the Better Lives Strategy and I intend to be brief. With many years' experience working

with older people and vulnerable groups I will be commenting with their interests paramount.

First of all though I would like to say I am pleased to see that Suffolk Court in Yeadon will be used for specialist rehab and that upgrades at Bennett Court and Union Court in Otley are forthcoming. I am also pleased that progress on the Council's first Extra Care facility is progressing at Wharfedale View, again in Yeadon.

I have no doubt that Council run services are high quality and loved by those that provide them and use them, but they continue to be delivered in out of date, poorly designed, poorly located and expensive premises. The costs of upgrading to modern standards are usually prohibitive, as are the costs of day to day running which often are twice that available in the independent sector. Changing demographics and diminishing resources for increasing demand continue to mean that Adult Social Care is left with little choice but to come forward with these proposals.

I do not really think it is about the money - although, as I say, Council provided services tend to be twice as expensive – but about changing views of the residents that once would have wanted to live and use Council care homes and day centres. This Phase 3 is just part of that continuing reduction in users' use of Council run services.

The changing demographics mean quite simply people are living longer, healthier lives. Demands are that they want to live their life in their own home and have choice and opportunity over who supports them. This means, and the report recognises this, that personal budgets are going to be increasingly used by residents to make those decisions. Poor estates means poor numbers of residents coming forward to use those services and I think Adult Social Care recognises and is therefore attempting to improve its estate.

It is investing in and supporting facilities. Like I say, the Extra Care facility at Yeadon which was funded by Department of Health money secured by former Lib Dem Health Minister Norman Lamb being an example. Wharfedale View will provide much needed care and support in an environment that residents nowadays want, living in a flat behind a door that belongs to them, either on long term rent or owned, rather than in a room like the traditional care home model or Council bedsits.

Work is ongoing across the city to improve and upgrade our sheltered housing and I see from next week's Exec Board meeting that there are a number of upgrades to a number of sheltered facilities across the city, turning bedsits into bedroom flats. This is done because this is what residents want.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lay, you have run out of time.

COUNCILLOR LAY: Thank you. Can I very briefly...

THE LORD MAYOR: Yes, last sentence.

COUNCILLOR LAY: Closing outdated, dilapidated, poorly designed care homes and day centres.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Golton, just before you speak, could I ask if you would just pay attention to the light, then I do not have to ask anybody to complete their sentence. Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Yes, the Better Lives Strategy. I was there at the Executive Board when this was discussed and I was looking at the Minutes and how it describes some of the discussions that took place. One of the issues it talks about is that:

“It was reiterated that current and projected figures indicated that there were sufficient levels of residential care provision to meet demand in Leeds, therefore Members were also provided on information on the work which had been undertaken on the viability of alternative models of provision.”

Lord Mayor, it has not been proven that in the future forecasting people's needs, that they will necessarily follow the formula that we decided as a city is that which we think is appropriate for them. People should have choices. This document talks about providing people with choices, about having a varied set of alternative support so that they can where possible live within their own home for as long as possible, that they can live in their own home with assistance where that is necessary when they become a little bit more elderly, but there does come a point in most people's lives, and especially with, to use the phrase that quite a lot of us have in here used, hardworking families, that that traditional place where people give up their time to care full time for elderly relatives that cannot look after themselves, that is very much time which is not available for a lot of those hardworking families, and residential care has become the choice for many of those families.

I know that it is our desires that people should live within their own homes as much as possible and that this Council does necessarily need to provide more extra care housing for those citizens to choose to go into in the future; nevertheless it should not think that residential care is not something that this Council should be paying attention to.

When it talks about residential care it should not just think about those beds that it itself commissions because we are here for the interests of the entire city and quite a lot of the people who live in this city will be wanting residential care as self funders, and solely to think of it as a commissioning exercise for our own needs as a Council and ignore those other people and rely on a privatised service for residential care which might be out of reach of the pockets of many of those self funders, we need to think again on that. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Macniven.

COUNCILLOR MACNIVEN: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, I would like to speak on Minute 40 page 248, Delivering the Better Lives Strategy in Leeds.

I want to take this opportunity to look at the Better Lives programme as a whole and what we have achieved in its delivery in a relatively short space of time under such brutally diminishing financial circumstances imposed by this Conservative Government.

We want Leeds to be the best city for anyone with social care needs. People who use social care services have told us loudly and clearly that what they want most is to maintain their independence, to stay at home whenever possible and for as long as possible. That is why our focus since 2011 has been and will continue to be ensuring that people can access services earlier, keep their independence with support when needed and that at all times they are given the choice and control. It is about personal care. People are given choice and control to use the services that best suit their individual needs.

Major advances resulting from our commitment have included the opening of Holt Park Active, the South Leeds Independent Centre and Assisted Living Leeds. We are striving towards becoming a dementia friendly city and our ambition is to be the best city in which to grow old. Our mental health services have been transformed from a static building-based service to one which is centred on recovery and reintegration in communities and in the life of our city. Our social care services are increasingly becoming integrated with health services to give people a better and more joined up experience of the health and social care system. Most importantly, we know that listening to the voices of the people of Leeds, as recorded in our local account of Adult Social Services, that users of our provision are seeing a huge benefit from the changes we have made already. This is exactly what we are doing through the Better Lives Programme, through housing, care and support, through integration and through enterprise. We have taken some big steps forward in making life in Leeds more independent and safer, with wider choices for older, disabled and vulnerable people. Whilst we have been doing this we have seen huge increases in demographic pressures with thousands of people now living longer (thank goodness) and with more complex needs; all this with enormous financial pressures to battle with.

The devastating cuts imposed by this Conservative Government and the last have hit us enormously hard, but we have fought to protect the most vulnerable in Leeds from the worst effects of the cuts. Over the last four years...

THE LORD MAYOR: Your time has run out. Could you just finish this sentence, please?

COUNCILLOR MACNIVEN: ...we have ensured that our Council budgets have risen from 31% to 38%. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on the same Minute, the Better Lives Review, which looks at a number of things but includes looking at the future of residential and day care in the city, including Springfield Day Centre in my ward.

The financial backdrop, of course, to this is the savage cuts to Local Government funding and we heard over the last few days that we are going to be hit even more, which is really frightening. There is no doubt for the individuals concerned, service users and residents, families and carers, the prospect of having to move to an alternative premise or facility is a worrying and frightening thing and I for one will never forget when I was doing Councillor Mulherin's role in a previous round going round some of our centres and an older person clasping hold of my hand and pleading with me not to close one of those centres. That does really make you think, as an Executive Member, to make sure that the decisions that you take are the right ones and robust. I know Councillor Mulherin and her team have thought very carefully about these proposals too.

The positive side to that story, of course, is when you go, as I did, to visit service users at Holt Park which is, of course, one of the alternatives on offer. Service users there absolutely love it, and why wouldn't they? They are able now to sit in a café and talk to people of all ages, they are able to use the swimming pool or to take a class in the gym. It is a much more positive experience for them. That is the rub, when you actually ask a room of adults, "What is your aspiration when you get to an older age? Is it to go to a traditional day centre?" most people actually say "No, it is not." People have different expectations now.

That is not to take away the concern that the individuals concerned will have and I know the team in Adult Social Care have developed a very personal, sensitive hand-holding approach to health, residents, service users and their families and carers through this process and that is exactly the right thing to do.

Lord Mayor, there are three key drivers behind these proposals: the diminishing budget; increasing numbers of older people living in the city; but also the fact that people expect a different kind of experience when they get to that age and that is what these proposals are all about.

No doubt some tough decisions will have to be made but overall hopefully at the end of it we will have an improved and enhanced package of services for older citizens living in our city. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor Terry Wilford was going to do this speech but unfortunately he has had some serious problems at work so he has had to stay there. He does work in a day centre so I am doing this on his behalf.

Of course, all the Green Councillors are concerned about this report. We notice that it is a consultation of closing yet more Council homes and day centres. One of those is in Armley, next to my ward, and is used by some of the residents in my ward. I remember the day centre in Middlecross Street being hailed as a fantastic thing because it was based round Alzheimer's sufferers and I have visited there and, yes, it is a good centre for people to go to with Alzheimer's, it is set up that way and, yes, that is down to talk about closing it. Where are these people going to go?

The loss of experienced staff teams, the pressure for service users and their families, the residential homes and day centres offer a sense of community. They provide a sense of belonging, providing social inclusion and a sense of wellbeing.

The consultation on decommissioning suggests service users, care staff and commissioners will work together to develop a more appropriate and cost effective service but I am concerned for service users who require continuity of care, a model of care that can be relied on.

It is stated that day centres are traditional but I disagree. They provide a safe environment where older people can interact socially, where an experienced care team can address individual issues, an environment where older people can make and explore relationships and flourish.

I note the report states the Council will save £2.186m by purchasing independent sector care provision but what guarantees do we have...

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blackburn...

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: ... concerning standards of care, wellbeing and social inclusion. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Caroline Anderson.

COUNCILLOR C ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 54 of the Executive Board Minutes of 23rd September on page 258 of the

papers. I have read the Director of Public Health's Annual Report 2014/15 and I am very pleased to see that the Executive Board has resolved that the recommendations as detailed within it be supported and that the Scrutiny Board, Adult Social Services, Public Health and the NHS receive a copy.

I can confirm that the Scrutiny Board did indeed receive a copy but I am yet to see where the recommendations have been supported. I know Members in the Chamber will all have read this report, but to refresh your memories the recommendations were as follows: that Public Health be involved in early discussions relating to all new major developments, ideally at the pre-application stage, to ensure that the health impacts are considered; that developers follow the principles of the Neighbourhoods for Living document and use this report as a complementary guide to draw out the public health benefits of good design; that the three CCGs actively engage with the planning process in their areas as they take on responsibility for the commissioning of primary healthcare services; the Council's Public Health Directorate should promote the NICE recommendations on physical activity and the environment; developers should consider design principles around food and climate change that are not covered specifically in Neighbourhoods for Living.

All of these are extremely important and I do not think anyone in this Chamber would disagree with any of those. I do not have time to go into these in detail but I would like, however, to draw attention to the fact that what is happening in reality with planning applications in this city is in complete contradiction and contrast to the recommendations in this report. I would like to know whether there is any comment from the Chief Planning Officer or the Development Department on how they are going to implement these recommendations when everything shows that they cannot and will not.

The Site Allocations Consultation Process includes potential areas of land for development that cannot meet these recommendations. Developers are being allowed to build houses on precious farmland, removing the areas we need to grow food and raise livestock. Access to health services is going to get more and more difficult because the infrastructure required to go along with an extra 70,000 houses is not in place and there is no sign of it coming along. What are the CCGs doing about this?

A number of developments are going to be outside the Council's own guidelines on distances to travel to public transport. People are going to be left isolated and alone, even in good weather, because they cannot walk up steep hills to access services and transport.

THE LORD MAYOR: I am afraid you are out of time, Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR C ANDERSON: Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wadsworth.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am also commenting on Minute 54, page 258, the Director of Public Health's Annual Report. My colleague has highlighted a lot of points in the report but I want to just centre on one point which is planning, which was highlighted as a key issue for public health.

Planning makes a lot of provision for houses, we have discussed houses a lot about where they are going to go, how many there are going to be, the types of houses, whether there is a flood risk. We sometimes go into schools, we sometimes have developers that offer schools in particular places, whether they are in the right place or not is not always discussed but we do not talk about where doctors'

surgeries are going to be or dentists are going to be and whether those doctors and dentists are going to take up those surgeries, because there is no point in building a surgery where no doctors are taking them up. We need to have that conversation.

In my own ward, appointments are already an issue and if we are going to have to take another 2,300 houses, they are going to be essentially the older people's care or family houses – both those sectors of the community use the health service a lot and require appointments. Guiseley, which is going to take predominantly most of the houses, is becoming a satellite of Leeds, whether we like it or not, and people commute into Leeds and want appointments early in the morning or late in an evening and they are just not possible as it is now, so with the continued housing build they are going to get worse.

More houses also need bigger surgeries. If we are not going to have new surgeries we need bigger surgeries so we are going to need more car parking and better bus services.

My own experience is that I went to enrol at my doctor's recently and I had to go in three car parks before I could actually find a space to actually go and enrol. I have to go to a dentist in Alwoodley because it is the only place I can get an NHS dentist.

COUNCILLOR: Quality.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: It may be quality but it is no good if you cannot travel those distances. If you have to get a bus from Guiseley to Alwoodley you have to go into town and out again, so it may be a quality service that you cannot actually access.

My plea really is that the Executive Member for Health speaks very, very clearly to her colleague one space across there and they have the conversation about getting the health provision in before we get the houses. There is no point in getting the houses and then looking at the health provision. We have done that before and got it badly wrong with High Royds particularly – we have got a lot of houses there but we have had no extra health provision put in. My plea is that we talk before we do the building. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I wish to follow on the points made by my colleagues Councillor Anderson and Councillor Wadsworth.

The plans and reports that have come forward on health matters have emphasised quite strongly that there is a need for planning across this city for future care of all residents. That is all residents who are there, young or elderly. One of my concerns is in a ward that demographically features a larger amount of elderly people, where housing is placed might not give them access to the healthcare provision.

We have already seen in the Scholes area when the doctors' surgery has moved nursing treatment and nursing timetables to Crossgates, that many, many people who are elderly residents are not able to get on the buses at the right time to go to their appointments and to actually access the doctors' surgery.

There is a larger problem, I think, as well when we look at healthcare issues. We are trying to encourage people to walk to surgeries. There is a problem, I think, if we do not look at where housing is allocated and take into account health concerns is

a very, very serious matter but actually we will be in the wrong areas and people will never, ever be able to get to them.

In terms of public transport and how people access that public transport as well, many, many people who are younger residents who do not drive but are maybe between 16 to 18 to 20 will need to access public transport to get to health provision. That at the moment is not factored in.

I would echo the comments made by Councillor Wadsworth before. We need to look at getting the healthcare provision in first before we actually look at where the houses are going to go and make sure that all of our planning is done strategically and we are talking to everybody across this Council. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

(b) Health and Wellbeing Board

THE LORD MAYOR: We have now run out of time on that section so we now move to page 14, the Health and Wellbeing Board. I have been asked that I may have to extend the time in order that all the speakers may speak and I have agreed to that.

Can we begin with Councillor Buckley.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I refer you to Minute 21, page 425 and Minute 32, page 429. This refers to mental health and also the Mental Health Challenge which has now been accepted and endorsed by the Executive Board.

As we all know, mental health in all its forms has not hitherto been paid the same attention, nor received the same funding, as physical health issues. It is a good thing that this commitment to put this right has now been made.

There are a huge number of different forms of mental conditions and the Lord Mayor's charity, for example, draws attention to one of them. Almost all of us will have had friends and family members who have suffered in some way. For instance, among the under 65s almost half of all ill health is actually mental illness and around half of people with a mental health condition experience the first symptoms before the age of 14. Interestingly, the peak onset years of mental health difficulties are between eight and 15. When it comes to the internet age and internet usage, over half of adolescents have been bullied online and half of this is repeatedly.

A Public Health England report from 2014 clearly made the link and showed that children looking at screens for four hours a day, for example, are particularly vulnerable to low self-esteem, depression, emotional distress and more than one in three young people have experienced online cyber threats. In addition to the effects on young people we should also continue to be concerned about the so-called 24/7 work culture which creates a situation, as we all know, where people never switch off and as a layman on this I just have a suspicion, as I have mentioned to other Councillors before, that this is storing up problems for the future, probably in about ten years' time, in my opinion. I know work is progressing in this area and including with employers and I think this is something which we should support very strongly.

We could all find things to disagree with in this Chamber but I think this is not one of them. The Mental Health Challenge is certainly worth pursuing and supporting and we should certainly continue to endorse all its aims. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Minute 21, page 425, primarily concerned around the Public Health budgets and, of course, the cuts which have been announced by the Government upon it.

We had the debate last time we were here and so we covered the area about how the Government said they would never touch National Health and all of a sudden when it comes under the wing of Local Government then all of a sudden it is fair game.

This particular Minute talks about how at the time that this meeting took place we did not actually know what the level of cuts was going to be because the Government had not actually decided what form it was going to introduce, primarily because, I assume, some civil servants actually understood exactly what it might mean. However, since then we have had confirmation of it but at that meeting that we are talking about here, Councillor Mulherin as Chair did say that she would be looking to call an extraordinary meeting once that had been announced so that we could all discuss it properly. It is one of those things that does need to be discussed properly because there is the potential for quite a large – what's the word – coalition – I had almost erased it from my vocabulary (*laughter*) – a large coalition of support for the position the Council finds itself in and if you remember the frustration that we had at the last Council meeting when this was debated as a White Paper was that we need to get out there as soon as possible and let the people of this city know exactly what it means when you cut that amount of money from the Public Health budget.

I have to say, I am a little bit frustrated because I am a willing advocate for you as the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board and as a Lead Member for Health and Social Care to help you amplify the message. Unfortunately, it feels like there is a lack of leadership in this area and that, for instance, the examples of where this money is being cut is not being brought forward and I understand part of the frustration is that some of our commissioned partners have not let us know yet how they are going to cut the bit that has been allocated to them within the budget. I really do feel that leadership is not just about being nice and bringing people together but it is also about setting standards and it is also about setting timescales and it is about getting that message out so that we can better fight it and the public understands exactly what these kind of cuts mean.

I hope that we will get an announcement for an extraordinary meeting soon because otherwise we have to wait right up until January. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Truswell.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Minute 29 on page 426, Lord Mayor, refers to seven day access to GP services.

Councillor Anderson's White Paper refers to GP services needed to meet the demands of new housing and we have had a number of other comments on that score, but when planning officers ask NHS England, they say there will not be a problem. Well they would, wouldn't they, because looking over their shoulder they have got the smiling assassin Jeremy Hunt – whose name I always have to pronounce with a great deal of care. (*laughter*)

The Government promises 5,000 extra GPs and seven day and evening GP access for every patient in England. It just does not stack up. The cost of opening every GP practice every day has been calculated at between £2.4 and £3 billion, yet GP funding has been cut in recent years by about 4%.

Seven day access is obviously a great idea, many Leeds GPs are already providing some extended access but stretching existing five day services to seven days without full funding is clearly a recipe for disaster. That is probably why 94% of GPs recently surveyed did not want seven day access for their practices.

The same survey revealed a third of GPs planned to leave the NHS within five years and many were considering a reduction in their working hours, so we have a real, enormous crisis brewing locally and nationally.

We hear the complaints of our constituents about the difficulty in getting an appointment. We know when GPs retire or move or simply flee the profession how difficult practices in Leeds find it to fill the vacancy or even to find locums or salaried GPs. That is hardly surprising, Lord Mayor. According to the Royal College of General Practitioners, vacancies amongst GPs are running at 10%. That is 3,300 unfilled GP posts. In other words, we need 3,300 more GPs just to stand still.

At the same time, almost a quarter of GP training places in Yorkshire and Humberside are vacant and it is the same across the country. How will the Government recruit more GPs when hundreds of existing training posts are unfilled? They do not say. How can new training GPs start work in five years' time when it takes ten years to train them? They do not say.

The GP crisis, Lord Mayor, is just part of the picture. Simon Stevens, the Chief Executive of NHS England, says George Osborne's NHS funding plan is not workable. The NHS deficit this year is already £1bn. Public Health budgets have been slashed. There is a looming crisis in care homes and junior doctors are up in arms. Lord Mayor, it is about time the Members opposite stopped crying crocodile tears and told Mr Hunt to wipe that sickening smile off his face, stop spinning and start delivering for the people of Leeds and beyond. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Renshaw.

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, I would like to speak on Minute 30, page 247, Winter Planning and System Resilience in Leeds.

Winter can be an extremely difficult and worrying time for some of our city's most vulnerable people. That is why we as a Council and a city have placed such priority on assisting people through the cold winter period. In particular, I believe the basic Winter Warm Wellbeing Packs, available through Neighbourhood Networks across the city, are a fantastic help to thousands of people. Each pack contains items such as advice leaflets, soup, a fleece blanket, a hot water bottle and thermal socks and gloves. Last winter alone thanks to funding, Public Health, the North and South CCGs, Housing Panels and Community Committees almost 4,300 packs were made available for those most in need in Leeds. This enabled organisations to approach vulnerable people offering them a vital supporting hand at this difficult time of year.

Also on the theme of winter wellbeing is the new training that is now set for volunteers within communities to become winter friends. These individuals will be available to promote services and resources and know how to fully access and use what is available to those most in need, as well as identifying additional support required such as flu vaccinations, energy efficiency and eating well.

However, I think it is important to us all to note that system resilience is about being prepared all year round and delivering high quality services whatever the time

of year. Whilst winter is clearly a period of increased pressure on health and social care systems, establishing a sustainable year round delivery requires collaboration and partnership working to move away from a reactive approach to being a proactive system every month of the year. The System Resilience Group in Leeds is made up of a number of partners including the Council, CCGs, Third Sector representatives, hospitals and the ambulance service. Together they develop a co-ordinated approach across all commissioners and providers to ensure one planning across all areas of health and social care.

A fine example of all year round provision is, I believe, the Warmth and Wellbeing Service, funded by Public Health. This is a three year contract of service that provides tailored solutions to addressing issues within damp and cold homes. Such help within the service includes offering assessments and advice, emergency bill health checks, keep people safe ...

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

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: Pardon?

THE LORD MAYOR: You have run out of time.

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: Thank you. To conclude I wish to thank all those involved, Lord Mayor, in the System Resilience Group in Leeds. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Flynn.

COUNCILLOR FLYNN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak to Minute 32 on page 429. Almost 74% of adults being treated for mental disorders are diagnosed before the age of 18, so I strongly support and welcome the plans, the revised TaMHS and CAHMS services going to be introduced probably over the next twelve months or so.

I do have some concerns about their sustainability, particularly with regard to the school cluster environment in which they are expected to thrive and the timescales for their introduction.

Delighted to say that the Leeds school cluster model has been recognised for what it is – a very successful model delivering much better outcomes to vulnerable children and young people. The new TaMHS Service of course is heavily dependent on the continuation of the school cluster system but it seems there are some long-term or potential long term problems with the future of school clusters.

The 2016/17 has only recently been agreed to be top sliced from the Schools budget. Fairly obviously there is no information available beyond that sort of period, although I know some work has been done currently on finding alternative funding but it is not forthcoming. The £1,500,000 CCG additional funding for TaMHS runs until 2017. No word of what happens once that funding runs out in 2017.

Some clusters are better placed than others in terms of capacity and capability in delivering the two services. It is essential that all vulnerable children be treated equitably and they have equal access to services right across the city.

On timing, I again have some concerns that everything should be in place before the two new services are actually introduced. For example, the single point of access which is critical, it is a vital component of both of the services, was supposed to be in place in September and it has been delayed now twice. I understand it is

going to be introduced in January. I know that there are issues around clinical confidence within the single point of access but it is getting rather late in the day now to be trying to get things right in that particular area.

I am surprised there has been no communication strategy in place to publicise the new services so that children, their parents and carers, schools and clusters, officers, GPs and other people in primary care and also in the NHS, and not least elected Members, are being kept fully abreast of progress.

I understand that TaMHS is now known as the School Cluster Mental Health Support – a real mouthful. My understanding is a lot of senior officers and elected Members are unaware of that change of terminology.

I would like to be assured that the new service will not be introduced...

THE LORD MAYOR: You have run out of time, I am afraid.

COUNCILLOR FLYNN: ... until everything is in place, every cluster is prepared and in short we must get this right for future generations. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I wish to speak to Minute 39 on page 433. In the “Any Other Business” matter that came up at the Health and Wellbeing Board it was discussed around the commercial food outlets. I wish on this area to note that Councillor Buckley has previously raised the food that is sold within NHS Trust hospitals on many, many occasions and especially around energy drinks and it is about setting an example.

We have heard before and just now from Councillor Flynn that the Authority should be setting an example as well and Councillor Mulherin will be unsurprised to know that I will be talking about tobacco products again for the second Council meeting running, and reminding some of my fellow Councillors about the figures in this area.

In 2012 West Yorkshire Pension Fund had invested £120m in tobacco products. By the last full financial year that was disclosed this was £180m. That is in comparison to the last year of public health tobacco controlled budget which was proposed at just £1,023,600.

I appreciate all the comments that have been made to me during the Council meetings, after Council meetings and in emails from Members and others and the comments from those who are on the West Yorkshire Pension Fund, for those who are on the Scrutiny Committee where I took a Scrutiny request to look into this matter, and also from Councillor Mulherin herself who has expressed a desire to look into this matter much further and has actually written letters as well to others in positions on this and I really, really do appreciate her efforts in that area.

The Pension Policy that we have should allow people to know just exactly where their pension fund is being invested and if they choose to, to have an opt-out of that pension fund. I appreciate that the West Yorkshire Pension Fund is set up to have an increasing return on the investment that is made but how can this be correct when it is diametrically opposed to what is the Council's priority when it comes to healthcare?

The West Yorkshire Joint Health Scrutiny Board, which has just had its new nominees today, has been written to by the Scrutiny Committee Chair to look into this matter and I will be writing to those representatives as well to look into this much further.

It was mentioned to me around air quality standards as well that this is something that could be looked into. I think that looking into tobacco investments is a damned good start if we are going to make one.

We have heard from a few Members around healthcare that we should be setting an example and from Councillor Golton as well in his initial remarks. I think that the West Yorkshire authorities could set a real example and show some real leadership in an area of vital healthcare and make a real impact for people's lives. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Mulherin to sum up.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I thank all the Members for their contributions. Councillor Buckley, I recognise entirely what you are saying about the impact of digital technology on our working lives. I am sure many Members round this Chamber will be answering emails and responding to social media at ten o'clock at night, which is not good for any of our health and wellbeing. I could just say that technology can also be used as a source for good and the city has recently launched the MindMate app for children and young people to access mental health advice and support from mobile technology, so there are pros and there are cons and I think that we need to be working with partners, as we are in the city, to try to make the best use of that technology to support people to be healthy and encourage all of ourselves to switch things off at ten o'clock at night.

Councillor Golton, the Public Health budget cuts and the Government response. I think – I would hope, certainly – that all Members in this Chamber would share our huge disappointments at the Government's decision to implement the cuts in a way that was easiest for them. They have completely ignored the responses they received. I understand from a SIGOMA briefing that something like three-quarters of the responses to that national consultation said what we said, which is that the position that Local Authorities are in in terms of whether they are under funded or over funded currently should be reflected in the way in which the Government cut was implemented, and they have ignored that. They have done what they wanted to do at the outset which is to give a straight percentage cut to every Local Authority. We are currently under funded by £6m, as Members in this Chamber know, and the Government has no concern about that, no regard for it whatsoever.

I have already set in process the recommendation that I made at the last Health and Wellbeing Board that we have an Extraordinary Health and Wellbeing Board meeting. It will be the case that some of the Members of the Board will not be able to be in that room for the discussion because some of them are actually recipients of that funding, so we are having conversations about who should be round the table, but certainly elected Members I hope cross party will support that discussion.

We all hope that we can have a collective response, which is the whole purpose of arranging that Extraordinary Health and Wellbeing Board meeting, from our CCG colleagues and NHS England who, of course, we have given large amounts of business rates back to in the same year as we are having them taken out of the Public Health budget.

That is part of the conversation that we will be having but really to be honest with you the conversation will be as much focused on 16/17 as it will now about how we manage the end of this financial year. Because of the very late notice from the Government it effectively was a 7.5% cut. Had it been implemented in April – of course it was announced two months into the financial year – because it is now being implemented at the end of the financial year it amounts to roughly 25% for those partners who we are now having to go out to and say basically we have got the worst outcome that we expected. There are conversations taking place with providers about how we work with them on that.

Councillor Truswell, seven day access to GP services. Thank you for injecting some realism into this debate. The Royal College of Physicians' President recently criticised the Health Secretary for questioning medics' dedication. We know that there are ballots going out about junior doctors. We also have not only a shortage of GPs but we have a shortage of nurses in the city and it is how the whole of that system can respond, given the cuts that it is facing across the board. We know that CCGs have had better protection than we have but it is within the rising demand, the shortage of trained professionals in it as well so when you point out that GP funding has been cut in recent years by 4%, I think that is a really useful and helpful contribution to that debate.

Councillor Renshaw, thank you for your comments about winter wellbeing, for welcoming what we are trying to do to protect the most vulnerable people in this city over the winter months. The new initiative around Winter Friends I too welcome and I hope that that will make a significant difference to the most vulnerable people in our city through this winter. The big question again falls back to how sustainable is that whole system and the work of the System Resilience Group to look at that and ensure that not only do we get through the winter because the winter crisis in our NHS seems to now start in June and end at the end of May, it is an all year round crisis, it is no longer a winter crisis and that is a direct result of both the Coalition Government's and this current Government's funding and decision making.

Councillor Flynn, I am really glad that you are supporting the improvements to the TaMHS and CAMHS services and the recognition that has been received for our school cluster model. There is a concern about sustainability across the whole system but we are working very effectively now as a system on prioritising mental health for children and young people and for adults in the city and again that is reflected in the fact that this Local Authority has signed up to the Mental Health Challenge and I am delighted that we have been able to do that.

Finally, because I am about to run out of time, on tobacco products, Councillor Robinson, as you know I have written to the National Regulatory bodies for both Local Government Pension Schemes and NHS Pension schemes as they clearly also have a key role to play in terms of ensuring that we get better public health outcomes, helping supporting people to stop smoking and stop the money going into the coffers of tobacco companies. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. We now move on very quickly to the Scrutiny Board Reports and these will go on until ten-past four, when I shall then ask Councillor Blake to sum up.

(c)Scrutiny Boards

(i) Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)

THE LORD MAYOR: The first speaker is Councillor Hayden.

COUNCILLOR HAYDEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking to minute 22, page 332, on Fees and Charges.

The Government's austerity agenda, along with significant reductions in core grant funding, results in difficult decisions for the Council to ensure that not only are frontline services protected, but also sufficiently supported.

Since 2010 Councils have faced a challenge of 4% real terms reductions to their core Government grants. Between the 2010 and 2015 Budgets, Leeds City Council's core funding from Government will have reduced by approximately £180m. In addition, it has also faced significant pressures in demand. This means that the Council will have to deliver reductions in expenditure and increases in income totalling some £330m by March 2016.

A recent analysis by the Local Government Association revealed that 40% reduction to core Central Government funding equates to £8.4bn. The same cuts to separate Local Government grants would see a further £2.1bn lost from Council budgets which, according to the LGA, would devastate local services and communities.

Leeds City Council has worked to address increased pressures and cuts by focusing on efficiency savings and seeking to reprioritise the delivery of services. For example, between 2010 and 2015 savings of around £12.6m have been realised from support service budgets. This reduction in funding also means increased pressures for Local Government to provide greater subsidies. Targeting the recovery of the costs of lower priority services could mean that high priority services are maintained.

Varying fees and charges could also address the need to generate further income to maintain essential services. Every 1% increase in fees and charges equates to £1m additional income.

The following represents some key facts taken from the Core City's Fees and Charges Comparative Analysis as mentioned in September's Scrutiny Board Fees and Charges report. Leeds is ranked fifth in terms of all income from fees and charges per head of population. This is an improvement on our previous position of eighth in 2012/13. Leeds generates lower than average fees as compared to other Core Cities in the following areas: early years and schools, parking, housing and environmental income is significantly lower than average. However, Leeds has the highest fees and charges income from cultural services with the exceptions of libraries, which is below average. Leeds also ranks first for income from children's social care.

The Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board is resolved to investigate fees and charges from each directorate, including the level of subsidy provided to schools and any area in which there is option for new fees and charges to help mitigate the devastating cuts to the Council budget. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nagle.

COUNCILLOR NAGLE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking to Minute 22, page 332, about Fees and Charges.

We have worked tremendously hard to limit the number of fees and charges passed on to the people of Leeds despite the increased budget pressures driven by our vision to be a compassionate caring city that helps all its residents. As part of this approach the Council has always considered the impact on communities when

making decisions. However, as the Government continues to propose even more cuts to Local Government core funding, this will once again make it more difficult for the Council to deliver those services that the communities we serve desperately need. When you also consider that existing pressures and services continue to grow, operating at this high level is getting more challenging year on year.

A recent comparative analysis of the Core Cities Fees and Charges 2014-15 showed Leeds has shown lower than average income gained from specific services when compared to other Core Cities such as Newcastle and Manchester. This is perhaps an indication of how the Council has operated greater subsidies even during times of continued cuts to Local Government funding. However, sustaining this approach is becoming increasingly difficult.

The continued austerity agenda, where we have seen significant imposed cuts to our budget of over £45 in this year alone, highlights the challenges we face and stresses the need to find new ways of generating income to maintain essential services.

We as a Council have already implemented plans which have seen new ways of working and a more innovative approach, something which we continue to ask directorates to constantly consider, encouraging our values such as spending money wisely. The Core Cities Analysis shows overall the Leeds income per head of population is £3 lower than average, which is equivalent to over £2m per year. This city was also ranked fifth in terms of all income from fees and charges per head per year, with £207 coming in, whereas other Core Cities such as Liverpool acquire £262. This is an improvement from previous years; however, as we are all aware, continued budget pressures mean areas where we do not necessarily charge in line with national averages will mean we are limited in considering other options which will cover the cost of subsidies we will lose in the coming years.

As the Scrutiny Board currently conducts its enquiries into fees and charges we will seek to ensure proper debate and consideration of the impact which is fundamental to any decisions made. This is a detailed enquiry and there will be a cross-party response. However, it is crucial we never lose sight that it is our communities who will be the most impacted by imposed decisions made in Westminster.

THE LORD MAYOR: You have run out of time.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I ask Councillor Groves to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR GROVES: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you to Councillor Nagle and Councillor Hayden for their contributions. We have heard today the importance of a proper debate around fees and charges, whether they are seen as a means to support core funding or as a way to generate income.

It is timely and important to have this enquiry with increased pressure year on year on budgets. As you have heard, the situation is not getting any better. We are always going to see further reductions to funding and only in the news this week the Department of Local Government has agreed 30% cuts over the term of this Parliament. These cuts will inevitably in some form reach Councils across the country.

My colleagues referred to the massive reduction in core funding of £180m since 2010 on top of demand-led cost pressures. So far we have worked very well to

protect essential services from austerity. We have become more enterprising and we have worked incredibly hard on delivering greater efficiencies.

Councillor Nagle spoke of new ways of working and Councillor Hayden talked about reprioritising delivery of service to generate further savings. We are doing all we can but it has been a mammoth transformation of Local Government. We have had to deliver the savings and we have had to reshape and look at the ways directorates work. However, as we face further cuts there will be some unpalatable decisions to be made.

The Scrutiny Board in September this year highlighted income generation from fees and charges totalling £108m across directorates. This may seem like a large figure but Councillor Nagle mentioned the Core City Analysis. Leeds is ranked fifth in terms of all income from fees and charges and per head of population of £207, compared with the highest at £262 and overall the average is £210. We also saw that on income gained we are below average, as Councillor Hayden pointed out, compared to many other core cities.

This perhaps indicates our choice not to charge where other Authorities have chosen to do so. However, it also emphasises that during these tough times it is critical that high priority services are targeted and be supported by subsidies. This raises important questions about charges and subsidies, something the inquiry will seek to provide a greater understanding about.

The Scrutiny Report highlights overall the Council's income per head per population is £3 lower than average and Councillor Nagle quite rightly pointed out that equates to £2.25m. Every 1% increase in fees and charges equates to an additional £1m in income.

The potential for fees and charges to address various challenges we have in the Council are clear to see. From addressing issues of generating income to improving service and delivering our priorities, the Scrutiny Board certainly has a lot to consider, which is why it is important we have a detailed inquiry that produces a cross-party response. However, we must not lose sight of why we have to make potentially difficult decisions and the impact on our communities.

It is decisions made in Westminster which ultimately have led Councils like Leeds since 2010 having to make very difficult decisions that impact on our communities. These demands are often issued seemingly without fully realising what this means to the ordinary people of Leeds. We will continue to work our hardest to protect essential services but as austerity continues and the demand for services rises and the Government continue their commitment to reduce funding, the future of Local Government is very worrying. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

(v) Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

THE LORD MAYOR: We move on to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services). Councillor Smart.

COUNCILLOR SMART: Lord Mayor, I am commenting on the Schools Attendance Report and I will admit this is a tenuous link but I am hoping Council will allow me some leeway.

The schools teach our children so much more than the core curriculum subjects. They give our children the opportunity to develop skills that will take them through life and one of the ways they do this is through extra curricula activities, which brings me on to Leeds Children's Mayor.

This year is the eleventh year of our hugely successful Leeds Children's Mayor programme, run by officers from Democratic Services and the Voice and Influence team from Children's Services for Year 6 pupils across the city. The Leeds Children's Mayor competition has become an integral part of the Leeds Civic calendar and one that I am sure we all value. Schools from across the city are invited to enter by submitting a manifesto written by one of their Year 6 pupils outlining what they would do if they were Leeds Children's Mayor. It gives children a chance to learn how democracy works and the role they can play in both shaping and improving their communities.

The programme is a valuable opportunity to strengthen children's understanding of their local Council and their Councillors and to learn about citizenship and the power of democracy.

This year 36 entries were received and the Panel of young people narrowed these down to a shortlist of twelve. Voting for the winner finished last week and I am delighted to say that we had a record number of votes cast this year. Tomorrow sees the Finals Night with each finalist reading their manifesto out here in the Council Chamber. Once the winner is announced they will be whisked off to help switch on the Leeds Christmas lights, the first of many exciting engagements for the year ahead.

We will all see the winner in the Chamber at a future Council meeting where they will present their manifesto in the form of a deputation – quite a daunting task. The manifestos written by the 36 entrants are displayed in the ante-chamber today. You may have already read through some of them but if not please take time over the course of this afternoon and at tea to have a read of them. I am sure that you, like me, will be impressed with their quality and the thoughtful ideas that have inspired all of the entrants this year.

Finally, a big thank you to our outgoing Leeds Children's Mayor, Amy Eckworth-Jones, from Strawberry Fields Primary School. Amy has had an incredible year and has done an excellent job and been a positive role model to children across the city. I do hope she has enjoyed the year and wish her every success going forward. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move to Councillor Blake to sum up, please. You have ten minutes.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I hope you will allow me to respond to Councillor Carter's comments at the beginning of the meeting and just to confirm what you said, that we did receive a letter from Ofsted on 29th October, which obviously was during the half term week, and I believe that Councillor Lamb was briefed on 5th November, just a few days after that, but you are waiting for more information to come.

The thing that I want to stress is, this was really unusual. The letter went to the Chief Executive and to certain MPs but was not sent to myself or to Councillor Yeadon, which I think is frankly something we should pick up and question.

What I want to reassure you is, obviously there are comments within the letter that we want clarification on. The Director has written for that clarification, nothing has come back yet, but as you know we look at these matters with intense scrutiny and I know that this will go back to Scrutiny and we will get to the bottom of the complex way that the information coming through has been received. I do want to let you know that similar letters have gone to just about every single Authority in the

whole of Yorkshire and the Humber, so there is definitely something coming through that.

We have nothing to hide in this and we will have an open cross-party debate to fully understand the implications of the letter.

Can I just say, the debate today I think has been extraordinarily rich in terms of the breadth of issues that we cover as a Council. The Equalities Agenda is absolutely key and crucial to all of us and I want to pay tribute to the comments that many Members have made today: Councillor Hussain on the diversity of the city, Councillor Macniven on the role of the Council and especially Community Committees. I think when we heard from Councillor Gabriel and Councillor Ritchie with your teams, I think we got a real sense of the extraordinary work that we do in our communities, building on the whole message of us being a compassionate city.

Neil Dawson talking about the impact of inequality, the most unequal country in the whole of Europe and possibly beyond and, indeed, today John Major himself made an announcement talking about the shocking inequality levels in Britain today that must be addressed. This is a major issue facing us all. Councillor Jarosz talking about the role of Members as Equality Champions. I do not think we should underestimate the role that Members play which then goes forward into the comments that were made on the Better Lives Strategy. Again, I think a really rich discussion, many contributions. Councillor Ogilvie I think really hit it on the head with the talk about the very difficult decisions that we have to make and the fact that we are doing it together as a Council means that we will lead to better outcomes.

I think Councillor Lay and Councillor Golton actually picked up very well the complexity of the decisions that we are going to have to make. They are changing all the time and we should not anticipate the needs of, dare I say it, the generations in this Chamber and what they will actually want going forward. This is a tough, difficult area and as Councillor Mulherin has outlined many times, the difficulties that we are facing through the funding situation that we have means that we really have some tough decisions, but at the heart of this – and I think this is the point that Lisa will make again and again – it is about quality provision. We cannot expect people to go into care in their old age going into premises without their own bathrooms. It is just not acceptable in this day and age.

Moving on to Public Health and Planning. You know, Councillor Anderson and Councillor Wadsworth, I understand exactly where you are coming from here but do you know what, I think you are missing the fundamental problem that we have and that is the absolute shambles that is NHS funding in this country. The NHS is in crisis. There just is not the money. At estimate of a £2.5bn deficit this year, that is the situation that is facing us. I think that if we are going to get the provision that we need for our people, whether it is in terms of buildings or in terms of access then, for Heaven's sake, let us put pressure on this Government to fund our Health Service to the needs that it has.

As Councillor Truswell mentioned, the deeply insulting way that this Government and their attitude to junior doctors in particular, undermining their extraordinary goodwill and the impact if those doctors do vote to work to their contracts in terms of the hours lost and the many, many hours that junior doctors work over and above their contracts, not getting paid for the work that they do.

This Council contributes an enormous amount in terms of services to supporting the most vulnerable in our society and I want to just pick up on the threat that has been running through all this so well picked up by Councillors Groves,

Hayden and Nagle when they reflected on the challenges that are being picked up in your Scrutiny Board.

I just want to quote the Tory/Conservative Leader of the LGA, Lord Gary Porter, when he says some Councils will be very close in the life of this Parliament to not being able to meet their statutory obligations and balance their budgets. This is Local Government being completely up against it with the cuts that the Government are bringing down.

I want to end by just highlighting, I think, one of the issues that we have got where we have seen the impact of Government cuts coming down. I do not honestly believe that many Members of Parliament really understand the challenges that we are facing in Local Government. That has been so brilliantly highlighted in today's press. I urge you all to look at this. Apparently in September David Cameron wrote in his capacity as a local MP to Ian Hudspeth, the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council, about their proposed budget statement. You really cannot believe this. Apparently in his letter David Cameron asserted that Oxfordshire's spending has actually increased in recent years. The reply to him from the Leader of the Council, a Conservative Leader, "Our revenue grant has fallen by almost 50% in the first half of this decade."

Council, this is what we are up against. We are determined to continue to provide quality services, protecting the most vulnerable in our communities but the challenges are immense. I want to say an enormous thank you for the work that every Member does in their communities but let us keep going, keep making the case and where we can let us do it cross-party. I believe local Government is on the verge of extinction in its current form. We have a job to do – let's go and do it. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We are just going now to take two votes, please, on page 16. The first vote is on the amendment on the Reference Back in the name of Councillor Jonathan Bentley. *(A vote was taken)* The reference back is LOST.

Now on the motion to receive the Minutes, or the Minute as amended. *(A vote was taken)* The vote is CARRIED.

Just before we go to tea can I just say to you that when you go into the Banqueting Hall you will see on the floor the beginnings of a mosaic Lego being made out of 200,000 bricks, of the crest of the City of Leeds. This is one of the fundraising appeals that I am doing this year for the Specialist Autism Services and I just ask you to take a look. It has been designed by a person with autism, it is being built by autistic people and if you have any spare change please put it in the bucket next to it to enable them to get more bricks built.

Can I invite people upstairs in the balcony to join us for tea and we will be back here at quarter-to five, please.

(Short break)

ITEM 16 – REPORT ON DEVOLVED MATTERS

THE LORD MAYOR: We will move on to the first part of the Agenda on Devolved Matters, which is before the White Papers. Maybe I should have qualified what I said before because the same applies to this item. Although it is timed, I agreed that I would let all the speakers listed speak, which was agreed at the Whips' meeting last night, so I should have said that before probably and made it a little bit clearer what I was talking about, but this is at the Whips' request.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: You are all heart, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: All heart? No, I was told what to do! I listen to what I am told to do.

Can we start, please, with Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking to the item on Devolved Matters. I just briefly want to give Council an update on where we are.

Most of you will be aware that the City and Devolution Bill is going through the processes in the House of Commons. It is actually going through the Committee stages at the moment, I think most of the amendments that will happen have already happened and the Government is looking for it to be enacted early in 2016.

From our point of view, and I have reported this to you before, we are negotiating with the Treasury and DCLG on a geographic area which is based on the Leeds City Region which is covered by our LEP area, clearly recognised as a functioning economic area and, as many of you will recall, the Devolution Agenda has been framed in terms of driving the economy of the north in particular forward, rebalancing the economy and creating the opportunities for us to maximise the potential that we have. The Leeds City Region has an economy valued at over £57bn and a population of 2.8 million and is the largest economic area outside of London. I just wanted to reassure you that the Leeds City Region is performing very well.

Growth data that was announced on 6th October by the Office of National Statistics shows that there are 119,000 businesses in Leeds City Region and this represents an increase of 9% from 2014. Also, figures show that the City Region is home to 5% of all business in England but it contributed over 6% to the total of national growth, and that significant growth outpaced the UK as a whole.

I think this is really important when we think about the negotiations that are taking place and of particular relevance to us, we have as a city, as part of the Leeds City Region, committed to becoming a NEET free area and the progress on that is from May 2012 we had 28,500 JSA claimants aged between 18 and 24; that has fallen to 8,400 through the Devolved Youth Contract. I cannot think of a better example of why we need more devolved powers coming down to us. We have proved in many areas where we have the powers and the resource coming down together we can collectively drive forward progress that makes a huge difference to people living not only in Leeds but the wider city region.

There is no time limit for our negotiations with the Treasury, we have got the Spending Review being announced at the end of November but we are not under pressure to sign anything before that date. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes my Lord Mayor. Well, Councillor Blake, you are right about one thing, you are under no pressure to sign up to anything before the November Autumn Statement because it is highly unlikely that a

Devolved Agreement for Leeds will be announced or possibly even mentioned, because since the last Council meeting there may have been a lot of talks – and we all know politicians, all of us, are very good at talking – but that is about all there has been, apart from a very unhelpful suggestion from that one-trick show pony in Wakefield, Councillor Box, that we should perhaps incorporate into the Combined Authority area the City of Hull, notwithstanding the fact that we are not joined geographically to it or in many other ways either.

It would be funny if it was not so serious because I listened very carefully to Labour colleagues trying to downgrade the importance of the Manchester deal, downgrade the importance of the Sheffield deal, referring to things as smoke and mirrors, downgrade the North-East – anything to detract from the fact that our progress has been virtually nil and we have the same problem we had before. I made it very clear, the City Region is the way in which the economy of this area functions. The problem is that three Councils are part of North Yorkshire and North Yorkshire has a veto and unless we can do something to get North Yorkshire on board, it will not happen.

What is the fallback position, Members of Council, of the West Yorkshire Labour Leaders, the Combined Authority? Completely unacceptable. Bad news for Leeds in every respect. You have only got to sit in meetings to listen to the anti-Leeds vibes and mood music there is all the time because unfortunately our West Yorkshire colleagues do not seem to get the message that we want to work with them but they have to realise that Leeds is the centre of economic activity and we will all benefit by Leeds's continued success. They understand that better in North Yorkshire than they do in the rest of West Yorkshire and, Councillor Blake, you have got to get that message across because if Leeds went with the Greater Yorkshire proposals, I remain convinced that Bradford would follow and if Wakefield wanted another choice they could go south, couldn't they? *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have got to say I am disappointed on the progress that has been made. Clearly the City Region model is not something that I support and I support a broader Yorkshire proposal, but we do not seem to be making any progress at all although I have got to say, I disagree with Councillor Carter here, I do not think it is all our doing, I think a lot of it is Central Government's doing. I do not think actually Central Government are into the thing of devolution. The fact is we have an Assembly in Scotland, an Assembly in Wales and a London Assembly; the North of England is left without anything. We need the same powers that we have in those areas to move forward and it has got to be democratically accountable, which seems not to be in Central Government's viewpoint.

I think we could do better. Certainly anything you can do, Judith, we will support you to try and push the thing forward but we need to push it forward but we need to make sure that what we get out of it is beneficial to our region. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thanks Lord Mayor. The Devolution issue. A lot of us would like a wider conglomeration of Local Authorities. We have seen how devolution worked in Scotland and how actually it was able to catch people's imaginations, there was a cultural resonance and it swept people up and it had an energising effect on the body politic and it was something which was great for

everybody. Even if you did not agree with people you were arguing with them and you felt the vitality.

Unfortunately the debate about devolution in Yorkshire ignores Yorkshire. This is no fault to the Labour Leaders of West Yorkshire Council, because when Andrew Carter was Leader in Leeds the Government of the day, when they were talking about devolution, was always about City Region models. It had to be economically led, it had to be about business. Sometimes, actually, devolution is about the people because at the end of the day no matter what kind of model you have, it is all funded by the taxpayer and if in the future we hope to aspire to actually having some kind of fiscal independence ourselves, then the people do need to be involved and they do need to be taken along with the agenda.

Unfortunately there is not the consensus in Yorkshire at the moment so we are left with a City Region model and that City Region model needs to be taken forward and then it can be evolved upon, because devolution is an evolution process. Unfortunately, it is true that on the one hand we have got the Labour leadership in Yorkshire trying their hardest to keep the likes of Hull off their back and keeping North Yorkshire at arm's length because they are used to who they are, the people who are sat round that table in a sub-regional manner, and they have got to a point where they have been able to agree on priorities, but at the same time the Government has lost its capacity to actually drive devolution in any way.

You do feel that David Cameron is sat back going, "Oh well, you lot, sort this all out for you" and if it is such a priority for him to get every single part of this country working as an economic motor to deliver a better economic future for everybody at the same rate, then they should be making the running as well and unfortunately they have lost capacity ever since the Coalition went (*laughter*) and the people who actually believed in devolution are not there to actually make it work and all it has turned into is a balance sheet process and that is not the same thing.

Actually, having Lord Adonis taken across from the Labour Benches and put in charge of this vehicle by David Cameron, that does not give me any particular confidence or positivity either.

Yes, Andrew Carter is right, there needs to be more direction coming from the Labour leadership of the five councils, but actually David Blackburn is right as well, Central Government actually needs to show that they care instead of just leaving people to argue amongst themselves.

THE LORD MAYOR: Right light, Councillor Golton, sorry. (*Applause*) Councillor Blake to sum up.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Yes, thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I just say that the root of the problem is that for all the talk, all the rhetoric about this being a bottom-up approach and they are not going to dictate the terms of the geography and then you actually look at the legislation and you are not allowed to cross a Police and Crime Commissioner boundary, for Heaven's sake, you are not allowed to cross Transport Authority boundaries. This is not a bottom-up approach, it is an attempt to impose a model that actually happens to work perfectly for the Manchester Combined Authority areas because they are all co-terminus. The North-East is co-terminus, the South, Sheffield City Region and South Yorkshire are not and they have got similar issues of cross boundary things.

The other thing is, I said before, we are resolute at West Yorkshire level. Every single West Yorkshire leader is fully signed up to the Leeds City Region model.

I do not recognise what Councillor Carter is saying in people falling out in lumps about Leeds. It is well recognised that Leeds is driving the economy forward.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Bit like this letter, isn't it?

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I have to say, what we have been doing is negotiating over North Yorkshire and the East Riding, putting in a proposal including Leeds and West Yorkshire without even telling us that they are submitting that bid. Come on, let us get serious. I want to say to you, Leeds City Region is the functioning economic footprint, we will keep going. We are in serious discussions with the Treasury about how we overcome some of these problems. They want Leeds to be part of this.

I tell you what, without all of the work we have done by coming together as Leeds City Region, I do not think we would have had the announcement last week that Burberry, the most iconic global brand who could have gone anywhere in the world but chose to come and bring textile manufacturing back to its heartland right into the centre of Leeds. I rest my case. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

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

WHITE PAPERS

THE LORD MAYOR: We will now move on to the final segment of the meeting, the White Papers. We have got three White Papers for debate. Each debate will last for no more than 45 minutes and will conclude with votes on the motion and any amendments.

ITEM 17 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – PUBLIC HEALTH & PLANNING

THE LORD MAYOR: If we can begin with the first White Paper, please, and I will call upon Councillor Barry Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In respect of the White Paper in my name, when I first read this report from the Director of Public Health I honestly had a eureka moment. I thought, finally, somebody has got it at last. They actually understand the problems that we are going to have in this city with the proposal for 70,000 houses. Maybe there are two or three people, maybe not many more, actually believe this can be delivered and that is in the whole of the Chamber because even people who are voting in favour of it do not actually believe it is going to be delivered.

We have actually got a document that says it as it is. It highlights the issues you have all got to face up to. Has reality finally sunk in? No. Unfortunately, no. You have got a document, the Site Allocations Plan, which is totally in conflict with this particular proposal that is coming from the Director of Public Health. You have not got joined up thinking yet again.

Councillor Blake was talking about threads earlier on. Here is a thread that is going on. No matter what you talk about across there, that side of the Labour Group have got a different agenda and there is no thread picking it up. When it comes to Public Health and Housing you have not got a thread that is holding things together. You are all over the place, no matter what it is. Devolution, exactly the same, one group saying this, one part of West Yorkshire saying another, no cohesiveness in what you are doing at all.

There is no addendum to the Site Allocations Plan after this report came out, none whatsoever, pointing out which sites now no longer in the view of the criteria set out by the Director of Public Health would no longer be acceptable because it did not fit the tests that you put in place. Did you make any reference to that? Have you made any comment about that, how you instructed officers to go back and look at any of these sites? No, you had no intention of doing so because you do not understand effectively what has happened. Until this White Paper was brought forward some of you maybe did not even know that the Director of Public Health had brought forward this particular document. Some were aware of it, some were not aware of it in terms of what was going on.

Health is important, vitally important. It is vitally important to the sites that are coming forward in Crossgates, Whinmoor, Garforth, Aireborough, Horsforth, Morley and in the north of the city. It is important to all of these people. You are letting these residents down because you are not facing up to the problems that are being caused by the housing strategy that you are taking forward. You are single-handedly destroying a lot of the green field, green belt sites, open spaces throughout the city. It is on your watch, it is on nobody else's watch, nobody else can be blamed for it because you have been told clearly by the Government it is up to you to decide what is best for your area so it is you that is doing it, nobody is forcing you to do anything like this at all, nobody is forcing you to say 70,000 houses, it is your choice that you brought this forward.

We have already heard today about access to GPs and dentists. How are you going to ensure that with where you are allowing the developers to dictate to you where the sites are going to be? You are not spatially planning this city out; you are signally failing to plan spatially plan what we have got in this particular city.

At the last Executive Board there was a paper on air quality. That is going to get worse. Under your own Exec Board paper in this city it is not going to get any better having queues of traffic coming in from the outer areas in terms of what you are doing.

What I am saying to you is try and make it a bit easier for people to communicate with you. Your site allocations consultation has been a disaster. You cannot get access to the computer system, the way that you have set the paper copies out makes it very, very difficult to go on. You have not held enough public consultation exercise in terms of what you are doing and then when you do run them, some of my colleagues will be able to tell you where officers have been misleading the public in some of the things that they have been saying and that is leading to mistrust of your Site Allocations Plan. It is not our Site Allocations Plan, it is your Site Allocations Plan so you are the ones that are failing miserably to what you are doing here.

You have got an opportunity today to address the issue.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Anderson, red light.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter to second.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: I formally second, Lord Mayor, and reserve the right to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis to move an amendment.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am somewhat confused. This document, actually a lot of it is stuff that I have been involved in and I am amazed that Barry is so enthusiastic about all our work at Hunslet Riverside, Beckhills, Holt Park Centre...

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Because I believe in this city.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I am amazed, Barry, that you find a document like this as something to hang your tired old arguments on that you have tried a hundred times.

Let us be honest about where the world sits. You have had a Government, a Tory dominated Government for five plus years. At any time during that five years your Tory Government could have made life so much easier for this Local Authority and every other Local Authority to come up with a plan that actually met the needs, the real needs, of the people of the city, but they have not. They could have, I suppose, strengthened our hand against developers, backed communities. Is it there? They could have protected green belt, say that you cannot build on green belt. They could have ensured that every household was consulted. Within the Government's terms you have to consult for six weeks – six weeks. We are consulting for eight. Perhaps we should have done for longer but they only want six weeks consultation. We could have done it in August, that would probably have fit with what the Government likes but it has not done anything to make our lives easier. All it has been interested in – and it is repeated again in a letter we have just got from Brandon Lewis – is increasing the housing supply. That is the only thing that concerns this Government, increasing the housing supply. It is not about quality, it is not about sustainability, it is not about how people live, it is not about providing decent homes. It is just about housing supply.

They have even imposed the abomination that is CIL upon us, so when I hear you start talking about infrastructure, Barry, give us a break. CIL, everybody knows it is a complete disaster and it is going to be a complete disaster that is not going to deliver anything for us. Misguided in every respect and we are going to have to live with that. That is your Government, Barry. You come here preaching away at how terrible the Labour Group is and how the Labour Group is responsible. This is total misdirection from you because you are trying to evade your own responsibility for where this Local Authority is and every other Local Authority in the country. *(Applause)*

What is even more hypocritical is I hear all the Members of your Group actually saying that the developers are the people who have the Government's ear and I have heard you bemoaning that. I have heard John Procter talking about the East Leeds Orbital and the problems with developing in the East Leeds extension where his criticism has been of the developers, absolutely. If there is one group that needs to connect with itself it is your group, Barry, because you need to talk about the reality that we have because the truth is, if we had a planning system that really worked for the people of this city and every other city and every other community, we could deliver so much more than we do to what we have at the moment, which is just absolutely dominated by a matter of numbers.

That is why our amendment is actually about other things. We are trying to get away from this kind of sterile debate, the sterile debate about 70,000. I will tell you, you say not everybody is keen on 70,000. I am not keen on 70,000 but I do know that it is a defensible figure and I am not going to do something stupid and put this Local Authority in a position where it cannot defend its Core Strategy, where it is left defenceless in the lands of the developers. *(Applause)*

Let us just go back and talk about a few things. What we need in this city, we need mixed communities and what you are destroying is the idea of mixed communities because you are making sure that starter homes are going to be not for rent, they are going to be to buy at a quarter of a million quid and as even Alec Shelbrooke, bless him, said, nobody can consider a house at a quarter of a million an affordable property. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin to second.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In contrast to the Government's approach on consultation this Council has a good track record on consulting with the public. I will give you two quick examples. The first, this is now the second round of consideration of site allocations effectively through this process. We went through a process before where we spoke to the public and we listened to their voices and changes were made to the sites that were put out in this round for consultation.

In previous rounds of the Council's Better Lives Strategy and programme we have listened to respondents and amended our recommendations to Executive Board and the decisions that were made in accordance with the comments from the public.

The Government's sham consultation in contrast on the Public Health funding cuts, which took place over four weeks, not eight weeks, and in its entirety within the August school summer holidays, is really not the way to go. Government claims to be protecting health services but it is slashing the funding of front line health services purely because they are now commissioned through Local Authorities and not through the NHS. It is clear that they were never going to take that consultation seriously and they had no interest in considering the responses they received. The promises from this Government when Public Health was transferred from the NHS to the Local Authority lie broken. We were told that our allocation, which is still £6m short of where it should be for a city the size and the needs of the population of Leeds, would gradually be increased over a period of time to the Government's own recognised target allocation. We had a 10% uplift in the first year; this year that grant was frozen and not only was it frozen but two months into the financial year and one month after the election George Osborne came and said he was going to take money back from us that is currently funding those services after contracts were let, so the promises from the Government cannot be taken seriously.

I know in terms of the proposals for the White Paper that it refers to much of the work that we are already doing in this Council, so we have taken reports to Executive Board in terms of how we promote cycling, how we promote active transport, how our transport policy will encourage people to be more physically active, how we will work to lower emissions and improve air quality in the city. We also have a commitment set in the Core Strategy which reflects this Local Authority's Public Health responsibilities and the desire to build health impact into what we do in terms of new developments in Leeds, so we are doing what we should be doing in terms of public health and planning.

Local Members as well are ensuring through their own actions in areas, and I can certainly speak for my own ward, that we have gone the extra mile to ensure that local residents' voices are heard, we have held extra meetings, we have been out and hand delivered letters to people to ensure that they have an opportunity to get their voice heard. In short, Lord Mayor, I will simply say that we will not be taking lessons from the Tory Members in this Chamber on consultation or from their Government. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. You sometimes wonder, sitting in this Chamber listening to the other side when they seem to want to talk about only things about which they can have little or no control over and moan about it, instead of talking about the things that are under their control and they can do something about. As Barry Anderson rightly pointed out, the Core Strategy is their Core Strategy.

I will give you an interesting comparison. The number of houses that they are proposing is almost identical to the Regional Spatial Strategy that their Government imposed upon us before 2010. Strange, Members of Council, is it not, that they have gone for almost identically the same number.

The Inspector at the Core Strategy, he called their target “highly ambitious”. Now, that leads me to believe that those of us who were proposing a lesser number of around 60,000, if Leeds had climbed on board that is what we would have got. It would have still been ambitious but not highly ambitious and probably saved 10,000 houses being built on green space and green belt, and it is their responsibility. They must own up to it and stand up for it if that is what they believe in. It is not the responsibility of anybody in Opposition or the Government. It is their Core Strategy and the effect it has on people’s lives and on public health has been set out extremely clearly in the report.

We had a chap from Headingley, one of the deputations earlier on, spoke a lot of sense about the lack of green space in Headingley. Let me tell you something, there is not a ward in this city that has more publicly accessible green space now than it had 50 years ago, so there is less public open space for the growing population now than there was 50 years ago. In this plan you could have provided a much more robust framework for more public open space, not scrappy bits on new estates but proper parks, but you have not. That was again your option and you have not done it.

It is like education. I am going to read another extract from this letter because it ties in exactly to Public Health.

“Pupils who fail to learn well in primary school are unlikely to succeed in high school and their life chances similarly reduce. The weak outcomes for pupils in Leeds leave them at a significant disadvantage as they move on to the secondary phase of education.”

Those kids who we are letting down as they move through the system, they will be a bigger pull on the public health services and a bigger pull on benefits and we are letting them down. That is something you can do something about; instead of keeping this secret you could have had it out to everybody and we could have debated that today, something you are responsible for the blame for which lies at the door of the Leader of Council who was the Exec Member responsible for Education when this was going on and we expect answers and we expect them very clearly and very quickly.

My Lord Mayor, I would be delighted to second Councillor Anderson’s White Paper. He is right in every respect. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. First of all can I thank Councillor Anderson for the creative way he has used to raise the housing numbers again. I think he wants to be congratulated on that.

The fact is, he is right and it needs to be debated. It is no good blaming the Tory Government. Councillor Carter is quite right, the Regional Spatial Strategy laid down the numbers that we stuck with and we should not have done because they were wrong. They are not good. What we need is something that is sustainable and that is in line with Public Health because if it is environmentally sustainable it is public health sustainable, but we are not working like that. We are just looking at figures that were dreamt up ten, fifteen years ago that we know are wrong. The amount of housing we need is in relation to the population we are going to have, not the population we thought we were going to have fifteen years ago which is lower now than it was supposed to be in that document, but nobody will take this. You are just going on this 70,000 or 74,000 whichever figure you look at and you have consistently gone on that and you know, both of you know, it is wrong, so why did you not review it when you had the opportunity? Why do you not make a commitment to review it in the future?

Why don't you take Councillor Anderson's advice to use this public health document to review the housing site before it goes to the Inspector? I support the motion. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor John Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I could not help but think when I read the amendment in the name of Councillor Richard Lewis that he was stuck in a time warp and that actually he still thinks he is the Chair of the Housing Committee on this Council rather than the Executive Member because he wholly, completely, totally and utterly missed the point that was being driven at.

I was surprised actually to find these statistics and this information in the report of the Director of Public Health but clearly he feels there is an issue there that needs commenting on.

Lord Mayor, we have heard already the fact of the matter is, the absolute fact of the matter is that the Labour administration had a choice. They could have selected numbers within a range. That was clear but that was information that was kept away from other political parties on this Council. We simply did not know, we were not given that information that there was a choice to be made, and there was. It was a choice between 55,000 units and 70,000 units. That is fact, absolute, complete fact, Chair, and that needed to be dragged out piece by piece through the Scrutiny process.

Lord Mayor, people moan and groan, I hear Labour Members moaning and groaning all the time, as do many of us, about the lack of infrastructure that is going to accompany these 70,000 houses. What I never do then hear is the follow up. It was identified by the committee that Councillor Neil Taggart then chaired, the Development Plans Panel, who said something like £420m was going to be needed in infrastructure to bring about the development of 70,000 houses. Like many things with this administration, when you ask the question "And where is that money going to come from?", "Oh, don't know, oh, we will have to ask the developers and we will have to see it on a site by site, case basis and er, er, er..."

We never, ever get the answers. £420m – don't you think we should be getting some of that from the volume house builders? Don't you think we should be

demanding that from them, yet where are those demands? Where is the clear instruction to officers "You need to go and get this money from these volume house builders." That is nothing to do with CIL, Richard, CIL is on top of that. You still get your Section 106 contributions for the major infrastructure – CIL is in addition to all of that as well, but we are not getting what we should be getting in Section 106 in the first place.

Lord Mayor, the thing that is really, really going to – I was going to say embarrass, I hope it will embarrass some Members opposite, is what is actually happening on the ground because a number of Members opposite who say 70,000 houses is a good idea. I have heard Councillor Charlwood say 70,000 houses are good, I have heard Councillor Walshaw say 70,000 are good because people need somewhere to live. Yes, well, who and living where? That is the second question that you are just not following up on. Councillor Truswell is now chairing a Scrutiny Working Group which I am fortunate enough to sit on and what has been revealed there is what you all think is being built is not being built at all, so the Core Strategy which you think is being implemented is not being implemented at all, it has been completely abandoned by Planning Officers and so the target within the Core Strategy within H4 policy says that the number of two bedroom houses that should be built in this city, our target is 50%. What was it in 2012/13? 27%. What was it in 2013/14? 22%. Surely we have got a grip of it now, haven't we, and it is going the right way you would think, wouldn't you? So in 2014/15 what is it? 15%. 15% two bedroom houses against a target of 50%. Look at the four bedrooms, what is that? Target of 10%, four bed plus, that is. Where is it now? 28% being built last year alone. It is a farce, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Graham Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Follow that! Lord Mayor, I would like to bring this back down to the local level, as I always do in these debates and talk about Aireborough. Aireborough is already getting more and more densely populated almost by the month. The A65, which is our main thoroughfare, is getting harder and harder to make your car move on because the traffic between White Cross and Rawdon frequently is at a standstill and regularly gridlocked, and even on a weekend we get this. It is going the opposite way at the weekend because people are coming into the place for other reasons, but the net result is that we have a very, very unhealthy, toxic road. The emissions from all the cars that are getting stuck on that road must be doing something dreadful to the air quality and we are all living with it. That is now. We have got more to come.

Hundreds and hundreds of houses for Aireborough, and Aireborough is really a microcosm for Leeds because this is happening everywhere – everywhere, with all these numbers of houses we are getting denser population, more cars on the roads and we are not getting any roads to spread this traffic out. The cars cannot move any more quickly, in the future they are going to get more gridlocked because, again taking Aireborough as the microcosm of Leeds, we have a whole load of houses being built over the last 15 years with no increase in the road infrastructure and whatever is planned for us for the future, whatever we actually get, no matter what the build rate, we are not going to get any more roads. It is all very well to say that CIL is there to provide the infrastructure but by the time we get any CIL – and it is not a huge amount of the net pot anyway – it is going to be too late to build the roads because the houses are already going to be there.

What is this adding up to? Commuting. No employment being suggested in the area so people wanting jobs are going to have to commute and I was listening to a programme on the wireless the other day talking about commuting – one of the most stressful activities after divorce, I believe. Commuting is stressful. Also, it is

more stressful for women because women tend to do their commuting – men, we get in the car and we go to work; women get in the car and they take a child to school and perhaps nowadays, because you cannot get them all in the same school, you have to take them to another one. *(interruption)*

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: It might be at your house.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we let him speak, please. Quiet, please. Can we let Councillor Latty speak?

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I honestly and truly did not think that that was funny. It struck me as a disadvantage for ladies. *(interruption)* For Heaven's sake, come on. You know I am not as big a threat as these two, just let me finish and tell you what it is all about.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could we keep to the point?

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: My time is going rapidly. I hope the Lord Mayor will just let me finish off.

THE LORD MAYOR: Look, could we please let Councillor Latty finish. Councillor Latty, please could you speak to the point so that they do not come back at you.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Just to finish – it is bad enough from that side.

THE LORD MAYOR: We are supposed to have one meeting in this room, not twenty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I will rapidly finish. What I am getting at is this all adds up to stress levels which we have not known before. Stress levels are going to go up and with stress comes a loss of health and also wellbeing which we all know is a very, very important factor in people's life, in their health, and if your wellbeing goes, which it is going to do with the sort of situations I am talking about, to me it is a recipe for disaster for our population in the future. Therefore, I do heartily support Councillor Anderson's White Paper. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I suppose cynics – and I would not include myself in this – reading the Tory White Paper might be somewhat confused as to what it is trying to achieve.

Barry refers to concerns that increased housing would be a threat to Public Health. I suppose even the most cynical among us might say the biggest threat to local Public Health is George Osborne's in-year cuts to Public Health expenditure, not housing.

He also refers to concern over the LDF housing numbers and waxed eloquently about them. Of course, cynics might say or they might actually wonder why, when we had the LDF Core Strategy debate, the Conservatives were so vocally enthusiastic for the numbers in the Core Strategy, calling on the three groups here to set aside their reference back, I think it was, and actually vote for the Core Strategy, which they did, along with their good friends over there.

We have consistently expressed our concerns about the numbers for the Core Strategy and it is slightly ironic, actually, we have had a better debate about that this afternoon than we actually had when we had the Core Strategy meeting. A lot of the points that have been raised have been very valid and have not been answered by the other side, so actually we will be supporting Barry because ... *(interruption)* and that is a really good example why because actually you are in denial about this. As John says, you were offered a choice – you were offered a choice; we were not offered a choice. We sat in that meeting and we were told straight up front it has got to be 70,000. It is only by probing that we found out that you had been told it did not need to be that money, so that information was kept from us. You have had more than one opportunity to say, “Well, hang on, we got it wrong. We got it wrong when we got the population figures, we got it wrong when we got the Office of Population Census revised figures, we got it wrong in fact all the way along.” Have you been able to say that to us? No, you have not.

You are as much in thrall, in my opinion, to the volume house builders as the Government is and I have no sympathy with them whatsoever. You are mesmerised by the power of the volume house builders. In the end, they are the ones that are driving this plan and driving your version of this plan. It is wrong, those numbers are wrong and we will suffer the consequences for the next ten, 20, 30 years. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, making new services match new housing is all about cash flow and forward planning. Leeds is not going to get anywhere near 70,000 new dwellings, or 74,000 as the gross target really is, by the end of the Local Plan in 2028, so someone will have to draw up an unofficial financial plan to cope with the numbers we are actually likely to get. If you have a target for 74,000 and realise that you will do well to get up to 50,000, how do you cope with that?

What it needs is a bit of imagination, what Councillor Cleasby calls horizontal thinking. I have looked into this and I did not pay much heed to the former MP who thought that the Treasury would benefit from a buy one get one free offer on gold bars. That did wonders for short term cash flow but it was not very good for long term Treasury assets.

The authority I consulted was none other than Arthur Daly. According to Arthur there is no such thing as an unbalanced account. What you need is one set of books with, say, blue covers with 74,000 stamped on them and another set, perhaps with black covers, with 50,000 stamped on them. Lord Mayor, two sets of books, one in each hand – perfect balance. *(laughter)*

You showed the blue books to any Treasury officials or Eurocrats who needed to see them while really you were working on the black books which kept tabs on what was really happening. You can make a nice little earner out of applying for European Union grants and Treasury Loan Sanction while telling them that you were really going for the 74,000. After a few years the Revenue and the VAT man would come poking their noses in and Illingworth would start making freedom of information requests *(laughter)* – meanwhile the world would be your lobster. If the worst came to the worst, as Arthur used to say, nothing erases a set of dodgy accounts better than a good fire. You could burn the Civic Hall down and cut your losses! *(laughter)*

Lord Mayor, Councillor Anderson raises a serious point. Recently we have had a run of planning permissions in Morley which are overburdening our surgeries

and are likely to cause severe primary school admissions crises in September 2016. Growth of services is lagging behind rates of building, which across Leeds are far below Local Plan targets and consistently so as well, year on year. We need realism if we are to avoid totally unmanageable problems.

No-one can pretend that Community Infrastructure Levy and what is left of Section 106 will pay for everything which is needed. New housing will not pull itself up by its own boot straps so money will have to be sought elsewhere to get that money and to get that money we will need to have reasonable targets and credible financial forecasts, and do not forget the Site Allocations Consultation closes at five o'clock next Monday and I am sure that, Lord Mayor, you will be getting your representation in in between your various commitments. Thank you, my Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Caroline Gruen.

COUNCILLOR C GRUEN: Lord Mayor, I am speaking in support of Councillor Lewis's amendment. Firstly, I would like to comment on the consultation process, both what we have done on the Draft Allocation Plan and also how the Government consults on its legislative programme.

The current consultation has seen 15 drop in sessions, a total of 86 hours for residents to discuss these matters with officers on hand to speak to. On top of this, plans have been available in the Leonardo building every working day from 9.00 to 5.00 and even a cursory glance at the Yorkshire Evening Post website will see adverts for the consultation plastered all over it.

I know that some Members have either used the press to encourage people to attend sessions or arranged information sessions in their own communities with information and resources provided for this. That is all something that we should celebrate and, yes, ward Members should be a central part of making sure people know about consultation.

When I look at the list of consultations that have taken place I note that these are overwhelmingly towards the edges of the city where we know that there are both local concerns and some housing allocations, so let us remind ourselves one more time where the areas with the highest targets are: East Leeds, 17%; the Inner area, 15%; and the city centre, 15.5%.

In the current draft plans both the city centre and Inner area are more than meeting their targets for housing in this area. Why do we not hear this more often from the Opposition? Are they prepared to accept that the Council is doing in these areas exactly what they are asking it to do and allocating brown field sites for development with the emerging phasing to put these sites in the first tranche.

Looking more broadly at the Government's consultation programme, I would like to ask Councillor Anderson about consultation for the Housing and Planning Bill. We have all heard this White Paper's impassioned call for consultation on our Site Allocations Plan today and I am sure that Opposition colleagues feel the same way about the wide ranging powers in this Bill, and I could not agree more that what we need is meaningful, honest, transparent and thorough consultation, and it leads me to ask some questions.

Why have we not seen a full consultation with public advertising, drop-ins and civil servants available to discuss the measures in this Bill? Why don't brown field sites need a local decision or public consultation to make an in-principle decision? Why did Housing Associations get a week to make a Hobson's choice between

accepting the right to buy or having it thrust upon them? Just when will Central Government be undertaking anything like our consultations on their plans?

We are trying to do the consultation in the right way in Leeds. There may be room for improvement, as there always is but if you want to see consultation done right you definitely cannot look to the current Government for it.

Now let us turn to assertion that Public Health is not taking account of in the planning process. This is complete nonsense. The Core Strategy deliberately puts health considerations at centre stage. For the last two years Councillors Mulherin and Peter Gruen have implemented through our Scrutiny system a very thorough examination of how public health principles can be included in the planning and decision making process. Yes, it does now need to be delivered but Plans Panels have all Leeds' party groups represented on them so when all is said and done, it is up to you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR M DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am very happy to support Councillor Lewis's amendment but one of the real reasons I wanted quite late in the day to speak on this debate was actually the charge that has been laid by Barry this afternoon that somehow we are not consulting, we are not getting involved, we are not taking part. Let me tell you something, since 2013 when we had the issues and options of the outline plan for site allocations we have literally done nothing but – meeting after meeting after meeting with ward colleagues and we have talked ourselves hoarse and we have listened to what the public of Outer South Leeds are telling us and what they are telling us is very clear. There are certain pockets of land they did not want to see brought forward to this current site allocation process. There are certain pockets of land people did not want to see and Councillors have been pragmatic and sensible in bringing forward an options paper for consultation. The one we have done in our patch has reached about 12,000 people so far through various social media spread, through the use of email but then, at the eleventh hour when we talk about consultation, Barry, my MP decides unilaterally that we have to throw another piece of land back into the mix that has been previously taken out because it did not find public favour through the consultation that we all went along with and he decided on 19th October last, "Mark, can we have another think about this piece of land? What do you reckon?"

Quickly on the back of that we have got this extremely well produced current document, Great 4 Garforth – Great 4 Garforth. I cannot really see how because everything we have been trying to progress in our area, talking about a relief road and how it will be funded, John, you are perfectly right, who is going to pay for it, if the volume house builder is going to cough up, those issues, issues about drainage that are the blight of our areas – not a mention. It is development cheek by jowl with the existing settlement of Garforth.

Then, we get this wonderful follow up letter on 4th November telling us why it is all wonderful, life is going to be hunky-dory, we are going to get some football pitches and a rugby pitch and one thing. No mention of the infrastructure needs that this will bring into play.

For me, Barry, if you want to talk about consultation, let us talk about it but what Alec Shelbrooke has done in a swoop is attempt to unpick two solid years of hard work and, quite frankly, Lord Mayor, it will not wash. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Walshaw.

COUNCILLOR WALSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Speaking to support Councillor Lewis's amendment and if I may I am going to look forward and offer a somewhat different tone from set previously.

I was looking at this legislation and I was thinking what is it about the 18th Century that so fascinates the Conservative Party? I do wonder about that. Bear with me, you will see where I am going with this. Is it period dramas, is it the tight trousers and heaving bosoms? Looking at what you are doing in the NHS is it the infant mortality rates that appeal? Or, when you look at this legislation, is it land tenure and who owns what and who pays for what where? I think there is something in that, Lord Mayor, and I will come to explain about that because this Housing and Planning Bill represents really the next stage in the Tory vision of housing in this country and we can see that that really is, yes, mortgages for those who can afford it but eye-wateringly high house prices, and then a tremendously large private rented sector all at very high rentals, some of which – well, a lot of that Bill we as taxpayers will bear that bill, won't we? There is no escaping that when you look at this Housing and Planning Bill.

I just want to speak to a couple of aspects to explain why I am coming at this from this particular angle. As a Councillor who has sat on Plans Panels for a few years now, I can safely say that I have never come across an application that would have been better for the people of Leeds if it had had anything like automatic planning permission on brown field sites – not one have I come across that would have been better without the hard work and input of Members and officers representing the communities of Leeds, and also with tremendous input often from residents' groups.

That does not improve the planning process. That does not involve housing delivery in this city. It is the keeping the door open to low quality development and I think I would admit in the legislation it starts off small but anyone who has ever looked at land use policy and urban policy in Britain over the last 40 years will see that things often start small and end up very big and we have got a lot of brown field ambitions in this city and the last thing this city needs is automatic planning permissions on any brown field site.

Looking out though that really does take me to the starter homes, the affordable starter homes and, as Councillor Lewis has pointed out, they are not really very affordable, are they, for anyone. I think we all represent communities, particularly on this side of the Chamber, where £250,000 for a house is not so much a king's ransom as an emperor's ransom and I would urge all Members of this Chamber to have a look at what this policy means, replacing the fast bulk of socially available rented property for expensive starter homes would be disastrous for the city of Leeds, absolutely disastrous.

I want to give you, please, I urge Members to look at some of the analysis there is. I would – and I do not like using props; however, Shelter, those fine folk at Shelter have done some work. I do not know if you can see *that*. (*document held up*) If you have got a family on the national living wage that the Government has talked so much about, that is where those starter homes are affordable. Red is not a good thing for you guys in this matter. There are tiny amounts of yellow – tiny amounts of yellow. Those homes are not affordable for the people we often represent and I think that is unfair, unjust and extremely unwise.

I urge colleagues to think that Planning decisions will last for lifetimes. We live in a city that is still dealing with the consequences of the 19th Century. Large scale development without planning permission that is ill-judged in its tenure types will take decades to sort out and unravel and, as Councillor Lewis has pointed out,

this is all about housing delivery at all costs. Well, it will not wash, it will not deliver the sensible, sustainable communities that this city needs. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Anderson to sum up.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Lord Mayor, before commenting on the individual contributions that have been made, I think today has actually shown the good thing about Council when we have a good debate putting forward issues – we might not agree on them but I think it is important that we do have debates like this and I think today has been an example of where this Council Chamber has shown that we can have a good debate on things.

In respect of what has been raised, Richard – Richard seems to think probably a bit in the Corbynista way that centralised control is the best way to do absolutely everything.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Nobody has ever called me that before, Barry.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: You are starting to look a bit like him!

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: He also mentions sustainability. When was the last time we had an application being refused on a green field site on sustainability grounds because it was not environmentally sustainable or socially sustainable? When was the last time we did that?

Lisa, you talked about the cuts that were in the Health Service.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: That was not consultation.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: I was not talking about that, I was talking about housing and you were talking about your one, fine, you can have a little conversation to yourself; we were talking about housing not about the particular cuts you talked about there.

Councillor Carter pointed out that you have got the responsibility, you have got to accept that whatever happens at the end of the day it was your decision to do what you did. At the end of the day you might be proved right, OK, but you have got to accept that if you are willing to take the plaudits you have got to take the brickbats as well if it starts going wrong.

In terms of Councillor Blackburn, he emphasised the need to be flexible and also the need for the review. John Procter highlighted basically what has been happening. The officers have got their way, they can actually start doing a bit more. Are they doing enough? I am not asking you to publicly state it but go back and ask your officers to start delivering more on what you said you want them to do, but are you getting them to do so?

We have also heard about the number of two bedroom houses. That, surely, must be a concern to you in terms of what is happening in that respect.

Councillor Latty highlighted the amount of congestion and on commuting and how it is bad for everyone – man, woman, child. Commuting is not good for your health because it is very stressful driving along stop, start, and I know from personal experience driving long distances does lead to lung problems with the amount of fumes that you are breathing in all the time and that is not good for people's health.

In terms of Colin, we maybe did not vote against the Core Strategy but that was for one simple reason – unless we had a Core Strategy it was a free for all with the developers and that was the decision we took for good or for bad. When you are wanting to lead it is far better you make the correct decision than necessarily the popular decision in terms of what you are doing, and I do agree that the numbers are wrong.

In terms of Councillor Leadley's contribution, yes, his Arthur Daly economics, I do not think he was talking about any past Chancellor there but he might have been for all I know.

In terms of Councillor Gruen's comments, again raising these health concerns – just speak to Councillor Illingworth. He will tell you how for years and years and years he has been trying to raise health issues in terms of the planning and been getting nowhere. He has not been listened to and he has proved in the part, particularly over the Children's Hospital, that he is someone who should be listened to when it comes to health related matters.

In terms of Councillor Dobson, OK, you have consulted, you have consulted and you have consulted but have you listened and actually done something and responded back...

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor, we are on a red light.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: ...to the application. Thank you, Lord Mayor, thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I am now going to call for the vote.

The first vote is on the amendment in the name of Councillor Richard Lewis. *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED.

That now becomes the substantive motion and we will vote again. *(A vote was taken)* The vote is CARRIED.

ITEM 18 - WHITE PAPER MOTION – WELFARE REFORM

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

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Some quick question and answer sessions. Do tax credits need reforming? Yes. Is this the right way to do it? No. Do we need new ideas and a debate about tax credit reform? Yes. Is a tax credit budget sustainable? No. Should we support hardworking families who do the right thing? Yes. Will these present proposals do that? No, they will not.

Now let us see if I can get through this as quickly as I can do. All of you will be receiving one of *these* if you have not already. It shows how your National Insurance and your tax is spent and it will tell you dah-di-dah, welfare takes up 25% of every penny you pay in National Insurance and tax. In contrast health is less, pensions are less but when you come to housing it is 1.5%, so there needs to be a debate about whether we should be spending more on public housing and less on welfare. That is a discussion and that is a debate that we need.

Are our tax credits sustainable? Well, if you look at some of the figure from the Benefit and Tax Credit Expenditure Growth and it gives you figures going back to

1951 to 1952, nearly £17bn was spent at that particular point at today's prices. We are up at £207bn in terms of the benefit and tax credit expenditure budget.

Why is that important? 1951/52 was the start of the results of the Beveridge Report. Now, I do not know if people have read the Beveridge Report, I have read the Beveridge Report. His idea and proposal was that it was a pay-in system, you took out from it from time to time – not really supportive of a means tested approach. That is why you got a National Assistance Act which was to be a small proportion, typically a safety net for people. That is not what Beveridge envisaged and I think he would be turning in his grave if he saw how complicated and how means-tested the benefit system has gone.

Indeed, if you look at the statistics again, if we look at DWP and HMRC spending in 2001/2 that was at £112bn. At this particular point it is up to £207bn. It is not sustainable at those particular rates. We cannot continue to have a Welfare budget that is basically out of kilter.

The Tax Credit System, can it be reformed? What are the suggestions and what are the proposals in terms of the Tax Credit Reform System? People may have had a look at what Frank Field had to say on this particular matter and Frank Field is somebody who understands the benefits and welfare system probably better than anyone else and his suggestion is that the present proposals in front of us are not acceptable and that they need trimming, they need adjusting, we need to look at other ways of making those particular savings. He says:

“The first step, the sheer complexity of the system must be addressed, hence the appeal of the Government's higher wage, lower tax, lower welfare approach for it is impossible within the current system to remove tax credits from top earners without hurting those at the bottom. The Chancellor must simplify the system so resources can be channelled towards making work pay for those who would otherwise be toiling for a life in poverty.”

At this particular point there are some practical mechanisms that Frank Field is suggesting; I think we need to visit those in practical terms to see what can be done.

In terms of the savings there are already going to be savings anyway with the new higher minimum wage, with the fact that you are in a situation where if the child care pledge that the Government has committed itself to actually does create the outcomes that it is looking for, at that point you are already going to get savings within the tax credit system.

There are some other suggestions and some other proposals. We would say that reversing the increase in the Inheritance Tax threshold would save £3.4bn. Just to be particularly popular with pensioners you need to look at the over-indexation of earnings for the State pension that was agreed in the last Parliament. Basically at this particular point there are choices that can be made.

What we are saying in a nutshell is that we are in a situation where we cannot go on as we are at this particular point, we have to look at new ways and new mechanisms. What we are attempting to do is promote a debate and look at the practical solutions to this particular problem because if we are going to get more money into affordable housing and other areas then we have to look seriously at a Welfare budget that is 25% of all money that is taken in taxation and National

Insurance contributions and we need to look at better ways of focusing that. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. A lot of politicians when they are in Parliament and they are in power and they get past the first term and they have done most of their reform and they get to the second term, they all start thinking generally about *grands projets*, don't they? They want to have something to leave behind that shows how great a politician they were, what fantastic vision they had, and most of them rely on built environment stuff like Canary Wharf or something – Francois Mitterand with La Defense.

Anyway, it seems that Gideon, Mr Osborne, his focus on having a surplus in the economy is his *grand projet* and unfortunately he is going to take us all like the pyramid builders and their slaves to the very ultimate of completion of this project and I am afraid it is the British public who are going to be facing the cost of his ambition.

Tax credits. He wants to have a high wage, low welfare economy. Well, do you know what, so do we all but the point is, how do you get there? Do you just start believing in your own rhetoric and do you start at ground zero and say right, I want a surplus in 2020 and I am going to get there no matter what I have to do to get there and no matter who I have to damage to get there. I am thinking about people like you, because I go to the LGA and I listen to my colleagues who are on Tory Councils and run a lot of those Tory Councils and the letter that Councillor Blake was talking about today, the response, he gets my applause, that Tory Council Leader, because some of the waffle that comes from Westminster talking about how economics is going to go work out as they want it to work out, it is just not going to wash.

As far as we are concerned when we are talking about the high wage low economy, we do not just end up having a private sector that goes, "OK, we will pay more money, thanks very much." The living wage is going to get brought in. The living wage, basically it will only benefit about half of those people that are going to be affected by tax credits. When I say benefit, I do not mean compensate. If they get £1,000 taken off them it might give them £300 back but they are still £700 short.

When it comes to income tax allowances as well the same is true. That is only going to benefit about a third of those people that are going to be affected by tax credit changes and, once again, the amount that gets taken off the tax credit is not going to be wholly compensated by that measure, so it is actually being dishonest and unfortunately you do not do the policy until you have done the maths and this, like the Public Health cuts, is another example of we are going to have this policy and we are going to make it work. It might work for them on a balance sheet but it does not work for the taxpayer and it does not work for society because there are plenty of people now, they are not just looking at the Council estate down the road where they go, "Oh well, them lot, they don't work hard enough do they, they're not like us" – actually this is every single person is going to have a neighbour next door to them that is going to be affected by this.

Thank God for the House of Lords, that is all I will say. Unfortunately, shamefully – it is the only place we have got Parliamentarians any more – shamefully it has to be said the Labour Party peers did not support the motion that was put forward by the Lib Dem peers which would have actually killed this. That is the shameful thing about it because at the end of it, it feels you sort of agree as well but you just want to go a little bit slower.

Anyway, it just does not make sense and I am feeling that we are getting to the same point as we did in the 1980s when we are starting to see some polarisation of thinking because Corbyn has turned up, hasn't he, but this very much feels like Norman Lamont and his three million unemployed when he said it was a price worth paying to save the British economy. It feels like those thousands and thousands of families that are not going to have the money, the tax credits, are the price worth paying for Gideon's surplus benefit. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I ask Councillor Ann Blackburn to move an amendment.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Yes, thank you, Lord Mayor. I wish to move an amendment to delete the words "accepts the necessity of welfare reform but". This is because I think stating this can give the wrong message to the public bearing in mind that some of the reforms are going to affect them, leaving them worse off. They may believe that we as a Council are in favour of these reforms where in fact many of the Council Members are seriously concerned about them.

The Government should incentivise people to work and tax credits are one way to do this where people are in low paid jobs. The tax credit changes will not do this but will help the wealthiest 4% of the population and penalise the people who need tax credits most. It is not like Robin Hood, who robbed the rich to pay the poor, but the exact opposite. With this the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. I hope that you will support my amendment. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn to second.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: I formally second and reserve the right to speak.

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

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Firstly, can I just say that we did ask the MBIs for support on our original White Paper so that we might have a cross party resolution that supported the many Leeds people who will lose out in April next year when these cuts hit.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: What was wrong with ours?

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Unfortunately, Councillor Finnigan thought that it was a necessity that welfare is cut. We on this side of the Chamber certainly do not agree that the £12bn of cuts are a necessity and I only hope that the people of Morley realise where his loyalties lie.

We are repeatedly told that the whole reason for the austerity measures are to reduce the deficit. Well, hello, it is not working and these savage cuts must be reconsidered.

Lord Mayor, I have to say with the welfare cuts so far all we have had is a story of broken pledges and false promises. First of all, David Cameron's broken promise – actually he made this promise in Leeds at a Question Time recording just before the General Election. When asked whether he would cut child and working tax credits he replied, "No, I do not want to do that." When pushed even harder to give a cast iron answer on child tax credits he replied, "It is not going to fall." Well, what happened?

I think it is important to note from the outset that the Government's line that their national living wage will make up the shortfall is a fantasy. Let us get one thing straight – it is not a living wage. From April 2016 the national minimum wage will be set at £7.20, nowhere near the £8.25 that constitutes a real living wage.

Leeds City Council is in fact far ahead of the Government when it comes to paying the living wage and from next April our lowest rate of pay will be 76 pence more than national guidelines. Huge numbers of families will still lose out enormously, something Councillor Yeadon will touch on shortly, and on average three million recipients of tax credits will lose £1,350 per year.

This is all part of a broader attack on the low paid and the vulnerable in Leeds. The increased minimum wage is not available to under 25s. The benefit cap is reduced by £6,000 per year. This is now expected to affect 1,500 families in Leeds rather than the 300 who are currently affected.

They are also planning to cut the Housing benefit for under 21s. The Government continues to set the wrong priorities and failing to meet their own deficit reduction targets and forcing low paid people in Leeds to pay the price, meanwhile cutting inheritance tax for the wealthiest 4% costing a billion pounds, and cutting the rate of Corporation Tax when the UK already had the lowest rate in the G20, costing £2.47bn a year by 2020 and cutting the top rate of income tax, a cut for millionaires.

All this is having a catastrophic effect on the ground in Leeds. 20,306 people received food through a food bank or a food parcel last year. Children accounted for up to 47% of all food parcel recipients across this city, 11% more than the national average and, according to the Trussell Trust, 22% of food bank users are referred as a result of their low income.

The solution to this is not further cuts to vital in-work benefits affecting people in all our wards. We have examples of people who will be affected such as teaching assistants...

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar, we have got a red light, could you would finish the sentence please.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you. I hope to see this White Paper amendment supported by other parties in this Chamber today to help us fight together against these tax credit cuts and stand up for hardworking residents of Leeds. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon to second.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to second the amendment in the name of Councillor Coupar and I would start by acknowledging something that the Conservative Government has achieved with these proposals, and that is bringing together the most unlikely alliance of people protesting against this abominable suggestion. You have got Barnardo's, you have got the Children's Society, trade unions, the House of Lords, you have got religious leaders, Charlotte Church and Boris Johnson, you have got the Labour benches and you have got some unlikely right-wing allies including think tanks and MPs. Indeed, today Conservative MP Stephen McPartland is boycotting a Treasury Minister visit in his own constituency because he will not talk to him about the cuts to tax credits. Conservative MP Heidi Allen even used her maiden speech as an opportunity to attack her own Government policy to warn that the cuts were too hard and too fast and that something must give. She even went further and said that the Prime Minister had asked us that everything we do must pass the family test. Cutting tax

credits before wage rises does not achieve that. Showing children that their parents would be better off by not working at all does not achieve that. Sending a message to the poorest and most vulnerable in our society that we do not care does not achieve that either. I do not think I will ever have the opportunity to say that again but I could not agree more with Heidi. It is just unfortunate that her vote did not reflect her views.

Even the Adam Smith Institute and the Institute of Economic Affairs also criticised the Government proposals. Sam Bowman, Deputy Director of the Adam Smith Institute, said, "Working tax credit is the best form of welfare we have and cutting them would be a huge mistake." He went on to say, "When it is working families at the bottom of the income distribution that are being hardest hit, it is hard to say that we are all in this together. We urge the Chancellor to rethink these cuts and find savings elsewhere instead"

We all know this is going to impact on families and therefore children. We are already hearing anecdotal evidence that the need for debt advice in our Children's Centres is rising as at the same time the numbers of families able to afford a full-time child care place has fallen by around a third and this is before these particular cuts are even implemented.

A recent study into the changes by the Resolution Foundation think tank states that the tax credit cuts and other benefit cuts will push 200,000 children into poverty next year. We already have 30,000 children in Leeds living in poverty. By 2020 at least an extra 300,000 children will be in this position, rising to 600,000 once all policy measures have come into effect.

The report found that those children affected by cuts would be predominantly from working households and that poverty would dramatically increase. Let us not forget that these tax cuts are there to top up the income of low paid workers with additional payments for those with children, being intended to incentivise people into work and also to fight child poverty.

I am sure we all agree that there is the need for a real living wage and we should not be subsidising big corporates who are under paying their staff. However, this cannot be rectified by plunging hard working and already hard pressed families deeper into poverty. A total of 7.7 million children in the UK are from families in receipt of some form of tax credits and 95,600 of these children live in Leeds. This figure has fallen by 15,000 in Leeds...

THE LORD MAYOR: We have a red light, Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: OK, thank you. What I will ask the Chamber is that we should not defend the indefensible and I would call on all my colleagues across the Chamber to join the unlikely alliance with Boris and Charlotte and support the amendment. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I call now on Councillor Lamb to move the third amendment. I am going to be confused shortly!

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, to listen to the opposition and Councillor Coupar in particular, you would think the end of the world was nigh, that all the prophecies they made about a million jobs being lost over the last five years have come true, but not one of them has had the courtesy to mention today the unemployment figures that came out this morning, the fact that we found today between July and September 103,000 fewer people are out of work. We are now at a record high level of employment *(interruption)*, unemployment is falling...

THE LORD MAYOR: Will you let him speak please.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am sure you will add on the extra bit of time at the end.

THE LORD MAYOR: It was ten seconds, just get on with it.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: You can do a lot in ten seconds, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Just get on.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Not only that, wages are rising. None of them have had the courtesy to point that out, they want to take credit for everything that is going wonderfully well in this city; they never acknowledge the job this Government has done in putting the mess that they left behind right. (*interruption*)

Lord Mayor, turning to specifically, we are very close to being able to agree with Councillor Finnigan's paper. I stand here as someone who fully understands the importance of a welfare system. I know from growing up what a difference £5 a week or £10 a week can make to a lot of families and so I am not someone who is standing here, this is not the caricature of the Conservative Party that is only interested in the rich. It is not the Conservative Party I have been proud to be a member of for the last 20 years and it is not the party I recognise at all. We are absolutely interested in trying to help the most vulnerable in our society and, for Councillor Walshaw, one of the reasons we are most interested in the 17th, 18th and 19th Centuries was because it was predominantly the Conservative Party that was helping to lift people out of poverty.

In terms of tax credits, Lord Mayor, Gordon Brown's tax credit system has to be the most expensively assembled poverty trap in the history of the world. It is a nightmare for people to try and get out and get on. I will read you something which I am sure you will agree with about tax credits:

"It has actually had the effect of subsidising wage levels, which is not good for public spending, it is actually not good for long term economics."

That was Alistair Darling, the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, who agrees with many, welfare needs reforming urgently. The drive to get to a high employment, high wage, low welfare economy is absolutely the right thing to do. Where this Government has fallen short, and we are not afraid to say it on this side, we do not agree with what they are doing about tax credits and we are happy to say that. The problem is, how do you get the transition from where we are now to where we need to be and that is where they have got it wrong. Nobody has mentioned yet, the Government has been pretty clear they want to do something to put this right and I strongly suspect come the Autumn Statement something will be done to put it right, but the idea that you can stand and the proposal from Councillor Coupar is to do absolutely nothing, to do nothing about welfare, to keep paying the welfare, to keep people trapped in poverty. That is not good for anybody and it is something we all note often. The people that have been represented time after time, year after year, decade after decade by Labour politicians are the people that are suffering the most because they do nothing to help them, they have got no solutions to offer and while it is a shame we could not find a form of words that everyone could agree on here, because I think that is not that much between us, it is just a shame that Labour have got absolutely nothing to offer to try and help those people who desperately want to get on, desperately want to move forward in their lives, do not want to be trapped on

welfare for their entire lives. They want to work, they want to do the right things and this Labour Party has got nothing for those people. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Buckley.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. In seconding this amendment can I just say something very similar to what Councillor Lamb was just saying and assure Councillor Finnigan and his Group that we all actually want the same thing here, as has been said. We want to help the poor and we all know that the Chancellor is going to do something about this problem in the next week or two and is working on bridging the gap between the reduction in credits and increased income and that this will be soon announced, so we are all on the same side in trying to solve this problem.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: You must know something we don't then.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: We all want the same thing for the poor and the vulnerable. We all want to advance their incomes and the standards of living and, to be honest, it is just, as we were saying earlier, that the Conservatives have always been better at doing this. We have been the best at providing ongoing solutions over all the years and the centuries, whether it is the 18th or the 19th or the 21st.

COUNCILLOR: You are joking.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: If you want to talk about the poor, join the Labour Party but if you want to help the poor, join us in doing the right thing and keep on helping them to do it. (Applause) (interruption)

Just to get back to the subject of Leeds, which is supposed to be what we are talking about, let us remind ourselves about...

THE LORD MAYOR: OK, can we let him carry on, please. Can we allow him to continue.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: It must be another 20 seconds, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: No.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Let us just remind ourselves how the people of Leeds have been doing over the last six years. Unemployment is down, employment is up, private sector jobs are up by 12,000...

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Child poverty is up.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: ... the average income tax is down by £825 a year, wages are up by 3.5% and the National Living Wage will be up by a total of £5,000 a year, wages are up by 3.5% and the National Living Wage will be up by a total of £5,000 a year.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: It is not a living wage. I defy you to live on it.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Free childcare, 30 hours under tax free allowance will be £11,200 per year. The same people who are benefiting from this, the people of Leeds, these people are outperforming the people of Manchester and Birmingham and Edinburgh as a place for growing businesses.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: You can say it as much as you want, nobody's believing it.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: They are doing it. How many times have we got to say this, Councillor Coupar said, "Oh, no, we do not want to reduce anything, we will go on spending." Six years ago the country had a deficit of £150bn which is 10% of GDP. The country was bankrupt and if we went on as she would like to do we will go down the tube in six months.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: You are well down it, you are missing your own targets.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: It is not fair to leave the next generation to pay off all these bills. The young people of the future, not today...

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: They still cannot pay them off.

THE LORD MAYOR: OK, that is enough.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: He is talking to me, Lord Mayor, he expects an answer.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: In that time...

THE LORD MAYOR: Could we just let him finish?

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: In that time for every £4 spent by the Government they had to borrow £1, all to be paid back later on by the next generation and the tax credit system at the time, as we have heard from all sides, was ballooning out of control, nine out of ten families being able to claim tax credit, including Members of Parliament. Just ridiculous.

Alistair Darling, as Councillor Lamb referred to, I think he must have written this bit for me, he did say that it had the effect of subsidising employers and he was absolutely right and how he finished his remarks was actually by saying, "Well, we just did not foresee it at the time." This is the unintended consequences, absolutely. The Labour Party would have us believe that destitution stalks the land and I have to say Councillor Golton more or less said the same thing.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could you please make your final sentence, please.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor, I have great pleasure in seconding this amendment and we need to help the poor as soon as possible.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I always like listening to Councillor Buckley's views on the Conservative Party. What is said is that he actually believes that that is how they are and that is what it is about.

Councillor Finnigan's White Paper is short and to the point and says it all. It recognises that reform is needed and I think generally speaking we see that, but also that these proposed cuts are not the acceptable way. I think Councillor Lamb was saying he is almost there himself in thinking that and it is just a shame that Councillor Coupar could not sign up to that so we could join with those who are genuinely opposed to these cuts to tax credits, but want to divide again rather than unite.

We might not all agree with the welfare reforms that were implemented during the last Parliament but a lot of them were designed to incentivise people back into work, support them getting jobs, help them stay in work, particularly families with children to include things like help with childcare costs.

One of the key policies that the Liberal Democrats brought to the Coalition was the year on year increase in the threshold at which people started paying tax and that meant that people kept more of the money they earned so work paid. The whole point was to increase the disposable income of low paid working people.

These tax credit proposals coming from this Government are going to have exactly the opposite effect. It will be taking money away from working people, away from families with children and for many, particularly families with children, work will no longer be the better option.

There have been lots of figures bandied around today but I would just like to mention one set of figures, figures from the House of Commons Library which show that over 36,000 families in Leeds will be affected, an average loss of £1,000 a household - £37m taken from the people of Leeds.

George Osborne made a great song and dance about introducing a living wage saying that that, together with increasing tax thresholds, is all part of this plan, this mantra that we now hear, the high wage low tax economy, but how is he paying for that high wage low tax economy? It is the low paid working people that will be paying for it and suffering from it.

That policy is hitting the very people who are doing what they have been encourage to do over the past five years, getting into work, supporting their families and what thanks do they get for doing that? They get their tax credits cut. In fact, they are getting no benefit from the growth in the economy that the last Coalition Government saw over the last five years. *(Applause)*

This is really giving with one hand and taking back with two. It is not good politics, Lord Mayor, but it is not even good economics. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dawson.

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I said earlier on today that actions speak louder than words and I think some of the words coming from that side are quite proficient really in terms of what they are saying and they seem to be putting forward a misleading story completely about the role of the Conservative Party.

On the Conservative home website there is a popularity rating for top Tories and following the summer budget this year the most highly rated Tory politician was George Osborne. However, he has now slumped down to a lowly eighth position and his ratings have continued to plummet. Why is this? I can tell you why, the election slogan of chaos versus competency was always false but now it seems bizarre as the only party that did not have an expenditure programme that added up was the Conservative Party. They told blatant lies about tax credits, they hoodwinked the electorate that they were competent. It was obvious that they would either raise VAT or cut working family tax credits.

A great myth put about by the Tories is that there is no alternative to tackling the deficit. Let us be clear, this is a political choice, it is not an economic necessity to cut working family tax credits. The Government has a one club approach to reducing

the deficit by cutting spending alone. Indeed, the public finance is in such good shape that they have actually managed to bring some tax cuts to selected people and Councillor Coupar has outlined some of them. Another one that she missed was hedge fund managers and the removal of Stamp Duty Reserve Tax in 2013 meant an extra £145m for the hard pressed hedge fund manager.

My own company, I work for a multinational company and this year we will be posting an extra £50m in profits for our US owners who are owned ultimately by the third richest man in the world, and the reason we are posting an extra £50m in profits is not because we have sold more, we have cut costs, we had some innovative new process or anything else. It is because George Osborne has cut the rate of Corporation Tax and it has taken our US owners a bit by surprise so we are posting a £50m extra profit. Contrast that with the thousands of people in Leeds who will be facing a cut in their tax credits this year and the misery that that will bring to them.

Our Morley and Outwood MP has resolutely voted for the reduction in working family tax credits and some people may feel that they have been duped, and there is evidence that some of her backers in May are regretting their support. Innocent people who were led astray, you could say. As an example, a Morley Councillor who was splashed over Tory leaflet after Tory leaflet backing Andrea Jenkins at the General Election...

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Is that me, Neil?

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: ...is now complaining the Tories need to change policy and that this measure is hurting hard working and vulnerable people in Morley. How ironic.

These proposals will hurt thousands of hard working people in Morley, in Leeds and all over the UK. People are now facing a reduction of up to £1,300 per annum – decent hard working people, care workers, shop workers, cleaners, service sector workers, NHS workers, local Government employees. These are the ones that will suffer.

In summary these changes are not an incentive to work but the opposite. I expect George Osborne's popularity may plunge further on the Conservative popularity ratings when he does a U-turn on tax credits and he may continue his fall from eighth place down into the relegation zone. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. During the General Election we were treated, if that is the right word, to Tory Ministers and their Shadows criss-crossing the country and attempting to persuade people that they were the champions of hard working families. In fact there were times when they could not actually open their mouth without using the phrase "hard working families". You got the odd occasion where the people would be saying "Would you like a cup of tea?" and they said, "Yes, like any hard working family."

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: You still think it is funny.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Anyway, it did not last, did it? It did not last and I will give you a couple of examples now of how George Osborne is helping out hard working families.

Let us look at the latest proposals for cutting tax credit. Let us talk about a minimum wage family and there are a lot of those about and that is a one earner, two

children. They will get a boost from the living wage and I am not saying they will not, and that boost will be about £728 a year - not to be sneezed at. They will also get about an £80 rise in an increase from personal tax allowance, a good Liberal Democrat policy, that one, but by the time George has taken their tax credit away, they will have a net loss of £1,046. That is on an income of £12,000 a year. That is a huge slice out of somebody's income and yet we are simply saying oh, we need to do this, we need to make these people pay for sorting out the deficit.

Let us look at somebody else as well. Let us look at a two earner family on about £18,000 a year, and that is about the average for the manual side. They do slightly better out of minimum wage because they get about £1,061 from the living wage and again about £80 from personal allowance, but George still has managed through the tax credits so they end up with a net loss of £903. I have to say to you, this would never have happened when the Liberal Democrats were in Government.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: We miss you already, Colin.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: You are smiling over there but I cannot let you get away because you – not you personally but your peers, your Government in waiting down in London, had the opportunity to do something about this. The Liberal Democrats and the cross-benchers in the Leeds put in what was called a murder motion which would have stopped this dead, there would have been no more discussion, this would have been the end of it. Could you bring your peers to support it? No. Corbyn's all embracing whatever you want to call it policy goes straight out the window. Why? Because you could not bring yourselves to vote with the Liberal Democrats. So what happens? You pass a motion in the Lords which does slow it down but all it has done is said let us just put it off for a little while and George, please can you do something nice for a few more people. That is not what it is about.

Councillor Buckley, I always enjoy listening to Councillor Buckley because he has taken on the role of apologist for the Conservative Government. In the old days it used to be Peter Gruen's job (*laughter*).

All this talk, I am quite happy, I like the knock about and all the fun of it, all this talk about some of the Conservatives ...

THE LORD MAYOR: Excuse me, you have got a red light, Councillor Campbell. (*Applause*) Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. What I wanted to do is give a personal view. I want to give you a personal view of today. What we need to bear in mind is that tax credit expenditure trebled in real terms between 1999/2000 and 2010/11. That was a massive trebling in real terms of the money that was spent by the last Labour Government on this particular thing.

Are these current proposals fair? No. Categorically no. What has been set out is not fair so what would I do, because we have heard a lot of talking today but I have not heard anybody – maybe one or two people have come up but we have not had a lot of people coming up with what is the alternative, what could we do to try and help things through.

What would I do? I would say that these changes should apply to new claimants so that people know when they are coming in to get it for the first time these are the procedures. If you are an existing claimant then I do not think they should apply immediately.

I would also look to try and, like the Government have done and are going to be doing on universal credit, introduce a fund just like the administration has done in terms of utilising the money for Council Tax and various other things. You are looking at the cases that need the help most and I think some funds should be made available to try and do something about that.

What I would also do is probably taper them coming in, so that maybe this year you only maybe get 70%, 80% of what you were expecting and cut it down in a managed way. These are the ways to me to be constructive in moving these things forward.

I would also introduce the basic rate tax free allowance now. I would introduce it now. I accept that it is not going to undo every single penny but all of these measures together, the cumulative effect of all of them, each small tool in its own special way will have a positive effect on what we are doing.

To turn round to what Councillor Coupar said, really have the Labour Party learned nothing as a result of the last General Election? Did you not listen to some of the things that were said?

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: I think the public might learn something from the Conservatives.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: For example, I will tell you categorically one of the reasons you lost the General Election was because you were getting tied up with the Scottish National Party who did for you because they were so anti austerity that some of our candidates and some of your Shadow Cabinet Members could not agree with them and they were being pushed into a corner. You did not learn. There are a lot of good Labour politicians down in Parliament who do understand that we need to start cutting back on the way that we have got these tax credits and various other things.

What I would say to you, quite honestly, is why did you not want a consensus? You said that you wanted Councillor Coupar to write down. I would suggest it would have been far better suggesting that you get the Chief Executive or your Leader to write down. Surely you believe that your Leader has more chance of convincing the Government to look into something than anybody else here, to be quite frank.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: The last time I put that in my White Paper you criticised us for it.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Councillor Blake has got a far greater chance of being heard, as has the Chief Executive, than us here. If you had gone for a consensus motion (*interruption*) chances are you would have been able to be successful. You have chosen not to go for the consensus motion today. We were all willing to look at what was before us, give way on this, give way on that, come forward.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: No they were not.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: You chose to go forward and be aggressive start trying to worry people beyond all recognition.

THE LORD MAYOR: Red light.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: You have chosen that route, as I have said before. Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: OK, can I now call upon Councillor Finnigan to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is across our White Paper motion is one that everybody can sign up to, I do not think it is unduly controversial and just to put Councillor Coupar clear about it, what we actually said was that welfare reform was a necessity, not welfare cuts. Indeed, if we look at the Labour Party's history and the time it was in Government 2008, Employment Support Allowance introduced by the previous Labour Government in an attempt to shed a million people off incapacity benefit. The bedroom tax was initially introduced by the Labour Government in 2008, they called it the Local Housing Allowance but it is the same thing.

The reduction in Housing benefit from under 25s was brought in under the last Labour Government so there is some acceptance on the Labour side that there needs to be some welfare reform and they were not prepared to commit to that. I do not know whether it is Corbyn, I do not know what it actually is but at this particular point whatever we have got at this stage does not work and we need to change.

This is not a way to achieve that reform and that reform that is entirely and utterly necessary and, indeed, the Labour White Paper is long on rhetoric and short on ideas and what we want is a constructive discussion about how we move this issue forward.

This is the wrong way of doing it. There is no doubt at all and some academics will tell you that wage levels have been suppressed because this is a public subsidy that has been poured year after year after year for your Amazons and your Starbucks and other people who use it as an opportunity to pay those lower wages.

What we do need is some genuine reform, we need to change the way that this whole process works. We are in a situation where we need to make sure that those who take the right choices take those constructive choices, who are striving to do better for themselves and their family, are helped and supported and the tax credit system does not do that in its entirety. We need to look at better ways of actually doing that.

Universal credit, despite some concerns, actually incentivises. It actually says to somebody you will not be passive, you will be active in trying to resolve the challenges that you face. Indeed, the City Council in terms of using its additional funds in terms of its Council Tax reduction is already looking at doing that and making sure that people are proactive rather than passive.

I suppose in the final analysis we might as well look at what this gent says. He says:

“As a first step the sheer complexity of the system must be addressed, hence the appeal of the Government's higher wage, lower tax, lower welfare approach, for it is impossible within the current system to remove tax credits from the top earners without hurting those at the bottom. The Chancellor must simplify the system so resources can be channelled

towards making work pay for those who would otherwise be toiling for a life in poverty.”

That is from Frank Field, Labour MP for Birkenhead. I think we can all learn something from what he is saying – this does not work, the proposals that are coming in do not work as well, we need to start from scratch and build a system that is reformed and does what we want it to do. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I am now going to call for various votes. The first one is the amendment in the name of Councillor Ann Blackburn. *(A vote was taken)* That motion was LOST.

The second vote is on the second amendment in the name of Councillor Coupar. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

The third vote, the third amendment in the name of Councillor Lamb. *(A vote was taken)* That vote is LOST.

Finally, it is the vote on the substantive motion. *(A vote was taken)* The vote is CARRIED.

PROCEDURAL MOTION IN RESPECT OF ITEM 19

THE LORD MAYOR: If we can move on to the next item, we have got a procedural motion. Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Can I move under the provision of Council Procedure Rule 14.10 that leave of Council be given to withdraw the motion in my name on Tax Credits.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: I second.

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

SUSPENSION OF COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES/LEAVES OF COUNCIL

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood – we are on page 28 now.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Selby.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: I second, Lord Mayor.

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

ITEM 19 – REPLACEMENT WHITE PAPER - FRACKING

THE LORD MAYOR: The replacement White Paper, Fracking, can I ask Councillor Lewis to propose this.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I suppose I was just wondering whether I should go for raising people's temperatures and the heating within this room by being confrontational; I felt the best thing to do was actually to be consensual on this one – I am sorry people are disappointed in that but it is late in the afternoon.

From reading the amendments I think that we are more or less all of a similar view on this issue about fracking. We might have certain reservations on the wording and what have you but I think that between both the White Paper and the two amendments we are actually really saying the same thing.

Just a few points I would like to make. I think all of us realise representing a city with a lot of mining heritage how doing things under the ground can cause major problems not necessarily when you do them but decades and even centuries afterwards. Not so long ago I remember a huge hole appearing in the middle of Tong Road out in the Blackburns' ward, where old mine workings had been long, long abandoned. It makes you think that pumping water at pressure under the ground with chemicals, with sand, not knowing really what the result is going to be is incredibly foolhardy.

I would say to anybody who might have any kind of reservations about fracking, whether that be about the volume of water that is actually used in the process, whether it is about contamination of the water supplies that are underground, whether it is about air pollution that you might find as a result of the gases that are released, even about small earthquakes occurring as a result of the works taking place, if you have got any reservations I do not think that you can support where the Government is going on fracking. You cannot support a fast track approach to this industry. You cannot think that it is something that this country can almost just embrace absentmindedly without full consideration of what the risks are, what the dangers are as well as what the benefits are.

If anybody has any concerns about how this could affect the city, any part of the city's boundaries, you should vote for this White Paper to oppose fracking. My colleagues are speaking about how it is impacting or could potentially impact on their wards and I think some of us could say "Well, it is not affecting mine." It could. The effect is not just restricted to where the work is going on.

There is a concern within Barry's amendment about is there an alternative. I think there is an alternative. The alternative is actually about the renewables industry which has been effectively – did you get solar panels put on your house, Barry?

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Yes.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I thought you were a renewables man. The renewables industry has actually been absolutely scuppered by what the Government has done in terms of feed-in tariffs, in what it has done to undermine all the eco initiatives that have been in place for a number of years.

There is an alternative to fracking; it is the renewables industry, it is about solar panels, it is about things that can be done by every individual and that can benefit every individual – not fracking, which actually only benefits a few large companies and leave us with the bill to pay for it all.

I urge you all to support the White Paper. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Renshaw to second.

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: Lord Mayor, we need no lectures from Central Government about how industrial development can mean jobs and help to our economy but what we need are clearer, safer businesses for our residents to work in. The last scale mines closed in our ward 40 to 50 years ago but many residents are still feeling the impact of coalmining in their daily lives.

The evidence on fracking is still developing. We know that it can have an impact on seismic activities. The earthquakes in Blackpool should be enough proof of that. We know that fracking is dangerous. Statistics from the TUC show that fracking workers in the United States are more than seven times more likely to die on the job than other types of workers. We know that fracking, often by failures in construction or machinery, can have an impact on safe and clean drinking water.

Lord Mayor, the attempts to force fracking on communities through the awarding of large exploration licences and through short and tightly enforced timescales to Councils are exceptionally concerning - that is why, even before we get to the ever-present threat of the Secretary of State taking planning powers away from Local Councils. How many more threats to our planning powers do we need?

This looks like Central Government making a decision from London on the failure of the North. It looks like any decision we make locally, democratically, will not meet David Cameron's desire to go all out for shale. We are not all out for shale, that is for sure.

Lord Mayor, I second Councillor Lewis's motion. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Jonathan Bentley to move an amendment.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The amendment being submitted by the Liberal Democrat Group does not delete any of the original White Paper submitted by Councillor Lewis. We share the concerns about environmental and health impacts and we are equally critical of the Government policy in this area.

Where we think this White Paper is lacking is that apart from saying it will oppose fracking and telling the Secretary of State that we oppose fracking, it does not come up with any practical ways of putting that opposition into a defensible policy.

In terms of planning policy the relevant document to consider is the Natural Resources and Waste Development Plan. At present this document includes policies on clean air and on restricting the exploitation of new coal resources, but it contains no policy on the exploitation of shale gas reserves, so we are suggesting that by having a Scrutiny Board enquiry that looks at the environmental health and other issues, the Council can come up with a reasoned policy that can be adopted and we will then be in a better position to oppose future applications from companies wishing to do it.

Other Local Authorities are taking this approach. Hull took this course of action and published their policy last week. North Yorkshire and York are currently seeking to amend their Minerals and Waste Policy and we think Leeds should be doing the same. We do not want to find ourselves the only Authority in the region without a policy and at the mercy of any fracker who wants to come in.

Apart from the environment and health issues, our view is that fracking will harm the transition to a low carbon economy and in order to meet the UK's 2030 Carbon Reduction Targets, we will need to be taking carbon out of the electricity grid and

replacing fossil based fuels with renewables. Large volumes of gas from shale coming into the market will discourage investment and commercialisation of low carbon energy technologies.

That also means that I think we as a city have got to be setting a good example of increasing our commitment to renewables, so we have the electricity from waste facility coming online soon, we have made significant investments in solar panels on Council buildings, and we hope that the Leeds Electricity Company that we are going to launch would prioritise electricity from renewable sources.

Also Leeds can set a big example in one of the biggest sources of untapped renewables in the city and that is organic and food waste. There is a huge energy resource which the Council is not doing enough to exploit, so we must start looking either as a city or a city region for funding sources for anaerobic digestion from food waste.

Lord Mayor, we do support the principles of this White Paper and our amendment is a genuine effort to make it workable. We hope it will be acceptable to the Labour Group. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Golton to second.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Fracking has come to us and it has been sold to us with lots of different benefits associated with it. I remember seeing Look North recently and there was the Conservative MP for Thirsk and Malton who took a group of his local residents to Pennsylvania and took them on a tour of the area which has got the most fracking sites on it to find out whether it worked or not, and basically he went out and he talked to the people who were doing the fracking themselves and also the residents that were affected by it and then at the end of it he said, "Well, do you know what, I think actually loads of the mistakes have already been made and when it comes here it will be perfectly all right, so do not worry."

I am afraid we do worry because whatever kind of geology they have in Pennsylvania I am afraid ours is a little bit different and stuff happens that you do not expect to happen.

Let us think about the motives for this happening in the first place as well, because this is not like the old coal mining industry, this is not something where you make some investment, it creates a huge amount of local jobs, it involves a certain amount of skills being learned by that local population who, even though it is a dirty industry, actually will get something out of it. I seem to remember at the beginning when fracking was discussed that they were all talking about, "Do you know, all those communities that embraced it you will get loads of income off this that other areas will not have so you really should think about it and take it on board."

Actually, there are very few jobs associated with fracking. Unlike conventional oil drilling and gas exploration in the North Sea where there are huge beds, whichever community takes this on it is actually a relatively short term industry and the people who are going to come in and deliver it are professionals that basically work like industry nomads and it is like a gold rush. They come into your area, they stay a little while, they take all the resources they can and then they move on. I am afraid there is no benefit whatsoever but there certainly are plenty of costs for any local community that takes on a fracking firm within their area.

The only benefit, of course, is to Central Government. This is being seen like the telecommunications mobile licences. If you remember not so long back the 3G

licences got sold for billions for nothing, for no investment whatsoever on behalf of the Government, it was free money. To a very great degree I think that they are viewing this industry in exactly the same manner, especially since the areas where the majority of the extraction is going to happen is not in their core constituencies and therefore the kick back will not be felt quite as intensely.

Lord Mayor, as far as we are concerned as a city we must be extremely emphatic, and I know that we are a very cautious Authority and that within our Development section which covers our Waste and Minerals Policy we also have a Planning Directorate which is traditionally cautious. We cannot be cautious on this point. We need to show strategic leadership and say to our people and also to our neighbours in other Authorities, it cannot happen in Yorkshire, it is not beneficial to us. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I call on Councillor Barry Anderson to move the second amendment.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: To be brief and to be quick, what I would hope, I am not asking you to necessarily amend the motion but could we not get a report back to Development Plans Panel with a policy set out in it that we can actually debate and agree a strategy for the city and take it forward and get it democratically agreed and then that to me would be one way forward in terms of trying to do something on that.

There are definitely legitimate concerns over health, ecology and the environment. There is no doubt that there are legitimate concerns being expressed and I think we need more, further clarification and more information before we can say one way or the other whether it is or whether it is not going to be safe.

At this stage it is like a lot of other things when they are being brought forward, the doom and gloom merchants who always seem to find a negative and sometimes they come to fruition and sometimes they do not.

You have also got to look as to whether in terms of degree of sustainability, how sustainable is this particular proposal going to be? One thing I do agree and I do think we need to get better consultation. We have been talking about consultation a lot today and I do think it is important that residents are properly consulted and we have proper debates with them in setting out the facts so that they can then give their considered views in terms of what is happening.

In terms of the Government's powers as well, yes, we do have some concerns that the Secretary of State is probably going to get more powers than we think might be the best thing for an area because at the end of the day the Government is saying, their Localism Agenda says that we should have more control ourselves and I think this is something that I think should be left with us.

I do agree that we need to try and look to try and see if we can get a political consensus. Again, this is a thread that has been going through a number of the debates today and we need to try and work harder I think as a Council to try and find a way of taking things forward.

One thing I do think we need more than anything else is an energy policy. There is a big void in energy policy under the previous Labour Government, who appeared to have a one trick pony – they were going for nuclear power. The Coalition, did it bring forward a coherent energy policy? No. Just now we have got David Cameron saying yes, we will go for fracking, we will go for shale and yet there is no doubt that renewables do have an important role to play, so I do think that is part

of the problem and that is why we have come forward with our amendment today, so that is where we are. Thank you very much, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wadsworth to second.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The problem with coming last on all this is a lot of it has been said of what I have written down, so I do not know why I write it down!

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Sit down then!

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: I will! I see Members putting their coats on – I do not know whether they are wanting to go home or whether they are just cold!

One thing is clear that we do need a sustainable energy supply as well and ten years ago people said that about renewables and I had a lady come up to me the other day when I was talking about solar panels, because I have to declare an interest, I am about to have solar panels fitted, and she said, “My husband says my slates are not strong enough to take the solar panels” so that is obviously a reason not to have them and things were said about renewables, windmills are going to be noisy and not generate things – now they are generating a significant amount of our power sometimes.

Fracking is a new technology and we do not know that much about it. I know as Councillor Golton said about things from America and I saw a programme about the guy in America. He seems to be now sold on it; he was not when he went to America but we just need to know more about these technologies.

I would urge you not to close the door on it and with regards to the Planning process, I think the Government said they will not take it out of our hands if we deal with it in a timely manner.

THE LORD MAYOR: They cannot hear you because your paper is on top of your microphone.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Sorry, Lord Mayor. I am not sure half of them are listening anyway. You do not want me to start at the beginning though, do you?

What we will do is we do not close the door, we do have a conversation about it and debate it, maybe with a Scrutiny inquiry, maybe through Development Plans Panel or something like that to actually bring forward a combined view that we can all agree on and, as I say, we do not close the door on the technology as such. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nagle.

COUNCILLOR NAGLE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking in support of Richard Lewis’s motion. I agree with what Richard and Councillor Renshaw have already said.

I want to focus on the impact of wildlife, nature, ecology and beauty that are threatened if fracking comes to South and East Leeds.

As I mentioned in my question at last Council, I am concerned that the geology in the UK is completely unsuitable for shale gas extraction as the events already mentioned in Blackpool show. In the UK we have a population that lives close together and, as Councillor Renshaw has mentioned, in a ten by ten kilometre

exploration block covered by both our wards you would be lucky to find a site big enough for fracking that is not a village, town, nature reserve or green space.

The Wildlife Trusts have looked in detail at the nature reserves that are included in the exploration blocks Central Government has put forward. You will not be surprised to know that there are a number of wildlife reserves that are either in or near areas where fracking could potentially be explored.

In Yorkshire, 31 Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Nature Reserves are within the licence areas, 91 sites of special scientific interest across Yorkshire are also within these licensing areas. An additional 35 nature reserves are within 500 metres of another area waiting further assessment.

In our ward both the Rothwell Country Park and Rothwell Pastures could at least in theory have fracking exploration in or near them. The Rothwell Country Park, a former colliery turned back into a nature reserve, has abundant scenic beauty and species as diverse as reed bunting, tree sparrows, willow tit and skylarks. All of these birds are classified red or amber in the Birds of Conservation Concern Review, showing how important these areas are.

Rothwell Pastures is a former railway line and manorial hunting estate that can trace its history back to William the Conqueror. Sites of water vole are not uncommon, as are cuckoos and skylarks.

It is unlikely that the custodians of these areas would let companies frack or even explore on them. This does not mean to say that nearby sites could not come along that could impact on their ecology. Perhaps that sounds farfetched but have a look at the blocks in question. If you have a good look a ten kilometres by ten kilometres exploration block covering Rothwell, SE32B, where do the Government expect companies will find shale gas that is not close to people's homes, nature reserves or existing development?

These licences are just one step towards development. With the Government's other changes it looks once the permissions to explore are granted it is pretty close to a done deal. Wouldn't it be better, given we know how eager Government is to see fracking, to have smaller, better focused exploration blocks concentrating on areas that could be suitable? That would give us something to debate about with the full knowledge of where fracking might eventually be held.

No-one thinks there will be exploration on Commercial Street in Rothwell, just as there will not be exploration in Wakefield city centre, but these are both included in the block, as are the nature reserves. This just adds confusion to confusion.

I repeat what I said before, fracking I believe is very unsuitable. There are issues with health that we do not yet understand and these must be fully explored. There is the issue of gas escaping into the atmosphere, there is the issue of gas and other heavy metals escaping into the water supply causing untold damage over the years. The wells themselves were only active for a very short period after which time they have to be capped and then managed over time. Certain people will make money, the economy won't and I urge support of Richard's motion. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn to comment.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It would be something like about 18 months ago when I was Chair of the Climate Change Working Group and we commissioned a report from a professor at Leeds University.

I was trying to figure out if Barry or Paul was on it – Barry is nodding so he remembers. Barry Anderson, Jonathan Bentley and Bill Urry and myself received that report.

In that report it highlighted the areas that were possibly likely for fracking within Leeds which all seem to be on the eastern edge of the city and south-eastern edge of the city. Oddly enough, we have just been talking about housing allocation – on some of the land where the major developments in the east of Leeds are, and housing and fracking do not mix.

The other thing we found out was that the rest of the city, because of the geology of it and the age of the stone that is there, likely as not any frackable material would have been lost thousands of years ago, so it is on that eastern edge going out to York and to Selby, it is the Vale of York, etc.

The other thing about it is we were given economic information on it. Because of the geology of this country and the fact that it is fractured already in many, many places, to actually put a station down and frack, by basically they send it and it goes up and down the layers of rock and blasts through that, it would be very difficult to do it and actually the only economic way you could do fracking in this country is oil and gas prices or energy prices would have to go up tremendously. It is ironic that the two areas of energy policy the Government has – nuclear, which they say is not subsidised but actually in the long run is the most subsidised form of energy because you have got to look after the site for thousands of years afterwards, and also this which needs an extremely large energy price to make it viable.

We are going round those areas and then removing feed-in tariff and such things like that that produce micro-energy production and also block up the waste that we have in our households, like the project that we did in East Leeds. More of that is needed so we use less energy, that is where we get security of energy, not going and doing things like this.

The fact is when they start talking about America, this is a vast flat land where they have done this and not a lot of people and where there have been people there that is where you have got the things of people's houses falling into holes and gas coming up through their taps and what have you where it has escaped. It is entirely different in a country like this that is so small.

I went to a thing the other day, which Councillor Sobel actually opened, by the Danes about the District Heating System, down at the library – I will quickly get finished before the light comes on. Funnily enough, I think they think we are backward or something in this country, they are talking by 2050 of producing their entire national energy supply – all right, it is a smaller country than Britain but their entire energy supply through renewable resources, getting rid of gas, that is the only carbon based energy they use. They are getting rid of it completely. We are 50, 60 years behind Denmark and other Scandinavian countries. It is about time we caught up with it before we kill this planet off. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis to sum up.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Lord Mayor, I was just thinking about the future for the city. It is not just about...

THE LORD MAYOR: There seems to be a problem here. I am sorry, Councillor Procter I understand you wish to speak.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: That was what was indicated, Lord Mayor. Thank you very much indeed.

THE LORD MAYOR: The reason we got it confused was because we thought you were telling us you were proposing the next White Paper.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: That as well for the next White Paper, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, thank you for calling me to speak and I promise, Councillor Lewis, I will not be long. However, as so often happens in this Council, one thing is said at one point in time and then at another it is completely ignored.

What did we start by talking about at the beginning of the White Papers? We were talking about the expansion of this city, 70,000 new homes, a whole heap of industry that is going to go with it as well and so where is the energy coming from? What are the proposals? It is not fracking and I am no fan of fracking, I will make that clear straightaway, but fracking is off the table. Nuclear – how dare you mention nuclear. We will not be having nuclear either, we will get that off the table. Where else are we going to go then? Wind? Wind power? Solar power? Microgeneration? I have got news for Councillor Blackburn, microgeneration does not do a right lot to fuel heavy industry - it does not - and heavy industry needs big, huge amounts of power and what happened last week? Emergency powers were brought into place where companies, heavy users, were paid to shut their industries down. That is the fact of it, that is what actually happened last week because we were about to have a complete national brown out with no supply of electricity to many homes in the country. That is the reality of it. That is the absolute reality.

On the one hand you cannot say let's have great expansion, 70,000 more homes for this city all of which will guzzle up energy like they do. What you cannot say is let us have additional jobs in this city, 40-50-odd thousand projected as part of the Core Strategy as well, all of which will take energy and power within those places of employment and what they goes with it is to say, well, actually, we are not quite so sure where you will get the energy from. Central Government, that is your fault, you do something about that but we are not having fracking and we are not having nuclear...

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: So what is your solution, John?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: ...and we are not having this, that and the other and all of the rest of it.

We know what the Labour Party's solution is. The Labour Party solution is to do what? Is to open up deep coal mining again. This is Corbyn's big idea for the future. Open up deep mine coal. It is the future, don't you know. It is absolutely ridiculous.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: What are you going to do, John?

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: So, what I will say, Lord Mayor, is that some people think nuclear is great, some people think fracking is great. If you are asking the question would you vote for it in your ward the answer is normally "No, I can think of a better place for it to go"...

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Frack at Wetherby.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Are you going to keep talking? Frack at Wetherby? Very amusing. Within all of that, Lord Mayor, that is the difficulty because when you have expansion you also have to have infrastructure to go with it. That is

what we said on the first White Paper of this evening and that is absolutely true of the last White Paper this evening as well, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Sorry, now Councillor Richard Lewis to sum up.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was just reminded of Ted Hanley, the one person who believes you should build 100,000 houses whereas the whole of the rest of the Council Chamber felt differently. John is the only person who really believes in fracking. It is great to meet you and understand that.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: I said three times I was not in favour of fracking.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I think we have to think about what the future is of the city and where the city's best interests lie. Is it as a city that has an energy from waste scheme in operation now doing the business, a city that actually has super insulated homes delivered by people like LATCH and Canopy, that has a compressed natural gas station serving the utility vehicles within the city which we are working on, a city that has its own energy services company, a city that actually believes in new industries, new renewable industries and actually creating jobs in those areas and looking at all the new technology that is there, or should we have a city that actually relies on what is this tired stopgap, that actually reminds me of dear old Jim Callaghan and the North Sea oil bonanza. Yes, it will just see us through under the wonderful years of the 1980s appear and look what happened then.

The thing is, fracking is just – it is a new technology but really it is an old technology. It has all the hallmarks of an old technology in that it is very worrying about what the results will be but let us not worry about those now, let us just get the money out and do the business and who cares about what happens tomorrow as long as you get that energy out. We all know there are huge concerns about it. None of us would want it in our wards and I think that means that we all stick together and actually agree that we do not want it as a City Council.

If I can just read Barry's wording:

“opposes the current exploration licences for fracking in the Leeds area until such time as concerns about health, ecology and environment have been fully addressed.”

That might be a long time, Barry. I think we have to be honest about that. I am more than happy to have discussions with all parties, I am not someone who believes in just saying right, we have got a White Paper through here, that is it. I think we should all be involved in discussing where the policy goes but for me, looking at the city now, looking at the real concerns that have been raised by people like David and Karen, we have a city where parts of it are actually threatened and where the residents feel deeply threatened by this as a proposal. It is our duty to stand behind them. I urge everybody to vote for the White Paper, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. I will now call for the vote. The first vote is on the first amendment in the name of Councillor Jonathan Bentley. *(A vote was taken)* The vote is LOST.

The second vote is the second amendment in the name of Councillor Barry Anderson. *(A vote was taken)* The vote is LOST.

We now take a vote on the motion. *(A vote was taken)* The motion has been CARRIED.

SUSPENSION OF COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES/LEAVE OF COUNCIL

THE LORD MAYOR: Now we will move on to the next item, Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I move in 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)* The vote is CARRIED.

ITEM 20 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – LIZZIE ARMISTEAD

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, now we go on to White Paper 20. I will ask Councillor Procter, please, to propose it.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lay.

COUNCILLOR LAY: Thank you, we formally second this.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Elliott.

COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. We formally support.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: I formally support.

THE LORD MAYOR: I will just call for the vote for the record. *(A vote was taken)* The motion is CARRIED.

Thank you very much for your patience.

(The meeting closed at 7.25pm)
