

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

**ORDINARY
MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

Held on

Wednesday, 13th January 2016

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
ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 13th JANUARY 2016

THE LORD MAYOR: We will now continue with the next Council meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: I will begin with Announcements.

The first one I would like to make is to offer my congratulations to Councillor Gerry Harper who has been nominated by the Labour Group to be the next Lord Mayor of Leeds. (*Applause*) If you have as much fun as I have had this year you are in for a wonderful year and one you will always remember. Enjoy it.

I would like to congratulate the following who were honoured in the Queen's New Year's Honours List. First:

Dorothy Brown CBE, services to taxpayers;
Professor Susan Price CBE, services to higher education;
Neil Clephan OBE, services to education, Roundhay School;
Councillor Keith Wakefield OBE, for political services and services to Local Government. (*Applause*)

I am just going to break a little from custom here. Please, Keith, I wish to offer my congratulations on your achievement and it is one so well deserved.

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

THE LORD MAYOR:

Jeffrey Brownhut MBE, services to the leisure and tourism industry;
Clare Harrigan MBE, services to further education and the construction industry;
Satpal Nahl MBE, services to taxpayers and public administration;
Asad Razzaq MBE, services to young people and the community in Harehills;
Hillary Willmer MBE, voluntary services to disadvantaged communities in West Yorkshire;
Mary Brewer BEM, services to crime prevention; and
Sandy Keene CBE. (*Applause*)

ITEM 1 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 11th NOVEMBER 2015

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 1 on the Agenda, Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I move that the Minutes be approved, 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 2 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE LORD MAYOR: Declarations of interest. Are there any additional declarations of interest to be made? (*None*) Thank you.

ITEM 3 – COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Communications. Chief Exec.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Just one to report that has been circulated to Members yesterday, which is a letter from George Osborne, the Chancellor, about the proposed HS2 station hub.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

THE LORD MAYOR: I would now like to call upon Councillor Charlwood for a Procedural Motion.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I will 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.

EMERGENCY MOTION – FLOODING

THE LORD MAYOR: I call upon Councillor Blake to move an Emergency Motion on Flooding. Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I hope before we start the debate on flooding you indulge me to add my very sincere congratulations to Councillor Wakefield on receipt of his OBE. I cannot think of anyone in this Chamber who is more deserving for his selfless dedication to the communities he represents but also to the whole of Leeds and beyond through his role as Leader of Council.

Moving the motion on flooding, can I sincerely welcome this opportunity, Lord Mayor, for us all to come together to respond on behalf of the people of Leeds to

the devastating effects following on from Storm Eva hitting the city over the Christmas period.

I think we started probably to get early warnings on Christmas Eve that Storm Eva was heading our way. I cannot describe to you the unbelievable scenes I witnessed in Otley on the morning of Boxing Day. I have never known the river at such spate and indeed the height the river achieved was truly unbelievable and we know with devastating consequences for people living in the immediate area of the Wharfe in Otley but along the Wharfe as it goes through the north of the city.

That was a Boxing Day none of us will ever forget, then followed by the highest surge in living memory along the River Aire, leading the river to burst its banks, wreaking chaos and havoc and incalculable damage to businesses, especially in the Kirkstall area of Leeds and the city centre.

There are so many people to thank (we will not have the opportunity to name them individually) but our thanks go to the emergency services who responded magnificently, to our colleagues in the health communities who put themselves at real risk reaching our most vulnerable. I cannot praise enough the communities of Leeds and the response that they made to these terrible events, and the complete dedication of staff from the Council; absolutely truly remarkable, right from cleansing staff coming out day after day, working hard into the night, through to the top Executive Directors – so many people who dropped all of their Christmas plans to co-ordinate the incredible response that we put together across the city. It truly is remarkable that nobody died.

The unbelievable response of hundreds of volunteers from across Leeds, and Councillor Yeadon will speak the efforts in Kirkstall later, but I have never witnessed so many people coming forward and, as a result, despite the inundation, Leeds city centre was open for business in such a short time after the event and that is a tribute to everyone, many businesses opening despite having been knee deep in silt, reopening by the New Year.

Sadly, Lord Mayor, we fear that some of the businesses that have been affected will not reopen and we know that some of the residents will be out of their homes for many months to come.

The response to events like these take a particular form. The initial response is around safety of life, major clean up, assessing the damage, assessing the impact on the infrastructure. We welcome the money that has been dedicated to Yorkshire by the Government but we know that we will require millions more. We are working tirelessly to make sure as much benefit gets out to people as it possibly can.

As of yesterday over 1,700 homes we know are affected and 519 businesses. We will continue to work round the clock to help them but we do need urgently to seek answers as to why so many parts of Leeds are without protection; why the planned scheme developed with cross-party support and with the Environment Agency for the River Aire was dropped by the Government in 2011. Most of all, we want to know what the Government, working with all of those affected, is going to do. The people of Leeds want answers, they want plans and most of all they want protection. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to second the paper in the name of Councillor Blake. I am just going to raise several things.

I represent Rothwell ward, which includes the community of Woodlesford. We are at the other end of the river. We get what goes past Kirkstall and Armley and the city centre and Hunslet and thanks to the investment that has been made over the past couple of years the flooding was the most extensive we have ever seen but there was no inundation in any property in my ward, and that is something that we need to be thankful for.

However, that should not just be the case in that one part of the city. That should have been the case throughout the city and I think my contribution to the debate hopefully is to send a plea out to Government again to say you talk about the Northern Powerhouse, you talk about devolved decision making being that which is best made because it is closest to the issue at hand – please let us decide what our priorities are. We were asking for flood defences for years. Councillor Harris, when he was Joint Leader of Council, went to see the Government and talked about flood defences. That was a Labour Minister that was in charge of it. I can remember going down to London and talking to Government and we took a delegation, and we took the business community with us, and that was a different Minister, the same set of civil servants. Unfortunately, it is those civil servants that need to be politically led and told to think differently.

The reason why we did not get our flood defences is because the formula that Government sets bases the value for money on their investment on how many homes are saved from flooding. Leeds city centre and the Kirkstall corridor may not have many homes in the flood risk area but I will tell you something, there are so many businesses there that the number of households that would be affected from flooding, we told this to Government, would be enormous and the effect on the British economy, not just our own economy or the regional economy, would be significant, but they would not change the maths, they would not change the formula to take into account the effect of flooding on business as well as on domestic properties and this is the harvest that we have reaped because of this short-sightedness. We now see a significant part of the city, an area which has been highlighted as part of us taking part in the Northern Powerhouse to build up our manufacturing strength and that is why we had that State of the City meeting to try and encourage it. Where are the sites for these areas to go into? In many cases in the city it is in the flood plain, it is going to be in Kirkstall and it is going to be in the Aire Valley.

We need to have that reassurance from the Government that they are serious about the Northern Powerhouse and that they are serious about decision-making being made at the point where it is best done and that means that we need our full flooding package now because this is not a one in a 200 year event any more, this is not a one in a 75 year event any more, which is what they were willing to pay for. This looks like it could be once in a decade and we need to make sure that we are not baling out this time in ten years' time. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Can I call on Councillor Andrew Carter to move an amendment.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. Can I begin very quickly by associating myself with Councillor Blake's comments about the honour bestowed on Councillor Wakefield – absolutely deserved, I am delighted to see his name in the list. It is a pity that more Councillors and maybe less other people that we see in the List of Honours are not recognised for the work they do over and above their normal job.

To move on to the White Paper, I will come to why we have tabled an amendment shortly but let me first of all say that I think that the work done by our employees and the staff of a whole series of other agencies, including staff in the health service, did an absolutely exemplary job over the period of time that we have had these floods. On Boxing Day I was very afeared that the Packhorse Bridge at Rodley would not be there the following day, the river was so high. Thankfully only minor flooding in Rodley on this occasion but normally when there are floods in Leeds, my ward at Rodley is extremely badly affected. This time, for reasons known to whoever and the water, it did its damage further down river.

Let me say as regards the White Paper we have no problem with any of the wording of the White Paper at all and we will gladly play our part in lobbying Government. Indeed, I have already been in contact with two Secretaries of State, two Government Departments, about the need to look at additional funding for flood defences in Leeds.

Stewart Golton was absolutely right, in 2007 the last major floods, I was Leader of the Council along with Councillor Harris, we went down on various occasions and met Ministers in the Labour Government, and subsequently with Councillor Lewis met Ministers in the Coalition Government and the original proposal were the proposals that my administration put forward to the then Labour Government.

I have to say be wary, because that scheme cannot be pushed as it is in total now because the flooding affected different areas and had different effects and we need to be very aware of the forces of nature at play here. I have listened very carefully to comments made by people who are clearly experts in the field of flooding who warn that flood defences alone and flood defences of increasing height will not save us from the problem. There has to be a whole series of other measures as well and that is why we tabled our amendment because nowhere in the resolution and from the briefings we have all had subsequently is the Council saying – the third largest Council in the country – what it is investigating, what we can do to mitigate against the effects of flooding.

We would urgently ask that you do look again at the housing numbers and even if you are not prepared to reduce those, if you look at the site locations with a new light, the light of the flooding we have just had and the effect that some of the sites you are putting forward are going to have as regards flooding in Leeds – and I look particularly at Kirkstall. If you look at one particular site, and I mention the one known as the Strawberryfields that stretches right the way on to Rawdon Crematorium, 700 houses on there draining directly into the Aire and the canal. That will not save the people of Kirkstall from future flooding because the flood defences have been built. You have to look at what we can do to mitigate against the effects of flooding. We are losing 800 to 1,000 trees a year with no strategic plan for their replacement. Everyone knows the useful effect tree cover has in terms of the

environment, that the root structures have on soaking up water. These things have to be looked at.

All we are asking for is that the Council is prepared to look at what we can do. For our part, yes, we will support a call to Government for more flood defence funding but that is not enough on its own. This Council and the people of Leeds expect us to have a plan of our own and at the moment there has been no indication that we have one and that is the only reason why we have tabled this amendment today and I do hope that you will indeed accept it. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, flooding is not a matter of north against south. The reason that fairly energetic flood defence activity was still taking place towards the end of last year in the Thames Valley and Somerset Levels was that until a month ago they were the places most recently badly flooded. This highlights a problem. How can Whitehall and Westminster and centres of power closer to home be persuaded to keep their eye on flooding after a few dry years? How can they be made to pay attention after the muck has been swept away, the photo opportunities have ended and the wellington boots and Barbour jackets have been laid aside? How can we stop Environment Agency works being reduced, paused or cancelled when memories have faded in the minds of gnats and fruit flies?

Floods have grown in frequency and severity since around the year 2000. All three Governments since then have lacked constant and long-term commitment to deal with them.

At the City Plans Panel meeting on 26th November I asked a question about the possible flood risk posed by a building project in Quarry Hill. The replying officer looked at me as if I was a creature from another world who had asked some strange question, perhaps asked whether earthlings could get plutonium simply by asking at Boots the Chemist or did they need a prescription for it. A month later parts of the city centre were flooded. Since then, almost every man and quite a few dogs have been making statements and issuing press releases about it. The question remains, if we have three dry years will that interest fade away?

On the Tuesday after Christmas I walked on both sides of the river from Neville Street to Crown Point and back. Few riverside flats along that stretch had flooded. There had been quite a lot of near misses but the technique of setting dwellings above undercroft car parks had worked well, though the car parks had flooded badly. It was quite remarkable that most of the sediment left behind was not silt or mud, it was coarse sand, hundreds of tons of it, as if the underlying bed of the river had been torn out by the force of water.

A lot of what has been done in Leeds in recent years about main river flooding and localised flash floods arose from the Flooding Inquiry which I chaired in 2005

and 2006, and Councillors Graham Hyde, Stewart Golton and Elizabeth Nash were also members. I would be more than willing to chair a revived inquiry.

Flood control must be a constant and long-term priority. If people argue that it needs big ticket public works that cannot be afforded, we will have to find the money by slaughtering a few white elephants and scrapping vanity projects, perhaps like the NGT trolleybus.

We are pleased to support the White Paper and hope that it will mark the beginning of a rapid and uninterrupted progress which will secure the earliest possible installation of comprehensive flood controls and defences wherever they are needed. The amendment seems a bit unnecessary and almost implies that the City Council should act alone. In fact we need to work with our neighbours to secure works to be funded and overseen by the Environment Agency which is a statutory authority for what are described as main rivers, and that is not just the River Aire and the River Calder and Wharfe. Even main rivers, the Millshaw Beck that goes right up to White Rose is technically a main river and the White Beck that flooded the Dunhill estate is technically a main river, so the Environment Agency has a statutory power and a statutory duty for most of the major sources of flooding in Leeds.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. As Councillor Leadley just said there, one of the problems is short-termism. We have a flood, a Government Minister comes up, makes some promises and then goes away and the fact is that the flood defences that Councillor Carter mentioned, one of the reasons that constantly got put back is somewhere has got flooded and they forgot about that. The fact is, it is going to happen and it is happening more.

When Councillor Carter was Leader and I was Chair of the Cabinet, on two occasions that summer, or summer/spring time, we were about a couple of inches away from the whole, entire city centre being flooded. We know it is going to happen so why – and I do not mean the Council but nationally, we know what is going to happen at some point in time. Something needs to be done and I have got to say, if it was in London it would have been done and that is one of our problems up here, we do not get things done. It is just a panic. Somebody comes up and then goes away and forgets about us. That needs to be done but not only on those major things like the River Aire and on the Wharfe, but as Tom was saying, there are lots and lots of water courses. For instance, something like seven to ten days before the flooding we had in Kirkstall in my ward, it did not get to any houses but you had a river coming down the ring road where the water came over for a couple of hours. We have got to take into consideration those things as well because that affects businesses. The last time that flooded properly, which was about 2012, I think it was, there is a car showroom, all new cars in Newthorpe had to be replaced, they got wrecked, and several houses the people were out of them for six to nine months having to be put up in various places in the city.

We have got to do this. It is important and we cannot forget about it like we seem to be doing, I think. We had a meeting on the Monday after the Christmas break with Councillor Blake - Councillor Finnigan, Councillor Procter and I went to it – and

I think what the Leader said there encouraged them in that we were going to find somewhere so that we can look what other mitigations we can do through either Scrutiny or something like that and that is something I will support, because what we have got to do is we have got to see what we can do on a small scale, but the fact is without the flood defences you are going to have some kind of flooding and it might not be necessarily the scheme we have got now but we need something doing rapidly. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: It is actually quite strange to be sitting in this Chamber after the two-and-a-half weeks that we have experienced in Kirkstall and getting my head into Council meetings which do not involve wellies, shovels, brooms and mops is a bit of a culture shock. However, it is absolutely right that we discuss this White Paper today and to acknowledge the devastating impact that Storm Eva has had across the city.

We urgently need to consider what help is needed to support those who have lost their homes and livelihoods and we need to ensure that all measures are put into place so that this does not happen again.

We also need to analyse why this has happened and it is important when looking to the future that we deal with the cause and not just the effect so perhaps a national conversation is required regarding the consequences of climate change.

The last time that Kirkstall Road flooded was in 1866 and never in living memory have we seen the scenes that were brought to us on Boxing Day. For over 24 hours the main western corridor into the city was a rapidly moving river and the properties either side acted as its banks. The destruction that this has brought to livelihoods is unprecedented. The majority of businesses impacted are not big multi-nationals with significant capital and extensive insurance behind them. They are small, family run independents many of whom have built up their businesses over decades, some of which have not been able to or cannot afford to get adequate insurance. All of them play a vital role in making Kirkstall a vital and thriving community and most of them are run by local people and employ local people.

From speaking to businesses we already know that they are considering their options for the future. Some are looking to relocate, others have already made people redundant and there are huge questions about the insurance premiums that those who do stay will face, all of which will make it so much more important that we continue to work alongside the LEP, Chamber of Commerce and other partners to get businesses back on track.

Every time we see the worst of times we also see the best of people and the response that the local community has shown has been breathtaking. In the first week we had over 500 volunteers coming out to help clean up Kirkstall and they keep on coming. We have had groups from churches, mosques and synagogues, arts and community groups, guides and scout troops. We have had 25 fire-fighters from Devon clearing out the basement of the Chinese Christian Church, ex-servicemen from the Isle of Wight building temporary walls for an engineering plant, a bus driver from Cannock who, on New Year's Day, his only day off, drove off with a lorry load

of donations and we have even had five guys who flew over from Israel especially. Thanks to many of you who have also come out to help.

I have been particularly proud and grateful for the dedication and commitment that has been shown by our Council staff who have worked brilliantly with the volunteers in our clean-up operation. Our Locality Team have been heroes. They have come in on their days off, they have worked early and late, they have been the embodiment of the spirit of public service. When I thanked one during the first week he said, "You do not understand, this is our patch and we are proud of our patch."

Myself, John and Fiona cannot thank everyone who has helped enough. I particularly want to pay tribute to two people who have been significant in organising the flood response. Since the floods the Chair of our local Community Association, John Liversedge, has been out every single day talking to residents and businesses to make sure that they are getting the support that they needed. At the same time, Phil Marken from Open Source Arts launched his new art space on 21st December. It flooded on the 26th and instead of worrying about how he would get the business back up and running again, he just turned it into the volunteer and donation centre for our operation.

Although the past two-and-a-half weeks have been devastating for our community, it has also brought our community together and it will be stronger, which brings me on to the White Paper and our response as an elected Council. What people in Leeds need and want is a united voice coming from its Council Chamber across all benches, sending a strong message to Government. They do not want us to play games with this, so let us stand together and show that just as the city came together, we can overcome political differences and stand united because a divided Council cannot support a united community. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Lay.

COUNCILLOR LAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. First of all I would like to join with other Members in thanking everyone for their efforts. The response from the Council, its workers, the emergency services and perhaps most importantly from the countless volunteers across the numerous communities was magnificent in what were extremely difficult and pretty unique circumstances. A particular thanks to the volunteers in my own community in Otley who came to the aid of the Bridge Avenue and Farnley Lane residents.

Now that the immediate danger to life and property is over there are three things this Council needs to do. First, it needs to get the money from George Osborne and the Treasury so it can help and support affected residents and businesses. The £50m recovery fund for Yorkshire is, in my opinion, pitiful and, as Councillor Blake said recently, a first step, whilst Tim Farron has called it a short-term fix. Without sufficient funding this Council will not be able to support and recompense affected businesses, residents and organisations including this Council. Homes, businesses, roads, parks and Council buildings all destroyed and damaged all need support financially to recovery.

Secondly, we are getting used to warm words from our PM and no action, so I am asking George Osborne and the Treasury to make good on the Prime Minister's statement that money is no object and he could start by making sure the Environment

Agency and this Council has the finances for flood resilience. With funding from George we could do everything possible to better understand and prevent this from happening again.

Thirdly, it seems to me several areas of Leeds need flood alleviation and it is good to know that all Leeds MPs and this Council agree and are heading to London next week to forcibly demand the funding for the schemes this city needs. Of course, all of this will cost hundreds of millions of pounds so it really does make the Prime Minister's announcement of £40m for all of Yorkshire look like the insult it is.

Finally, a plea to everyone to not forget the second river in this city, the River Wharfe, which I am told is the fastest rising river in the country and also floods – maybe not as widely and dramatically as the Aire Valley when that goes but it still impacts on communities like mine in Otley and the Leeds communities downstream of us. Judith, when you go to London to argue for the Aire scheme, please can you put in a strong word for our second river, the River Wharfe, so that we can have the alleviation and flood defences funding that we need. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Yes, thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to associate and support all the words that my colleague Councillor Andrew Carter said and also those of Councillor Lucinda Yeadon.

The events of Boxing Day touched the lives of many people in this city. We have heard about those in the inner areas where both homes and businesses were affected and remain affected as well, but there are also areas in the outer parts of this extensive city that were affected. I spent much of Boxing Day myself barrowing tons, literally tons of sand to varying homes within the village in which I live in an attempt to stop water entering those homes. I know other elected Members had nowhere to go other than to ring the Chief Executive, the sandbag line, as it became known, to try and seek assistance in the best way that we could for residents and those that we represent. Homes in Collingham were flooded and businesses and homes in Wetherby were also flooded and remain still affected.

One of the lasting legacies of the flood is the bridge between Linton and Collingham which dropped over a metre, continues to move almost daily, is closed and will remain closed for the foreseeable future. Goodness only knows how many millions of pounds it will cost to rebuild that piece of vital infrastructure.

What it is useless us doing here is trading insults about which Government spent more money than the last Government, should spend more money than the next Government on which piece of flood defences because this might be better to save one community as opposed to another, because the truth is that none of us know which piece of infrastructure will solve, if there is a solve, this particular problem.

If there is one thing we should learn it is the example from Pickering, who actually looked to a more localised solution – yes, with a very small amount of Government money but they dealt with their very real flooding issue further along and further up in the tributaries and the streams that supplied the river that runs through that particular town. The idea that we can build ever higher walls and keep out ever more water simply is not reality and it will just simply push it somewhere else.

That brings us to our amendment. It was made to be constructive and the reason why I say that I support the words of Councillor Yeadon is that I believe that everybody in this Council should vote for a composite single motion and that is why I hope that you will support this amendment today, because it takes nothing away from your motion and simply adds the belief that this Council should also play its part, and it has got a very important part, Lord Mayor, to play.

The building of 70,000 new homes on sites that were initially identified before this flooding event simply is not realistic to move forward with, Lord Mayor. The Site Allocations Process of this Council has got a vital role to play in dealing with such issues as flooding.

There is also major issues of the streams, becks, that feed into the rivers and many of those streams and becks were the very thing that flooded and caused the real issues to people in this city. As Councillor Carter has already mentioned, there is a very live and real issue in relation to Site Allocations adjacent to his ward.

I was in a meeting earlier today, Lord Mayor, where a landowner was prepared to offer a ten acre area of land that formerly was a reservoir to recreate that reservoir which would stem the flow of the Cock Beck. Those of us who know that tributary know it is a real problem in the city of Leeds. Yes, that landowner does want to build houses but it is that sort of dialogue that we need to get involved in in this city to try and stop this very real problem.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter, we are well over your time.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: There is more that we can do in this city, Lord Mayor, and we should do it. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake to sum up.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I thank everyone who has contributed to the debate today and to the many of you who have come to talk to all of us in terms of the commitment of us pulling together to deal with this. It gives us a much stronger position, as Councillor Golton said, going back down to London next week to meet the Secretary of State for the Environment but also the Floods Minister is coming to see us in Leeds later this week and we need that consensus, that real determination from the whole of the city to make sure that we continue to get our message heard.

One of the issues that we will have to draw attention to Government Ministers is the broader impact of budget cuts to the whole of the Council. The Council has responsibility for looking after the highway, for looking after the gulleys, all of those things that are so important in helping the flow of water through the city, and not least the funding that the Environment Agency needs to have to be able to respond to these events, and the thought of them receiving more cuts to their funding when we are obviously facing extreme weather conditions ahead beggars belief. Also, of course, our emergency services who are struggling already.

Andrew, I am disappointed that you were not here for the briefings that we had for all of the Members affected by the flooding in their immediate wards but also

the meeting with the Leaders of the Groups, because at that meeting we sat down, as David said quite rightly, and that is within the motion that we have put before the Chamber. We understand that we have got a responsibility, we are not going to shirk from that responsibility. We are the Planning Authority for the area and we are reliant on national planning policy. We have to come together to have an influence on that.

Councillor McKenna raised a very good point about building regulations. All of those things, sustainable drainage, tree planting and, as Councillor Leadley said, we cannot do this on our own. Water does not just start at the Leeds boundary and our responsibility finish when it leaves, so the partners that we include are all of the neighbouring Authority boundaries where the impact of policies that we understand up in the Dales and the moors can have devastating consequences for us further down.

I am disappointed that you felt obliged to amend our White Paper. Our White Paper is strong, it calls for commitment, it calls for all of us to work together.

Lord Mayor, after the events of 2007 we warned of the risk of major flooding in Leeds. We predicted the devastating consequences of the river breaching its banks along the River Aire from Woodlesford right the way up to Newlay Bridge in Horsforth. So sadly we have seen our predictions come true. I believe we have seen the very best of Local Government in our response to the terrible events that unfolded not only in Leeds but across Yorkshire, Calderdale, absolutely devastated and, of course, Lancashire and Cumbria as well, but Local Government at the heart of its communities bringing together local partners playing a key leadership role. Once the risk to life moved on, it is the Council that continues to co-ordinate the effort to bring everyone together and I commend the work that Councillor Yeadon did in Kirkstall with her ward colleagues and with all the other Members who came out to help.

Let us go to London with the confidence that we have got everyone behind us and we will not rest until we have got the answers and the funding that we need to protect our communities here in Leeds. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. I hope that you will note that I have allowed many of the speeches to go over time this afternoon as it is such an important message that we need to get over.

Can I now call for the vote, please.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Recorded vote please, Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Seconded.

*(A recorded vote was held on the amendment
in the name of Councillor Andrew Carter)*

THE LORD MAYOR: The number present 87, the number of people who say "Yes" 19, abstentions 8, "No" 59, so the amendment to the motion has been defeated.
LOST

We now move on to the second one, the motion in the name of Councillor Blake. *(A vote was taken)* The motion is CARRIED.

Very briefly, I have missed two items that I should have mentioned under Communications. I am going to mention the first one now and the second one just before tea. The first one, as it was agreed this morning that because the meeting is going on from one o'clock with no breaks until probably after five o'clock, it has been agreed that we will have a comfort break after the Question time and it will be for five minutes. The bell will be rung after four minutes for people to come back to their seats.

ITEM 4 – DEPUTATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to Deputations.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: To report that there are four Deputations: one, Children's Mayor regarding the global Families of Leeds Project; two, Leeds Youth Parliament wishing to bring an end to racism and religious discrimination; three, USDAW, the retail and distribution workers union regarding the deregulation of Sunday trading; and four, Weetwood Residents' Association regarding safety considerations for residents and pedestrians along parts of Weetwood Lane resulting from overspill and unreasonable car parking.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Charlwood.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

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

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

DEPUTATION ONE – CHILDREN'S MAYOR

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. Hannah and I have already met on a few occasions. 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.

MISS HANNAH BEGUM (Leeds Children's Mayor): Hello. My name is Hannah. Today I have Faisal and Tahera and we all come from Hunslet Moor Primary School.

As Children's Mayor of Leeds I would love to set up 'Global Families of Leeds Project'. The aim of this would be for children and young people in Leeds to have more opportunities to interact with each other through the existing youth and community groups, after school clubs and faith groups. Each month, the groups would get the opportunity to visit each other's groups that sound exciting to them. The lead worker for that group would co-ordinate the visit. This could be a youth group from North Leeds meeting up with a dance group from South Leeds. These

opportunities would give young people the chance to try new skills, have fun, make friends, meet and interact with each other, develop leadership and facilitation skills, develop a sense of belonging to Leeds and develop community cohesion. To do this, I would set up a data base of all the existing groups and ask them to sign up to the scheme.

I used to attend a youth group to meet loads of new people and visit Cadbury World and even the set of Coronation Street! My group had to shut down due to the lack of funding so I feel really passionate about setting up these groups again.

My community is very transient with many new families coming from all over the world. Sometimes there are stereotypes of where you live so my project would be the perfect platform for children and young people to feel safe, ask questions, and learn about respecting other cultures, religions and beliefs in a safe environment. My project would tie into the UN rights of the child, learning about tolerance and understanding, as well as underpinning the Government's work on British values. My project would be extremely cost effective as all the groups already exist; just a little work will be needed to co-ordinate the data base and make the links. A little money might be needed if the groups need transport for their visits. The groups that sign up for the project would get a certificate for taking part and at the end of the year we would have a celebration event to highlight all the positives from the project.

I feel the opportunities and interactions we have as a child determine the adults we are in the future. I love Leeds and I feel proud to be a Yorkshire lass, it is a fantastic city and my project would make it even better for children and young people. Thank you.

(Standing ovation)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I move that the matter be referred to the Director of Children's 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.
(Applause)

DEPUTATION TWO – LEEDS YOUTH PARLIAMENT

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 M ABEDIN: Thank you. We are two of the four Members of the Youth Parliament for Leeds, myself, Minhaz, Shamim and Sam and Nicole as well. We have been in term for the last two years, starting our two year term on 1st February 2014 and we were voted in by 4,000 young people in Leeds.

The UK Youth Parliament is a national programme enabling young people aged 11 to 18 to use their energy and passion to change the world for the better through voice and influence. Every year we are tasked nationally to complete the Make Your Mark Ballot, which is the UK's largest youth consultation for 11-18 year olds and each year our role as Members of the Youth Parliament is to work alongside schools, young people from across the city, to complete the Make Your Mark Ballot, enabling us to find out the top five issues that affect young people across the entire of the UK.

This year in Leeds 16,343 11-18 year olds voted in Leeds, which is 23% of the entire youth population, with an astonishing 986,091 young people across the entire of the UK taking part.

The top five issues that were voted in were taken to the House of Commons on Friday, 13th November 2015. For Members of the Youth Parliament like myself and Shamim to debate the top issue which then became our national campaign.

Our national campaign for 2015-2016 is tackling racial and religious discrimination, particularly against people who are Muslim or Jewish. This was a fantastic result in Leeds and I am sure you will agree, as this issue was voted in second locally within Leeds by 30196 young people saying that this was the most important issue for them.

In every walk of life, in every community and every society there are good things and bad. Similarly in every belief system and in every race there are good people and bad. Statistics show that one in five young people feel racially and religiously discriminated against every single day, which is why 95,000 young people from across the UK felt that it was necessary to choose tackling racism and religious discrimination as their Make Your Mark issue. The statistics from the My Health, My School survey show that 7.8% of secondary school students who were bullied were bullied because of racial/religious discrimination.

We believe we can help bring change to these issues because even if what we get out of it is making one person feeling like they belong, we have made a difference. The Government has put an integration and equality strategy in place and it is time for all the MYPs and MPs across the UK to work together with elected Members like yourselves and decision makers to ensure that these strategies are implemented effectively, making sure that each and every person is saved from discrimination because what can affect one of us can affect us all.

I know there are a few of us who log on to Facebook and upload a selfie, like Shamim over here, but let us just think about it for a second. Have we ever seen a religious or racially hateful post and made the decision to ignore it? In doing so we allow discrimination to persist, hiding under the mask of humour. Where do we draw the line under these persistent crimes because, let us face it, we need change.

We could explore doing a social media campaign to give young people the confidence to challenge this.

THE LORD MAYOR: You have got to the end of your time. Could you just sum up with your last sentence, please? The time, five minutes, has gone.

MR M ABEDIN: Can I keep going?

THE LORD MAYOR: Can you draw this to a conclusion quickly, please?

MR M ABEDIN: Yes, thank you madam. We would like to ask you Leeds City Councillors to work with us and support us in developing a campaign to tackle racial and religious discrimination amongst young people in Leeds as part of the national day of action. Our initial ideas include encouraging schools, colleges and youth groups to celebrate diversity of young people in Leeds, an awareness raising campaign to give young people the facts and help them have the confidence to challenge discrimination, educating young people as there is a lack of understanding and too many negative stereotypes. To help us we will be coming to you for your support in communicating our campaign messages.

THE LORD MAYOR: I have to stop you now. You are really taking advantage. (Applause)

I am prepared for some leniency but you really had tried my patience a little too much. Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I move that the matter be referred to the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) 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. (*Applause*)

DEPUTATION THREE – SUNDAY TRADING

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. So that you know where you are with time, there are lights that come on and when it goes to amber you know you are nearing the end of your time. Thank you.

MR I DALTON: Thank you. My name is Iain Dalton, to my right is Angela Partington, to my left is Barbara Cotton and we are coming on behalf of USDAW Leeds Private Trades Branch.

My Lord Mayor and Councillors, we have brought this delegation today on behalf of USDAW, the retail and distribution workers union, to ask you to oppose the deregulation of Sunday trading and, if handed powers over Sunday trading as the government is proposing, that you pledge not to extend Sunday trading.

The Sunday trading regulations at present mean that large stores can open for no more than six hours on a Sunday. There is a likelihood that small businesses would be adversely affected by such deregulation. If supermarkets and other large stores had longer opening hours, this could prove devastating for such businesses.

Retail workers are themselves overwhelmingly opposed to deregulation of Sunday trading. A survey by USDAW found that 90% of retail workers are opposed to such deregulation. For many, Sunday is the only day where you can guarantee that you will have an evening free to spend with friends and family. Deregulation also threatens Sunday premium payments for those who do work Sundays which, if removed, would depress pay in an already low paid industry.

Whilst there is also an opt out from working on Sundays, many retail workers already feel pressured into not taking up that option. There are many for whom Sunday is a special day for religious and other reasons, who will feel increased pressure to work Sundays if shops are to open for longer. There is also a knock-on effect for those working in the supply chain of such stores, which will affect working hours.

The Government is making its case for deregulation based on what it perceives as a success of a temporary deregulation around the time of the Olympic Games in 2012. However, trading that year in August, the month that the Games fell mostly in, was down on a yearly basis by 0.1%.

We believe that no legitimate case for deregulating Sunday trading can be made. The fact that the Government is not prepared to deregulate themselves but to push responsibility for such measures on to Local Authorities reflects this.

To reiterate, what we are asking from Leeds City Council is to oppose the Government's proposals to deregulate Sunday trading and to pledge if the Government does hand the Council powers over Sunday trading, not to extend Sunday trading hours. Thank you. (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.
(Applause)

DEPUTATION FOUR – WEETWOOD RESIDENTS’ ASSOCIATION

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. Thank you, Martyn.

MR M THOMAS: My Lord Mayor, Members of Council, I am accompanied by Angela Partington. My name is Martyn Thomas and I am the Chair of Weetwood Residents’ Association and I am speaking to you concerning the deteriorating, damaging and unsafe car parking situation in parts of our neighbourhood, a situation which has to be addressed most quickly and most effectively.

For the past two to three years residents of Weetwood have been seeking relief from unreasonable and overspill car parking caused primarily by staff and students at Leeds Beckett University. The Council introduced a TRO along Glen Road which combined resident only parking with both total parking restriction along parts of the road and time-limited parking on other parts and since full activation of this TRO, Glen Road has been effectively emptied of parked cars during term time, but Weetwood Lane has seen an upsurge in overspill and unreasonable car parking on both sides of the road along part of its length.

We now see that the minor road, Glen Road is broadly empty of parked cars whilst the local major road, Weetwood Lane, which is a bus route with double-decker buses every 20 minutes, has parking almost entirely on both sides from the Glen Road junction to Weetwood Court. This road is no wider than Glen Road, indeed in parts it is narrower, and with double-sided parking there is not room for two lanes of traffic to pass. Clearly a risk and on a road which has speed bumps.

Residents on the east side of Weetwood Lane need to exit from their drives which are generally at a lower level than the road and during the weekday period are confronted with parked cars to the right, to the left and ahead of them. Their view is severely limited and the danger is self-evident. So far we are lucky that no reportable accident has happened.

Some drivers when deciding to park on the east side of Weetwood Lane recognise the reduced width and straddle the grass verge. Accordingly all of the local and Council grass verges along this sector are massively damaged and simply do not comply with the neighbourhood description within the newly accepted and updated Neighbourhood Design Statement.

What do we seek? We seek a sensible, fairer and more easily manageable parking situation in our neighbourhood, and safety being properly recognised as the key factor for residents, pedestrians and non-residents. We do accept that some reasonable parking in our neighbourhood should be available to non-residents.

We seek an urgency to addressing the problem before any serious accident occurs. In the absence of any pro-active move by Leeds Beckett University to help by providing an acceptable regime of on-campus parking, we recognise that we have to be proactive supported, we hope by the Council and by local Councillors.

We feel entitled to support from LCC in addressing this problem and we seek that you help by providing officer involvement with us to quickly agree and implement a sustainable long-term arrangement for parking, provision of a safer neighbourhood environment and protection of our local amenity from unwarranted damage. Thank you. (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. *(Applause)*

ITEM 5 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – TAXI ENFORCEMENT

THE LORD MAYOR: We will move swiftly on to Item 5 on the Agenda. Councillor James Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I will second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harland.

COUNCILLOR HARLAND: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, we are being asked this afternoon to approve the sharing of taxi and private hire delegated enforcement powers with other Councils that make up the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. This is a groundbreaking step to help ensure the safety of the travelling public in our area.

It is in response to new legislation in the Deregulation Act, which allows private hire operators to subcontract bookings to other operators anywhere in the country. This means that people making bookings with one firm may have a vehicle licensed by another Authority turn up to take them home. That vehicle and driver may not have been checked and vetted to the high standards we insist upon in Leeds. This clearly could present many potential risks where the Government should have

insisted on common standards across all Licensing Authorities before introducing these new changes but it failed to do so; added to that the Government did not give our Enforcement Officers the necessary powers to stop and inspect these out of town vehicles, which means these vehicles can operate without fear of being challenged in our area.

The changes we are being asked to make to our constitution today will ensure that our delegated enforcement powers are shared with all other Councils in the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. The other Authorities are doing the same for us. By sharing our delegated powers in this way, all our Enforcement Teams across West Yorkshire and York will be able to inspect each other's vehicles and ensure that out of town vehicles are operating lawfully.

The changes also allow officers to share powers with other Authorities where we have seen an increase in their vehicles operating in our area such as Rossendale and Manchester and others.

With so many different licensed vehicles from different Authorities working in our area, the risk of rogue or unlicensed activity increases. With so many different types of badges on different vehicles it becomes much more difficult for the public to identify a properly licensed private hire vehicle. Not all vehicles carry the same distinctive licence livery as our own vehicles do in Leeds. This is another reason why we are sharing enforcement powers in this way to ensure we can challenge any suspect vehicles properly. We are making very clear we will not compromise when it comes to protecting the public from any safety risk and that we are looking to mitigate some of the impact of the changes.

Let me be clear, this change does not impact on who makes decisions on the issuing or revocation of licences made to or granted by this Council. Leeds City Council will still make those decisions. I ask you all to vote in favour of these changes which are necessary to help ensure the ongoing safety of our travelling public in Leeds. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our officers for working hard to achieve this agreement throughout our region. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. Once again, an example of the administration seeking to blame the Government for all the things it has not done while taking credit for things it has done and I am going to illustrate to you a number of others now that it ought to have done.

The situation with private hire vehicles and taxis has been going on for some number of years in terms of licences held outside the Leeds area enabling drivers to operate within Leeds.

I want to give you a particular case, though, in connection with this supposedly wonderful cross-Authority working we now have, although I will say this, this report is long overdue and is very good as far as it goes.

Members may or may not be aware that some little time ago the Licensing Authority in Leeds refused a licence to a particular applicant. The result of this was, I think, two appearances in court with appeals against the Council's decision. The

Council's decision was upheld in both instances. The applicant then went to Kirklees and applied. Kirklees consulted Leeds, Leeds officers appears in Kirklees at the hearing and it was refused again. Then the applicant applied yet again to Kirklees. This time, with the support of a reference from a Councillor and a Member of Parliament, Kirklees did not contact Leeds and the application was granted.

Nothing in this paper stops that happening because unless we get a guarantee from the other West Yorkshire Authorities that they will always consult us and give our officers the chance to make the appropriate objection, it can happen again. It is not in anybody's interest, particular, actually, taxi and private hire drivers, to not have the most rigorous of regulation because we are protecting them as well.

The other concern I have is that in the past taxi and private hire businesses were notifiable occupations under the Notifiable Occupations Scheme. Under the Common Law of Disclosure the National Association of Police Officers seem willing to limit the information they pass to our Licensing Authorities through their Powers of Disclosure Unit. Again, this is not acceptable. The number of references has gone down dramatically since the National Association of Police Officers issued this guidance to different Police Authorities. It simply is not acceptable and it leaves everybody wide open and we need to see yet more rigour, Councillor Harland, in the case of this report and us doing what we can do under the powers that we have to their full extent. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. We support this particular report. We think deregulation in this particular area is a poor idea and leads to all sorts of problems and difficulties. Certainly if anybody has read the Jay Report they will know that one of the problems they identified which has significantly contributed to CSE problems in Rotherham was a dysfunctional Licensing department and anything that means that Licensing departments can work more closely together and make sure that they share that information to keep the community safe has to be a good thing.

To conclude, Lord Mayor, we think that we are in a situation where deregulation in this particular area is the wrong step to take; we think there needs to be more regulation. We think that there needs to be more exchange of information and certainly the police need to be more co-operative on these occasions than they perhaps have been in the past. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. I call on Councillor James Lewis to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Let us be absolutely clear from our administration that we would want the strongest and most stringent regulations there for all taxi and private hire licensing. We are working as hard as we can to push other West Yorkshire Authorities to not just work together on some of the cross border issues this report has outlined but also to make sure we have the highest standards of licences issues and I think Councillor Carter knows what we are doing on that and knows the position.

Frankly, we are doing what we can and again I can only reiterate the point that Councillor Harland made. It does not help when Government deregulation legislation is making it easier not just for people that we have not licensed to work in the city but it makes it harder for our officers who are dealing with the licensing and enforcement on the ground where we have all sorts of behaviour from taxi and private hirers not to be able to even stop and talk to taxi drivers who are working in the city.

On those comments I move the paper and move in terms of the Notice, Lord Mayor.

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

ITEM 6 – REPORT ON THE CALCULATION OF THE COUNCIL TAX
AND BUSINESS RATES TAX BASES FOR 2016/17

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 6, Councillor Blake.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: I will second that, Lord Mayor.

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

ITEM 7 – EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 7, Councillor Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: 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.

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE REPORTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Community Committee Reports. We will now move on to Community Committee Reports. Consideration of each report will last for no longer than ten minutes. Councillor Pryor.

ITEM 8 – REPORT ON THE INNER NORTH WEST COMMUNITY
COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR PRYOR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is always a pleasure to talk about some of the work we are doing in the Inner North West Community Committee.

Every Member here will know some of the good work we can do in all our Community Committees. It is the perfect way to not only get in touch with the people on the ground but also make decisions as close to people as possible because we as local Members know more about what is going on in our own wards, more than those at the top.

One of our sessions we had on accessibility (and this is the one I want to focus on), we decided to have our own topic, one which was recommended to us and it gave a real opportunity to bring some new people into the Community Committee meetings. As all of us who have our local meetings will know, there are often the regular suspects (and no more than in Headingley) who will come to every meeting and in having our meeting on accessibility it gave us the opportunity to see some people who we had never seen at local meetings before, we were able to talk about issues which they felt had nothing to do with the Council because they had never been spoken about and we talked about access to housing for disabled students, for example, who just do not have the same experience as other students because if they are in a wheelchair they then cannot go and live with their friends out in Hyde Park and Headingley, they have to stay in student accommodation the whole time.

We also spoke about some of the difficulties many people have on the streets such as the length of time to cross the road, as well as other accessibility issues people have, so I will hand over to my colleagues in the Inner North West.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Walshaw.

COUNCILLOR WALSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Environmental Management is a significant issue for Headingley, as you all know. I would just like to add our voices as Headingley Councillors to the tributes paid to the Council service, Council workers, everyone involved in the flood clean up including the volunteers and including our Kirkstall colleagues. I think you have all certainly been heroes.

Lord Mayor, it would be a space oddity, would it not, if we could not address the issues in Headingley. I think when I was first elected as a Councillor I got a lot of emails that, some said isn't it just a moonage daydream that we cannot address the litter in Headingley and I want to highlight some of the ways that we are bringing about some changes.

First we have got to improve locality working and that basically means tailoring our services to exactly how people live. For example, doing our litter picks after a Friday and a Saturday night instead of during midweek. I think that is enormously sensible and enormously useful.

We have got a number of pilot schemes which we should be very proud of, including the Ash Road scheme which is basically where you have to opt into recycling and most people do who are permanent residents and student houses tend not to but all those student houses' black bins we send to a dirty source so that our

recycling levels are going up. We are doing better communications and better working with all our partners, including the university, including charity.

I am not expecting that everyone who comes to Headingley can go, “Oh you pretty things and isn’t the ward amazing every time”, but whilst I think our services have previously been under pressure, I think Headingley is at least, and the Inner North West, has had the chance to experience some golden years, Lord Mayor.

I would come clean, there has been the odd David Bowie reference in that wee statement and I just would like to pay tribute to the singer who was taken away from us too soon. Thank you for your indulgence, colleagues. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harper.

COUNCILLOR G HARPER: I also attended our recent Area Committee where we discussed an issue which applies throughout the city – it is about domestic violence and abuse. We had a proper discussion about it, we had lots of people from the community there and it went down really well, bringing the effort to people, getting to them and talking to them about how important it is.

We have made many efforts to tackle domestic violence and abuse. It has always been a key policy for our committee and this next year will be no different. Domestic violence and abuse is a crime that recognises no ethnic or social differences among its victims and has a crippling impact on communities regardless of the region. The only discernible pattern appears to be in its gender, as most victims, 80% of the cases reported are women, but figures show that there are men who also are subject to domestic violence. This only takes into consideration those cases reported and does not include the many victims who suffer in silence.

This is why we support the White Ribbon campaign that should be central to the work of the wider Leeds Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy Group, due to its unique position as one of the first male orientated organisations to push for an end to domestic violence against women. One of its main aims includes putting pressure on the Government to ratify the Istanbul Convention signed by the UK in 2010 which provides a legally binding framework of actions aimed at ending domestic violence. Such a framework is greatly needed as in Leeds alone over 14,000 domestic violence incidents were reported to the police in 2014, which clearly demonstrates that this is a widespread issue which requires constant attention.

The urgency of the issue becomes even more apparent when you consider that in 2015 62% of the children in households where domestic violence takes place were affected or indirectly harmed.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harper, you have got a red light.

COUNCILLOR G HARPER: The Inner North West Community Committee is determined to continue tackling this issue and we look forward to working with the Council and other local organisations to raise awareness for those affected in our communities. Thanks, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to pick up on some environmental issues as well, things that have been discussed at the sub-committee on Environment and Community Safety. If you walk through or travel through Inner North West, one of the things I am afraid you will see a lot of is graffiti and in some parts of the area it has taken so much control that it looks like it is out of control.

In my ward particular, in Weetwood, although we are on top, I think, of what I would call general graffiti on walls and buildings, the blank canvases presented by the increasing number of cable boxes the telephone companies are now installing, particularly with the advent of more fibre broadband, the blank canvases present a big temptation to – I was going to say graffiti artists; they are not artists, they are not Banksys, they are people who just scribble on the cable boxes. It is up to, really, the telephone companies and the mobile phone companies who own these assets to get them cleaned up and they are just not doing it.

At one time the Council and our Locality Teams would go out and clean them up and we charged them. They are not doing that any more. Telephone companies have said that they want to do it as they are notified, but they are just not doing it. They do have a responsibility as good corporate citizens of Leeds, they have a civic responsibility to do it and they should be enforced to do it. Unless that enforcement takes place and they start doing it, I think we should be going back to the old method where we go back and clean them up and we charge the telephone companies for that task. If we do not get on top of this it is the old cliché, the broken window syndrome – more graffiti, they are being degraded and that just brings the whole area down. We do need to get on top of that and the telephone companies who own these cable boxes do have a responsibility to help with that. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We have run out of time on that section, so can I ask Councillor Pryor to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR PRYOR: Councillor Bentley is absolutely right, the Inner North West area, graffiti is a problem and it often feels like it is trying to push water uphill sometimes cleaning it up. I think it is absolutely right that a lot of companies are failing in what is their legal responsibility to keep those clean. We have had a few conversations about how we can enforce that and I am sure we will take that going forward.

In terms of the general cleanliness, as Councillor Walshaw was talking about, some of the bespoke solutions are really working and more and more in talking to people in the ward and in the area they are saying that they can see an improvement and they do appreciate a lot of the work that the teams are doing.

Councillor Harper, you spoke about the session we had on domestic violence. It really was an insight into something which I think we are all aware of but maybe do not know all the details and for me I find it particularly interesting to hear about some of those hidden groups who also face domestic violence, be it same sex couples, inter-generational domestic violence, as well as some younger couples who may still be at university but still suffer the same problems with domestic violence. In the Inner North West we are going to continue with our work so I move in terms of the Notice. *(Applause)*

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

ITEM 9 – REPORT ON THE OUTER NORTH WEST COMMUNITY
COMMITTEE

THE LORD MAYOR: We go on to item 9, please. Councillor Wadsworth.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I move the report that has come to Council and since we last met in April - it does not seem long since I reported back to Council – we have had three business meetings and two workshops, along with a number of forums across the four wards.

The first workshop, the Neighbourhood Planning Workshop, which was held in June, was really to bring together people who were established groups and working well in Neighbourhood Planning but also to give the opportunity to individuals or groups that did not really know how to get involved in Neighbourhood Planning or what it entailed etc, etc, and it was well attended and I think many members of the community went away with more awareness of what was involved in Neighbourhood Planning and I think some joined existing groups, so it was quite productive.

A further workshop was held in October on road safety. That was also very well attended. Councillor Anderson chaired that. The two main issues that came out of that was parking, and parking has obviously been raised in Weetwood so obviously that is an issue for the Inner Committee as well, and speeding. The main thing that came out of that was that we did try to get together with a Community Speedwatch and Councillor Lay and myself took on the gauntlet of dealing with Aireborough because our two wards do come close to each other. We are moving on very slowly with that and so that is one of the sort of issues that we suffer from, but the majority of the work is in the sub-groups.

There are five sub-groups which are detailed into the report; I will not go into which they are but I will just mention the highlights. The Health sub-group has supported the development of an app which is going to aid in social care and I think that is a big move forward for them. Children's, of course, have had their Youth Funding to spend and they have done very well in spending almost all of that funding and I would congratulate Councillor Pat Latty who chairs that sub-group in doing that. I will let Members speak on that. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I am just formally seconding that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cleasby.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. If I could be helpful, Council, I wish to discuss on page 41 there is a reference to Leeds Bradford Airport. As Transport sub-committee Chair we are all fully aware of the difficulties we have with the airport. We have tried for some considerable time to get our hands on or sight of the airport master plan, which is rather difficult when you cannot and at this very moment in time we have consultation by the Council on an airport link road

using vast tracts of our green belt, which is rather odd because the airport we know, from what information we can glean from them, has its profit predicated on car parking charges, so it is odd that we are not going for a rail line linked to the airport that could increase the patronage over a greater distance to the airport where the motorcar is pretty limited in its patronage, but all four wards of the outer area North West are the access roads to the airport.

So I would like simply just to draw to your attention, and I hope the Chair in summing up would support this as well, that the airport are going to have to be more co-operative on working with us to get a better airport, but a better airport that serves our city but, more importantly, does less harm to our four wards in the Outer North West. Thank you, Lord Mayor, thank you, Council. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I also highlight the contribution made by the Community Committee sub-groups and in particular I will pick up on Councillor Anderson's Environment Group.

Members will recall that the Area Committee, the administration generously gave us oversight of cleansing etc, and that has been an interesting experience for all of us because it allowed that sub-committee to find out that rather than street gulleys – and street gulleys are relevant at the moment because we have had a lot of flooding – rather than street gulleys being cleaned once every eight months, as the administration told us when they handed the responsibility over, officers reluctantly admitted that actually it was more like every two years. Interestingly, subsequent to that we asked for a breakdown of cleansing within North West Outer. We found out that actually if we are really, really lucky it is once every five years.

It is all very well giving them responsibility but if you do not give us the budget we cannot set the priorities and I think I have to point out to the administration that at the moment our response to gully cleansing is woefully inadequate, simply because we do not have the men or women and we do not have the equipment to clean all the gulleys in a reasonable fashion in a reasonable time.

I would hope that as part of this *entente* we are having at the moment in relation to flooding you take that on board and when the Budget debate happens next month we hear some positive news in relation to that. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wadsworth, can I call upon you to sum up, please?

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Dealing with Councillor Campbell first, Councillor Campbell makes a very valid point about gulleys and the length of time that gulleys are now being cleaned out. In my time representing Guiseley and Rawdon that time has gone from once every twelve months to once every five years and when we first got that information we did not actually realise it was the true information but I think the Environment sub-group have teased out that it is actually the true information. At least something is getting done.

With regards to Councillor Cleasby's point around the airport, we seem to talk around the airport an awful lot but the people missing are the airport. They do not want to engage with us, for some reason, and they have been coming constantly with a master plan. We want to engage with them and the whole community and it is just about the road. It is about their surface access, their car parks, road, rail, buses, how people are affected...

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: That is what happens when you sell it off.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: ...by noise. They are currently wanting to change their night time operations and day times operations, their times. Residents are affected by that and we would like to talk and discuss it with them and they are the missing piece out of the jigsaw and it is around talking. We do an awful lot of talking in Outer North West *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR: It is hot air!

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: It is not just hot air by Members. We need officers and the buck has to stop with the Exec Member both for Communities and the portfolios but we need to get actions. We do a lot of talking and Councillor Lay and I have done a lot of talking about the Community Speedwatch, but the partners are not necessarily fully engaged because we are not actually doing it. What we want to do is, when we decide that we want to do something we want to carry it out, we want to engage with the airport, we want to get the Speedwatch up and running but it always seems to get locked up in talking and if we could do less talking and more acting I think we would do a lot better. I hope that Councillor Coupar will take that on board. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

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

ITEM 10 – REPORT ON APPOINTMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 10, Report on Appointments. 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 call for a vote. *(A vote was taken)* The vote is CARRIED.

ITEM 11 – QUESTIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: We now move on to Item 11, which is Questions. We have 30 minutes and at the end of the 30 minutes that is when we will have the 4.9 minute break – for those who can run fastest that will be!

Can I call on Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Will the Executive Board Member responsible for Planning Enforcement please advise why Planning Enforcement are unable to enforce the most basic planning conditions that planning approval was based upon?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harper.

COUNCILLOR G HARPER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am looking forward to my 4.9 minute break shortly!

THE LORD MAYOR: Oh good!

COUNCILLOR G HARPER: I am sure that Councillor Anderson will have an individual case in mind for this point he is raising. However, I think it would be useful to help understand the wider context in this group.

Leeds City Council operates a busy Planning Enforcement service. In 2014/15 we dealt with 1,317 cases and on average at any one time we have around 1,100 cases under investigation. Consistently around two out of three of the cases we look at are not breaches of planning and are technical or minor in nature, or end up with a permission being granted. Around 30% are resolved through negotiation, either the use of development ceases or any harm being caused is reduced to an acceptable level. In around 5% of cases it is necessary for us to take formal action.

In 2014/15 we served 90 Enforcement and other notices, up from 66 in 2013/14, and Leeds pursues more formal actions than any other Core City. In fact, Leeds has taken more formal action than Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham and Sheffield combined in 2014/15.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Do you have a supplementary?

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Yes, Lord Mayor. Just to clarify, does Councillor Harper share my concern when non-compliance of conditions attached to applications in both my ward and others – I heard of one from Councillor Cleasby the other day – are ignored by applicants as they know that his Enforcement Team will both be unlikely to take action, in the first place but, more seriously, always look to make excuses around the intentions and inadequacies of Planning not putting tough enough conditions on in the first place and also a lack of will to take action in certain parts of the city and, more importantly, against high profile applicants?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Harper.

COUNCILLOR G HARPER: Is this an individual case you are looking at, because I think you have got to look at the fact that we look at every single case individually and look at all the concerns that people raise. I cannot give you an answer on all the cases as a full sweep but we do look at every single case and if you have got any that you have concern about, if you want to bring it to me you can and we will look at it for you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Could the Executive Member for Environmental Protection please update Council on the current status of the implementation of the clean air zone that the Government has imposed on Leeds?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR M DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In a very quick series of events around the turn of the year I was contacted by Roy Stewart the DEFRA Minister, and told there would be a deputation to Leeds of civil servants, who came the following day and met with both Councillor Lewises, Councillor Mulherin and I and senior officers. At that meeting we were told that Leeds would be earmarked for a clean air zone by 2020 along with Nottingham, Derby, Birmingham and Southampton. We were told this would not apply to private car holders but it would be for taxis, lorries, vans, diesel buses that do not reach Euro VI requirements by that date and whilst this was very much to be fleshed out, it was very much an early meeting, there was talk of charging for non-compliance and areas were discussed, including the inner ring road.

I think the problem for us is this was based on what has been admitted by the civil servants who came to see us as national modelling and we do not really know what that actually means in terms of Leeds because, again, it was only in December that we received grant funding to put our own piece of work in place around our busier areas in terms of traffic flow, to look what the actual situation is in Leeds in terms of not just PMs but NO₂s, nitrogen dioxide and how that impacts on people in the city. We will not have real access to the results of that work until June but I think it is important as a city we do have the elbow room to actually get that down and established in terms of where Leeds actually is.

National modelling, we are not going to ignore it, we are not going to pretend that this is not a problem that has to be addressed, but I do think we need to actually get the specifics in the areas of concern of where Leeds actually stands, and it also raises other concerns around the Leeds economy, around transport plans and also around quite advanced plans to change the way that traffic flow operates around Leeds, specifically in the city centre areas where there are in fact much, much larger footfall, where people are actually being affected, than in some of the areas that have been discussed. I know that is something that Councillor Mulherin made very clear, this has to be about people and public health and not simply about a ticking a box exercise.

All that said, we are committed to moving on this as quickly as possible because 2020 is looming it will come in the blink of an eye and Leeds has to be ready and prepared for the challenges ahead. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Do you have a supplementary question?

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank Councillor Dobson for that comprehensive reply and to assure him that in implementing these actions you will have the support from my Group, certainly.

Would he agree with me that had the work he is talking about now having to be done, had that been done five years ago when the Liberal Democrat Group called for action on a clean air zone, and the administration had not dragged its feet, we would now not be having to play catch up at the behest of the Government, we would be living in a cleaner city and, most importantly, up to 350 premature deaths a year may have been avoided.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dobson.

COUNCILLOR M DOBSON: I think it is demonstrably clear we are living in a cleaner city than we were in 2010 for sure. I think some of the initiatives that the administration has taken on and delivered, often with a huge degree of criticism, I am sure if Councillor Lewis was sat to my right here he would nod in agreement, when the Park and Ride scheme we implemented was not met with universal approval and look what a success that has gone on to be and has actually led us to look to delivering a second such model. The Cycle Superhighway, the wider transport policy, the moving of our fleet to alternative methods of fuel, the fact that Leeds is going to be the first city that is going to link up with a company (Northern Gas Networks in this case) to deliver a joint scheme around compressed natural gas in a location that will actually refuel our own vehicles. I think Leeds has taken a very strong lead on this agenda in the last five years.

We cannot do it in isolation. For any real significant piece of work that identifies where we sit in terms of pollutants we need money to actually finance those schemes. I am sure it was only coincidence, Lord Mayor, that that money has come into play at the time that we are now having this scheme imposed on us, but the reality of it, Councillor Bentley, is the fact that this has come about only because of a Supreme Court ruling that said to the Government, “You are behind the curve, you have got to get your act together” and in turn therefore this has been cascaded very quickly down to us with very little flesh on the bones.

The five year argument, the honest answer is this has been a pressure upon the last Coalition Government that was never acted upon sufficient that has actually brought that Supreme Court ruling about, so I would argue that perhaps the Liberal Democrat Group have not got the completely clean pair of hands that you would argue.

All that said, this is a serious issue. It is not one I think any of us want to bat about in the Chamber, it is one we have to give serious and proper consideration to because, as I say, the clock is ticking, the work has to be done, we will give a commitment in Council that that work will be undertaken but we will lead on this. We will not be dragged by the nose from Westminster telling us what is good for us. We have to actually and firmly establish what is required for this city and push the Government at that level and we are fully prepared to do that. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Harington.

COUNCILLOR HARINGTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Could the Executive Member for Children and Families update Council on the Prime Minister’s recent announcement regarding Children’s Social Care?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you. Yes, you may remember that just before Christmas the Prime Minister announced that we are one of only six Local Authorities who will be working with Government to help improve Children's Services across the country. I may be wrong but I suspect that he must think that we are doing something right, but while we are flattered that Mr Cameron has chosen to single us out in this way, I would have to say it might have been nice to have been told exactly what it was we were being asked to do in advance of the announcement.

We are still very much in the dark as to what these mysterious academy-type powers are and had absolutely no knowledge of this aspect or, indeed, any suggestion of taking over other Local Authorities in advance.

All I can say is that we have always been very open to helping other Local Authorities and have shared what has worked successfully in Leeds over the past five years with over one third of Local Authorities in the UK. We have done this in a spirit of open and transparent sharing and learning. We have made all our experience, evidence and approaches open and freely available to others and have been keen to develop partnership arrangements with other Local Authorities based on coaching, mentoring and the sharing of best practice.

Our innovative work, including establishing and embedding family group conferencing and restorative practices to support our strategy of utilising family wherever safe and appropriate, will be endorsed as one of a small number of different approaches nationally that Local Authorities could look at to help design how they would like social work to operate in their area.

This is something we are very happy to continue to do but, of course, we expect this increased confidence and responsibility to be matched by increased funding. I am sure you all feel the same. Our position is and always has been one of working in close partnership with police and other Local Authorities. We joined the DFE Framework as an Improvement Partner and are currently engaged in offering practical help and support to two specific Authorities as identified by the DFE. Since also being approached to become a Practice Partner, our understanding has been that the scope of this would provide further opportunities for us to engage with and facilitate shared learning improvement with other Local Authorities.

Now, if you recall at the last Council meeting, Councillor Carter quoted from a letter received from Nick Hudson in which Leeds was criticised. I would suggest that if Government shared those concerns they would not be approaching us for help. In fact, I am sure I can go further to allay Councillor Carter's fears by referring to Sir Michael Wilshaw's annual report which did, in fact, name Leeds as one of the Local Authorities he would like to see working to help weaker ones improve their educational standards – something to say that we are already doing. Perhaps Sir Michael was drawing on the fact that we are top of the Yorkshire and Humber region for the number of schools rated as good and outstanding with 92% of our primaries at the last count. We never thought we would say this but it is encouraging that at least one Conservative recognised the progress we have and will continue to make. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Have you a supplementary? No. Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Will the Executive Board Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning state the monitored gross number of new dwellings completed in Leeds in each of the years 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, the net additional number of dwellings in each of those years, and the latest estimates of gross and net figures so far in 2015/16?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Walshaw.

COUNCILLOR WALSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I certainly can give you those figures, so if you will bear with me, colleagues.

In the year 2012/13 we had a total gross of 1,828 with a net build of 1,801. In 2013/14 we had a total gross build of 3,201 and the net figure of 3,195. In 2014/15 we had a total gross construction of housing units of 2,323, after demolitions that is 2,226, so that is a total over that period of 7,222 out of a target figure over that three [year] period of 10,980.

I just want to give you some more detail, Tom. If you want to look at Outer South West, which the People's Republic of Morley is part of, in 2012/13 there were 203 net; in 2013/14, 251 net; and in 2014/15, 353 net. That is a total net in Outer South West of 907 units but that is based against a Leeds total of 7,222.

You can see the figures vary from year to year, don't they, but I think we are basically seeing a recovering housing sector. We are seeing some encouraging movement from developers of various scales and hopefully that will continue. At the moment there are currently about 2,197 units under construction across around about 117 sites, so when we are looking at this year, 2015/16, we are looking at a figure net of somewhere between 3,200 and 3,500 and as the year progresses the team will be able to harden that figure up for you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary? No. Councillor Dawson.

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: Could the Chair of the Transport Committee at the West Yorkshire Combined Authority please update Members on the proposed HS2 station in Leeds?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and thank you for indicating you would give me a little time to say a few words about the award. Just to let Council know that the award has already had a major impact on Government. I have a letter here from David Cameron asking for my help and support. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: About time!

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: "For me there are no New Year's resolutions, just ongoing resolve to deliver what our Party promised in our manifesto. To do this I need your support, Keith." That is what he calls, me, Keith.

The following line, I will not read it all but he says, this is the catch line and that is why people query why I got the award, "Please donate today and together we

will deliver a brighter future.” *(laughter)* I still get the letter from David, even though I have been relegated.

Firstly I would genuinely and seriously like to thank all the messages I have received from colleagues not only from my Group but across the Council and some of the messages and some of the new names I am now carrying around, some of them I cannot repeat in Council. One in particular I like, as I said to the Group on Monday, Obi-Wan Kenobi is a really good name for me, it will do for me.

On a serious note, I am really proud to be associated with Local Government. I am really proud that that Local Government is Leeds City Council and I am really proud that I have received such support from Members across parties and here, officers, the voluntary and business sector and, indeed, people who have voted us to lead this great city. Many thanks and, as I say, it is a great honour for Local Government and for everybody who is associated with that in Leeds.

On the question that Neil asked me about the location, given that we started off at Crown Point with the location, to get it moved to the biggest station in the North of England with 27 million people so it becomes integrated, it becomes literally on the same footprint, allows us to achieve our three major ambitions with this new station. Firstly, it becomes a national transport hub with services going from east to west high speed and north to south, connecting our great cities in this country.

The second, and not to under-estimate this, it is really important having experienced some of the local journeys, it provides an easy transition from high speed into regional transport. Anybody who has travelled to Huddersfield will know that it is a very slow, outdated process. It can take you up to 40-odd minutes just to get from Leeds, 18 miles. Anybody who has travelled to Halifax, as I did yesterday, will know that the biggest challenge we have in this region if we are really serious about boosting the economy is making that greater connectivity locally and within the region.

Our third ambition, and again this is something that I know that Leaders have spoken about, getting a new station which we want to be as iconic as St Pancras will actually be the catalyst to produce thousands of new homes, sustainable communities, a thousand new jobs and at last deliver the regeneration that the south of Leeds deserves and needs over a long period of time. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary question?

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: Yes, please. Could I ask the Chair of the Transport Committee to look at another station in Leeds, in Morley, and can he comment on any potential improvements there, particularly disabled access and additional car parking.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: That is a very smooth transition to another question, Councillor Dawson but, as you know, Councillor Lyons, my advisor and my escort to big events like this, came across to Morley to have a look at the Morley station. It is clearly, on a really serious level, completely unsuitable for modern day transport. Disabled people have to walk around rather than go down. At the moment the good news is that we are working with Network Rail, Northern Railway, Leeds City Council on a feasibility study and we are also working on a development plan

that will have a look at step-free access, ramps and improving the car park facilities and we hope to bring you better news and more news further down the line, but thank you for your lobbying and thanks for your question.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Is the Executive Board Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning confident that the locations proposed for the 70,000 additional houses in the Site Allocations Plan are sufficiently resilient to the risk of flooding?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Congreve.

COUNCILLOR CONGREVE: In Councillor Lewis's absence, and as the Chair of the Development Plans Panel, I am confident that we have looked at flooding as part of the drafting of the Site Allocations Plan and we will continue to do this. The Flood Risk Sequential and Exemption Test background paper which is part of the Draft Site Allocations Plan document runs to a total of 260 pages of detailed work.

We have consulted with the Environment Agency and through Site Allocations we are looking to take flood risk into account. The Site Allocation Plan will, of course, be subject to public examination and the Inspector will no doubt want reassurances that the proposed allocations are consistent with national guidance on flood risk.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary?

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I suppose that is slightly comforting and slightly not comforting. I am just wondering whether the Executive Member is familiar with two sites in my ward, namely Wills Gill and Ings Lane, two sites which on Boxing Day were quite flooded. Ings Lane floods regularly and Wills Gill joined it on Boxing Day. These are two major sites in the Aireborough HMCA for housing and quite honestly anybody who had been living in a house there on Boxing Day would have been in a similar state to anybody on the shallower parts of Kirkstall.

I would just like to know whether the Executive Member will undertake – you say that there is going to be further investigation but I would like an undertaking that those two sites will receive particular attention and reconsideration before the Site Allocation Plan gets written in stone.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Congreve.

COUNCILLOR CONGREVE: As I have already said, the Development Plans Panel will be considering flooding as part of the Draft Allocations Site Plan. The consultation on the Site Allocation Plan has recently ended and we will be discussing the next steps at the Development Plans Panel meeting on 19th January. We have, of course, consulted with the Environment Agency and will be looking at any responses they have as part of this process.

We take flood risk extremely seriously, as our response to the recent flooding devastation locally has demonstrated. While we have to follow Government guidelines on flood and draining for new developments, our decisions are informed by

full flood risk assessments performed by us with the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water and we will refuse those that the Environment Agency object to.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Would the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adults please confirm that she is still committed to the goals of the Commission for Local Government?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Yes, I can. *(laughter)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary question?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Lord Mayor, would she therefore agree with me that...

COUNCILLOR: No! *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...the outcome for the Dolphin Manor Trust, who were promised four years ago that the Council would work constructively with them for them to take over residential care for elderly adults in the Rothwell community, for that not to have happened is a dereliction of that commitment to the Commission for Local Government which shows that Local Authorities should be committed to encouraging civic entrepreneurship, the growth of the Third Sector and particularly in that sector's delivery of social care within those Authority boundaries, and could it have something to do with the light touch leadership in a merry-go-round of three separate Social Care leads in the space of this administration?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I could not disagree with you more. The Council is committed to working with social enterprise in Rothwell, as you well know, in the development of extra care housing and nursing care beds to meet the current gap in provision for older people in the Rothwell area and, as you also know, the Dolphin Manor Trust and local ward Members, along with myself and the Director of Adult Social Care, are still having ongoing talks to achieve that end, so where you get the idea that there is already an outcome I do not know.

The aims are to deliver high quality care across all settings and ensure that all older people have a choice in where they live in older age in the Rothwell area. I would like to encourage Councillor Golton and Dolphin Manor Trust representatives to do what Councillor Bruce and I did earlier this week, and which Councillor Nagle is in the process of organising, which is to visit an extra care housing site and hear directly from people who are living there about the additional benefits that it brings to them.

We had a really fantastic visit to one of our extra care facilities in Leeds and heard directly from older people how positive they were about it as a way to live. As a model it allows independence, privacy and personalised care of varying levels in accordance with the individual's needs, as well as a more social and communal

offering in accordance with the way in which the Council sets out its ambitions for older people in Leeds to live their lives and maintain their independence for as long as possible within a safe and secure environment with staff available 24 hours a day should they be required. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Macniven.

COUNCILLOR MACNIVEN: Does the Executive Member with responsibility for Health, Wellbeing and Adults agree with the report supported by Age UK, which says that “the future of adult social care looks bleak”?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor; thank you, Councillor Macniven. It is clear from the Annual Association of Directors of Adult Social Services Budget Survey that the cuts to adult social care are deepening. There have been five years of funding reductions nationally, totalling £4.6bn and representing 31% of real term net budget cuts to Councils. In 2015/16 adult social care budgets were reduced by a further half a billion pounds in cash terms. Taking the growing number of older and disabled people into account, this means that an additional £1.1bn alone will be needed to provide the same level of service as last year.

There are now £420,000 fewer people nationally receiving social care services since 2009/10 and of those still supported a significant number receive less care as a result of Government cuts to Local Authority budgets. Many Councils like Leeds have prioritised adult social care in the face of ongoing and significant reductions to their overall budgets. Councils have tried to protect social care spending at the expense of other services but are running out of the ability to do that in the future. Allowing Councils to levy an additional 2% precept to fund pressure in social care sets a dangerous precedent for shifting a proportion of funding of what should be a nationally funded service like the NHS is to Local Authorities. Indeed, the way funding formula for Councils is comprised means that those Councils with the greatest need are able to raise the least money.

We are at risk of an increasingly unfair society where those who can afford it will arrange private formal care with others reliant on family and friends for their care, unless there is a change in Government policy. In Leeds we are proud that we are a compassionate city that does care for its most vulnerable citizens. The proportion of the Council’s budget that pays for adult social care has been increasing each year to its current rate of 37% of the overall Council budget. We have signed the Ethical Care Charter to ensure we pay a fair fee for care and that in turn supports the fairly paid and well supported workforce.

We have had to make hard decisions about our own services in order to make the Leeds pound go further but at the end of the day Leeds and Local Government cannot do it alone. Social care deserves the same security of funding as our precious National Health Service. I hope everyone in this Council Chamber would support that ambition, otherwise I would tend to agree with Councillor Macniven and Age UK that the future of social care will, indeed, be bleak. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Is there a supplementary question? No.

This is where we take our 4.9 minutes break.

(Short break)

ITEM 12 – MINUTES

THE LORD MAYOR: We will now begin with Item 12 on the Agenda which is the Minutes. Can I call upon Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I move that the Minutes be received, Lord Mayor.

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) Economy and Culture**

THE LORD MAYOR: We will now go on to Exec Board Minutes. The first one is Economy and Culture. Councillor Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and I see people were not following your 4.9 minutes instruction there! I am speaking on Minute 81 and Minute 106 of the Exec Board Minutes and I have long since taken a very personal interest in the South Bank and its regeneration because for many years my own business was actually based right next door to Tower Works on Globe Road. We did move away from there some years ago so it is not a personal financial interest any more but it has always been an area in the city that certainly would indeed benefit from some of the regeneration that is certainly now coming along.

As an aside, I would absolutely support Councillor Golton's view that our Council does indeed need more Councillors with a real business background like, if I might be so bold, Councillor Lamb, Councillor Procter, Councillor Procter and, of course, myself.

The proposals for development on the South Bank are certainly to be welcomed. The opportunity within the city to create 35,000 new jobs is undoubtedly a golden one and what it shows is where we as a city engage with national Government and where we engage with private industry and bring those three parties together, we can truly achieve great things.

Members will know that parts of the South Bank were actually impacted by the recent flooding and it is therefore so essential that we do play our part as a Council when formalising the final scheme that flood risk in that part of the city is properly taken account of and its impact properly minimised. In that vein I want to echo Councillor Yeadon's thanks and recognition for all those volunteers from across the UK and indeed the world who helped with the clean up, including the Disaster

Relief Delegation sent over from IsraAid in Israel. I suppose it is good to know when the chips are down who our friends truly are.

Turning now to the other Minute I am speaking on for about 30 seconds, the City of Culture, I know there is a concern across the city to ensure that our City of Culture bid is one that truly involves the whole city and what I can assure Members is, having been an initial member of the Steering Group, the view very much from across the board from the Steering Group was the only way that this will go forward as a successful bid is that the whole city is involved and, indeed, the initial proposals in the skeleton form very much a donut approach of ensuring that it is the outer part of the city that needs to lead into the centre and not the other way around. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have learned a valuable lesson there – do not follow Councillor Cohen because he has said all of what I was going to say! That has saved you some time!

Just to reiterate, the Minutes I am talking about are Minute 81 and Minute 82. In respect of the South Bank regeneration, just a couple of things I will now say. It will be interesting to know as a result of the Special Council Meeting we had about manufacturing as to what is happening about looking more into the suppliers into the regeneration there. Are we actually doing something as a result of that meeting? It was a constructive and positive meeting so are we now implementing anything that came from that particular meeting? The other thing is to reiterate, because you would not want me to stand up and not talk about housing, the redevelopment, if we are going to go ahead with the brown field site, which I do totally support, that we make sure we put appropriate flood measures in place and we also put appropriate investment into the gulleys that are in the area, both in terms of the gully cleansing and in terms of the capital repair that is needed to the broken gulleys that we have got throughout the city.

Turning to the Capital Investment one, I was disappointed to see that there was not any mention of the infrastructure plan that we have got for this city – or do we have an infrastructure plan? Has anybody seen the infrastructure plan of what we need to meet the housing needs that we have got in this city? Why has that not been reflected in there?

We know it is not going to make great reading. Why has that not been reflected in there so that we have got a rough idea of what level of investment is needed? Also, where are you going to get the funding from? If any of you have looked recently at the Government consultation on CIL funding that is one of the questions they ask, what are we going to do about it?

Just to reiterate, the other thing I was going to say is about highway maintenance. Can you look again at trying to capitalise more highways maintenance and bring the city up to a reasonable standard?

Can I welcome the investment in the market. As a newly appointed member of the Markets Board can I welcome the money that has been put into it and the hard work that everyone is doing in working with the traders, and the work that Councillor

Harper has been doing as well in order to bring this situation. It is much appreciated and also the work being done about broadband and superconnected cities because it is vital that we get that put in because it is needed further.

The one thing I would say, and it is to reiterate something Councillor Leadley said, one way you could make some savings is not to invest in NGT, which will not bring the benefits that some of you think are going to come in this city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Caroline Anderson.

COUNCILLOR C ANDERSON: I am speaking to Minute 81 on page 151 of the Exec Board Minutes.

On 16th September 2015 I noticed on the BBC website that the Victorian Society had published its annual list of the most at risk Victorian and Edwardian buildings in England and Wales. I had a read through this and was interested but saddened to note that Hunslet and Victoria Mills featured on this list. Both of these are Grade II listed buildings built around 1838 and 1842; Hunslet Mill thought to be the last and individually the largest of the Leeds great flax spinning mills. The report said that the buildings had been unused for decades and the developers who own them say that rejuvenation remains unviable.

I was concerned that these important historical buildings should not be allowed to lie derelict and unloved. I was not sure what the Council might be able to do but I wrote to the Director of City Development to ask what might be feasible for the Council to do. The day after I sent the email I received a reply to say that a report had just been published for September's Exec Board looking at Hunslet Riverside and that covers this building. I am pleased to report he confirmed the Council were in dialogue with the owners to bring about proposals as to how this can be brought back into sustainable use.

I am delighted that this is the case because we must seek to preserve our history and heritage at every opportunity. Leeds has a good record in this regard. When we are on a top ten list we want it to be for something positive for our wonderful city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Truswell.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Lord Mayor, I am sorry that my comments on Minute 81 page 151 cannot be quite so anodyne as those we have already heard from the Conservative benches.

When I first joined this Council in 1982 we were already talking about Leeds as a two speed city and, regrettably, it still is. By 1982 the then Tory Government was already crucifying our industrial base on the cross of its malign and malicious monetary policies. Our manufacturing industries and the generations of skilled employment that they provided have never recovered from that economic vandalism.

We often hear the mantra that Leeds is open for business and we have been hugely successful in attracting big names, but we must – and the Leader constantly

and rightly repeats this – ask not only what Leeds can do for business but what business can do for Leeds.

The massive proposed redevelopment of the South Bank sits cheek by jowl with some of the most deprived communities in Leeds – indeed in the UK. Lord Mayor, I am reminded of the old Bisto kids adverts – they could see the gravy, they could smell the gravy but they never got to taste it. It is vital that these surrounding communities like those in my ward get to taste the gravy from the South Bank.

Burberry is undoubtedly a fantastic acquisition for the city. It was an early adopter of the living wage and it also invests 1% of its profit in social and charitable causes. It promises a bespoke apprenticeship programme to preserve Yorkshire's unique textile manufacturing skills as well as full restoration and sustainable use of the Temple Works and the regeneration of the surrounding land.

We desperately need such reinvigoration of our manufacturing base, better jobs and an escape from the oily rag image of manufacturing that discourages so many young people, but let us not forget, as the report quite rightly acknowledges (the Executive Report that is) that Castleford and Cross Hills have lost this longstanding source of local employment to their communities and if Leeds is to be the driver of the City Region, devolved or not, then we need to remember that that status carries some responsibilities as well as privileges. In addition, I think the report is also quite right to indicate that the relocation of existing businesses in the Holbeck Urban Village to enable the delivery of Burberry needs to be handled very sensitively.

My Lord Mayor, George Osborne recently warned of new threats from far off China. Predictably he did not mention the much older threat much nearer to home – himself and the Tory Government. That is why we must seize opportunities like the South Bank redevelopment to make a real difference to the people in our communities who most desperately need us to fight their corner against the pernicious policies of this Government. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Most of the comments actually on this Executive Board arena are around the South Bank. I think we were all really excited when we heard that Burberry was going to come to the city and the fact that the investment was associated with a re-energised manufacturing outfit as well really made us feel like Leeds was renewing itself because that was the cradle of our industrial revolution and now it was going to be the place where we are going to build our future prosperity.

I have also aligned it with the item in the Executive Board Agenda which was around the Government's Finance Settlement and the difference between what we were estimated to get and what we actually ended up with, which was another £9m hole in the city's budget, and the fact that the Chancellor is encouraging people to be and asking Local Government to be more businesslike and then not being businesslike in the way that they talk about money with us just shows how short-termism the project is coming out of Number 11 Downing Street.

One of the things that is also behind the new Local Government Finance which is being put together by the Government is the fact that we will be depending

less on the revenue that comes directly from the centre but we will be given more access to our business rates. There is a certain expectation there in terms of how our business rates will grow.

We can see that there is great potential here on the South Bank that where we actually are enabled to go out there and look for business we can find it but we are not helped when the ideology of cuts means that things such as the flood defences get cut back means that that whole growth strategy in the business area actually could potential come to a halt because when people in their mind's eye hear of Leeds in the past few months what have they thought of? They have thought about the river that runs right through the heart of our city and that river is seen as a threat. We cannot allow for our future business investment to be put under threat by the uncertainty around how we are able to protect the very land which is our future prosperity and where we are supposed to be getting our future Local Government taxation from.

This is just a plea. Our Leader, Judith Blake, is going to Whitehall again. Please take that message to them as well. If they are going to depend on business rates being our new revenue to fund our city's services, then they really need to be enabling us to help those businesses come to us. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Nash.

COUNCILLOR NASH: My Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, it gives me very great pleasure to also speak on Minute 81 on page 151 regarding the regeneration of the South Bank of the river, an area I have represented for over 25 years.

I am not going to repeat all that was said when the announcement was made regarding Burberry relocating to Leeds, nor to repeat what has been said this afternoon, except briefly to say that this is a real feather in Leeds's cap and I do welcome the opportunities for my constituents who long to have access to highly skilled, professional and respected jobs on their doorstep. Burberry has the potential to bring really great jobs into the local economy. Our Council is to work with Burberry and with the education and training providers to develop a skill and employment plan.

Up until a few years ago for too long the city turned its back on this former great industrial area. Currently the talk is about creating a Northern Powerhouse. Hunslet and Holbeck used to be just that, exporting products including textiles and ready-made clothing to all over the world. Burberry will revive that historical trade.

I speak not only as a Councillor representing the area but also as the Council's Heritage Champion. Many of our industrial buildings on the South Bank have been restored to their former grandeur - for example Tower Works, Marshall's Mill, the Round Foundry, Cooke's Printworks. All of them should be tourist attractions but none more so than Temple Mills, the Egyptian temple where Burberry is to relocate, but unfortunately Temple Mills, arguably the most important and attractive of them all, has been left neglected and unloved.

The Council is to assist Burberry with the restoration of Temple Mills and will support Burberry in applying for restoration grants from other funding bodies. I look forward to the day when Burberry will manufacture its famous trenchcoat at Temple Mills and have an onsite shop which will give customers the double pleasure

of buying an iconic product in an iconic location. Thank you, my Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Renshaw.

COUNCILLOR RENSHAW: Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, I am speaking on page 153 Minute 82, Capital Programme Quarter 2 update.

Capital programmes and financial planning can be relatively dry subjects, but the real impact of this valuable work has been in the day to day lives of people in the city. In Ardsley and Robin Hood we have seen our major capital works can be long-winded, following the long closure of the Fall Lane Bridge. I will spare you the boring details but the Council has part of the responsibility for the bridge alongside Network Rail. It connects the communities of East Ardsley and Thorpe leading to the city centre. Inspections on the bridge showed the improvements were required and since 2010 there has been a three tonne weight limit. This is particularly problematic as it means buses have to take a long diversion to not use the bridge. This can make daily journeys harder, making communities feel further from each other, and impact on bus timetables, making services less reliable.

There has been a long period of negotiation between the Council, Network Rail and all three of the local ward Members have been involved in trying to restore this. It has taken us a long time, not least due to the dire financial circumstances placed on all public organisations by Central Government, but I am glad to say we now appear to be reaching agreement on getting this work done.

This is a testament to careful financial planning and detailed negotiation. Of course we would have preferred this to have been quicker but that we have got to this point at all shows the positive and co-operative way that we have been able to get a resolution that suits everyone.

We are hoping for design work to continue and for work to take place promptly. Local residents have been very patient but it is only right that work happens quickly now that agreement about finance is in place. I look forward to seeing the work take place and residents finally getting their full bus service back. Careful management of our capital allows us to be able to make a real difference in communities. By managing our capital now we can commit to supporting residents now and in the future and making improvements. We know that large capital schemes can contain longer and detailed negotiation, but when it comes together it can make a huge difference. I look forward to Fall Lane Bridge being fully reopened. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dawson.

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I am also speaking on Minute 82 page 153 on the Council's Capital Programme. In particular I want to focus on the economic benefit of the capital programme in Leeds.

In total we are spending £1.1bn over a period of four years and this has increased by other £100m since the budget was approved in February 2015. The aim of the expenditure is to improve the Council assets, to improve our infrastructure in Leeds and crucially support the growth of the Leeds economy.

Let us just look at some of the significant schemes in the Capital Programme and their economic impact. £28m on infrastructure in the Enterprise Zone, including such things as the Temple Green Park and Ride, creating four million square feet of purpose built industrial distribution and office premises, creating around 7,000 jobs. Already people like John Lewis, their delivery hub, is moving there.

£7.4m on Kirkstall Forge railway station and developments, which should create around 2,400 jobs plus the spin-off of an improved transport link into Leeds City Centre, a seven minute journey from Kirkstall into Leeds.

Spending £2.2m on Sovereign Square improvements in the city centre green space improvement have attracted KPMG, high profile national organisation, to locate their office there.

As has been mentioned, £13m on investment in Kirkgate Market, improving the market, encouraging more customers and support for the traders.

An assessment of our economic impact of the Council's programme shows we support two-and-a-half-thousand jobs in Leeds. We should compare our ambitious programme to the Government's capital spending on infrastructure, which has fallen by around £15bn since 2010. Given the economic impact capital spend can have, the infrastructure that we get for the economy, the cutting of capital expenditure by the Government is undoubtedly short-sighted.

Looking at an example of capital investment, I look back in the 19th Century, back to 1871, when the leadership of the Council, under a guy called John Barran, who was a Liberal, decided he wanted to spend £139,000 of capital spend purchasing a park three miles north of the city centre. This was controversial. The total spend was £17,000 more than it cost to build the Town Hall. Shall we say the more conservative forces on the Council called this a White Elephant, a waste of public money, it was too far from the centre to benefit the working classes. Despite bitter objections at the time Roundhay Park was purchased and has been one of the jewels in the crown of Leeds ever since. In retrospect, it was an example of a very wise capital investment that has enormously benefited the city of Leeds.

I believe the investment programme we are currently delivering will also deliver large economic benefits to the people of Leeds for decades ahead. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Groves.

COUNCILLOR GROVES: Thank you, Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors. I am speaking to Minute 105 page 170, on the initial Budget proposals for 2016/17 and obviously it is not a pleasure to be speaking on this Minute.

The last time I spoke in the Chamber I discussed the forthcoming report from the Cross-Party Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board on fees and charges. The draft report was discussed at the last Scrutiny Committee with the Leader and Councillor James Lewis and they both highlighted the very difficult financial challenges we face in the coming years.

The purpose of the inquiry was to look at income generation and recommend options to increase levels or new sources of income that could potentially ease budget pressures. Some of you may have already seen the contents of the report which does offer some recommendations which could be looked at to raise further income. We know that Leeds is ranked fifth out of eight of Core Cities in terms of income from fees and charges per head of population, and below average when compared to other Core Cities in charging in some service areas.

The Council's income per head of population is £3 lower than average and every one per cent equates to an extra million in fees and charges if we were to increase them, so the potential for income to meet the financial pressures is clear.

The need to look at income generation is even more crucial. After the Local Government Settlement in December last year we were prepared for £24m reduction in funding; we faced £34m. £10m more cuts to Leeds was distressing and devastating news. You instantly know that essential services in your communities will suffer. Communities rely on services and regardless of what the Government's own Councillors have told them, the Government cut a million here, a million there and it is far too easy to make these decisions in London and not have to think about the huge impact these cuts have on people in this city.

We all in this Chamber see and have to deal with the consequences in our wards and in our surgeries and it seems that austerity remains on the agenda. I am sure colleagues on Scrutiny Board Committee and this Chamber will agree with me when I say we did not become Councillors to make some of the difficult decisions and recommendations which are featured in the report. However, as the cuts continue year after year and demands for services still remain high, it was important that we stressed the need for a serious debate on future income generation and what we will do to raise it.

THE LORD MAYOR: You are over the time, Councillor Groves.

COUNCILLOR GROVES: OK, I will finish, Lord Mayor. We will continue to work hard and hopefully meet the challenges for the sake of the citizens of Leeds. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Hyde.

COUNCILLOR HYDE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to speak on Minute 105 page 170 on the Initial Budget Proposals.

On 25th November Mr Osborne made his Autumn Review Statement, much lauded by the press. One of the quotes was, "Osborne ushers in the end to austerity". Councillor Groves has just quite clearly said to Council that that is not the case. Austerity is not dead, it is around. 56% cuts by 2019 is ridiculous.

Really, Lord Mayor, I want to talk about actually the north/south divide. The discriminatory way that the Government is cutting the grants to Local Authorities, the north/south divide is very clear. It is not dead and I can prove that. I acquired a map, Lord Mayor, of percentage cuts of Local Authorities (*Councillor Hyde held up the map*) and you can see that the dark red are mainly northern Authorities who have between 10-12.5% and Leeds is one of those on this map. If you look lower down,

the lighter pink and the blue, they are actually getting increases or zero or up to £100 per family or individual cuts to their grants. It is obviously purely about looking after their own because northern Authorities, if you look on this map as well, most of those dark red ones are our Authorities, Labour Authorities, who are receiving the substantial cuts to their granting.

Some other interesting statistics: 46 out of the 56 Authorities who have the most deprived communities, since 2010 have sustained substantial grant cuts and are continuing to do so. It is not really about need, it is about something else and I think the whole system that we have around the granting allocations, even under the new model that Councillor Golton mentioned, is actually unfair and unjust and Leeds people deserve better from this Government. I do not think we are going to get it but I do think we deserve better.

Clearly Mr Osborne, and if you look at this map Mr Osborne's own constituency has got zero to £100 individual cut against other Authorities. If you look at their rates around spending power, if you take Leeds since 2012, 21% reduction in spending power; if you take London, above the national average, 174% increase in spending power. That is not my figures, that is their Government's figures, that is the Tory Government's figures.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor, red light.

COUNCILLOR HYDE: Sorry, Lord Mayor. Just to wind up then, I think the whole system is totally unjust and it needs actually looking at and it is in favour of the south not in favour of the north. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Pryor. Councillor Cleasby is not speaking. Sorry, I was told he was not speaking.

COUNCILLOR: That was a wish! *(laughter)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We were told you were not speaking but I will rectify that. Councillor Cleasby.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. If I could speak to the same Minute as Councillor Hyde and if I may be bold to stray into Minute 106, to be helpful, Leader and Council, referring to funding of Leeds Community Support Officers.

One thing that has always surprised me and I find unusual is that every so often I get an email from the Police and Crime Commissioner telling me that he has got the proceeds of crime available to be distributed to community groups. I find that rather odd if the law, City Solicitor, does not allow that money to be used for funding then the police and then I think, Leader, you ought to be talking with the Government and getting that changed. It does seem rather odd that if the police are as efficient as they tell us and there are huge proceeds from the crime that they are defeating, well, let us use it on the police force and then in Horsforth we would not, with a Town Council, have to be putting money into funding PCSOs ourselves. That is that.

The other thing, Leader, you received an email from me in the last couple of days about the ballroom in Horsforth's Mechanics Institute which is at risk of being

taken over as Horsforth Housing office. That does seem a shame and that is where I turn to 106, where it is our City of Culture. I would have thought people who are teaching ballroom dancing should be part of our initiative in our bid towards City of Culture and especially, Leader, if you would look at the email again, because the company concerned have a lot to offer us but more importantly you need to look, Leader, at their criticism of the way we as a city book our facilities. It is counter-productive.

Thank you, Lord Mayor, for your generosity. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We have now run out of time on that section - *(interruption)* not much I can do about it, it is out of my control!

(c) Joint Committees

(ii) West Yorkshire Joint Services Committee

THE LORD MAYOR: We now turn to page 15 and we will look at the reports until 4.50, when Councillor Blake will then begin to do her summing up.

Joint Committees, Councillor Grahame.

COUNCILLOR P GRAHAME: Thank you, my Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors. I am speaking today on Minute 44 page 442, regarding the importance of a strong Trading Standards Service in our city.

Trading Standards are essential for enforcing many legal requirements we take for granted and play a key role in overseeing progress we all rely on for the continuation of a safe and law abiding society. One of the most pressing issues facing the West Yorkshire Trading Standards Service at the moment is the circulation of illegal tobacco and counterfeit cigarettes. This is a real problem in the region as a survey in 2014 revealed that over a third of smokers in the region have been offered illegal tobacco. Clearly this Council is doing its best to encourage people to stop smoking altogether but these illegal cigarettes are even worse, with research showing they contain 78% more tar than genuine products – a worrying trend when we also consider that illegal tobacco is much easier for children and young people to get hold of.

This is why campaigns such as Keep It Out, which took place in the summer of 2014, are so important. They raise awareness across the region of the issues caused by illegal tobacco and help generate intelligence from the public which can be used by West Yorkshire Trading Standards Service to initiate enforcement visits potentially ending in prosecutions.

The other major issues standing in the way of enforcing trading standards in Leeds is the false advertising some businesses employ to sell legal highs. Packaging these substances as plant food or research chemicals allows shops to sidestep the Medicines legislation which only states that these products cannot be advertised as fit for human consumption, although national legislation will soon provide a blanket ban for these substances.

It remains extremely important to continue tackling the issue through as many avenues as possible. Only in March last year the West Yorkshire Police revealed

there had been a 15-fold increase over the last three years in reported incidents involving legal highs, a clear demonstration that enforcing trading standards remains a key pillar of combating crime in our communities.

When trading standards are properly followed by businesses they ensure the continuation of people's livelihoods within that sector and also provide the public with a quality of service they have a legal right to. It must therefore remain a priority within Leeds to continue promoting a strong Trading Standards Service and ensuring everyone knows about the consequences if they are not followed. We should make more publicity for Leeds City Council's involvement in support of West Yorkshire Joint Services. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake to sum up. Do you wish to forego that and sum up at the end?

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: I do not think I can add to the excellent contribution that Councillor Grahame has made but actually Councillor Grahame was ill before Christmas and she arranged for her senior officer to come to meet me and I have to say that it was one of the most interesting meetings I have had recently, and I look forward to sharing the incredible intelligence that comes through this committee. It covers so many areas of life that are of huge importance including, I have to say, issues like safeguarding, safeguarding of adults, and particularly issues around fraud and there is a piece of work about people who take their personal payments and misuse them.

I really commend the Minutes to everyone but look forward very much to learning more about this really important area of work. Thank you. *(Applause)*

(iii) West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Iqbal. We are on page 15, we are on West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel.

COUNCILLOR IQBAL: Sorry, Lord Mayor, to go out for a comfort break. That is a minute gone now! The Lord Mayor is in a tough mood today. I saw the mover with the young kiddies.

Lord Mayor and fellow Councillors, I am speaking on page 414 minute 2.4 of the Police and Crime Panel meeting on 13th November last year on officer ethnicity.

As a member of the Panel I feel it is important that Council also thinks about this issue. Of course, it is preferable that our emergency forces reflect all the communities in our city. Our police force is there to keep all of us secure and it does so best when everyone feels that they are part of it. We know that recruitment of officers from the black, Asian and minority ethnic community has been a challenge for some time right across the country. Indeed, figures released recently from the Guardian show the scale of this challenge. In West Yorkshire 18.2% of the population identified themselves as from the BAME community, but only 9% of applications to the force come from those communities. This picture is represented across the country and West Yorkshire is by no means alone in seeing this.

I do not think we should get caught in navel gazing and hand wringing about this. What we need to do is take positive and clear action in order to try and ensure that people from all communities are interested in working for the police and they are encouraged to do so. This can be through our marketing, through the way we try to interest young people into joining the police and by working to show that this service is a valuable and important part of our community life.

At the meeting we discussed looking at what other forces are doing, particularly with regard to the College of Policing Equality and Diversity Initiative. We know a one size fits all solution would not necessarily work but I hope that we will be able to look at what other forces are doing to see if there is more we can achieve.

I know I would be proud if a relative or friend decided to become a police officer. Their actions in the last few weeks alone in helping with the floods should once again make us proud of the police. I hope that we can find ways to ensure people from every community would want to offer their service to the police. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am also referring to the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel Minutes and have some concern at what is recorded in Item 7 on page 415 which relates to the use of pre-charge bail by West Yorkshire Police. As Members will probably know, suspects can be put on police or pre-charge bail whilst investigations are being made and during this time the suspect has neither been charged nor been brought to court. It is important, therefore, both in the interests of the rights of the individual and in the interests of justice that people are not on pre-charge bail for an unnecessary length of time.

On the face of it then it is a matter of concern. In the West Yorkshire area in November 2015 there were 436 people who had been on pre-charge bail for over six months. Now admittedly that number had come down from 859 in 2013 and the police should be congratulated on achieving that, but if you look at the reasons why people have been on bail for such a length of time, the police cite that length of time to get forensic and medical evidence and lack of overall supervision of the bail system. If you look at some benchmarks, for example South Wales Police had only one person who had been on bail for over six months, whereas West Yorkshire Police say it can take up to a year to get computer downloads and South Wales Police get theirs done in six weeks. Medical data to South Wales Police can be received within 24 hours; in West Yorkshire it is four months. This is not a question of administrative backlog. These timescales are affecting people's lives and the course of justice.

I am pleased that this is being looked at by the Police and Crime Panel and I would urge Members of this Council who are on that Panel to continue the scrutiny of that important subject. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Police and Crime Panel has been working alongside the Police and Crime Commissioner, Mark Burns-Williamson, since 2012 and in shadow form since 2011. We are here to support the

residents of West Yorkshire to ensure the PCC meets the needs of the people he has been elected to serve. I think the Panel has been effective in its purpose and I wish to pay tribute to the cross-party and independent members of the Panel, including former Councillor Les Carter, for their sterling work and commitment to community safety and the people of West Yorkshire.

The Panel has held the PCC to account robustly and consistently on a range of issues including, as we have heard, the appropriate use of bail, data integrity, recruitment of a representative and balanced workforce and use of resources, particularly around things such as the £20m Transformation Fund, the Strategic Policing Requirement, as well as managing the reduction in funding from the Home Office.

We have negotiated additional expenditure for West Yorkshire Councils in areas such as domestic violence and funding from PCSOs as part of the Precept and we have maintained dialogue with key partners like Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, the Chief Constable, all West Yorkshire Leaders and Community Safety partnerships so that we can triangulate the information that the PCC gives us – we trust nobody – but also to ensure that we continue to hold him to account for the issues that matter to us all.

As we enter the final months in the lives of the current elected PCCs, it is interesting to note that 50% of the existing cohort do not intend to stand again – confirmation, if this were needed, that the role of the PCC is a poisoned chalice and despite the hard work, commitment and support of Panels like West Yorkshire's, the institution of the PCC as an ideology remains flawed, expensive and, most importantly, undemocratic. *(Applause)*

(d) Scrutiny Boards

(ii) Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have been trying to make this speech...

THE LORD MAYOR: Just keeping you on your toes!

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: You certainly do – you always have, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I do not know what to say to that!

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: I want to talk about the Scrutiny Inquiry, Minute 42, which is Preparing for the Future – Supporting Special Educational Needs and Disabled Young People. One of the key areas of discussion is recorded as being the importance of Special Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs) developing workstreams that support the whole family.

It has been estimated that there are around 800,000 children with a disability in the UK and it has also been estimated that 80% of disabled children will have one or more siblings. There has been very limited investigation or research into the issues

affecting the siblings of disabled children and what there has been has been mainly focused on their roles as young carers, but families with a disabled child face a number of additional difficulties and a higher rate of social exclusion than other families, so it is important to look at the question what is the effect of the child's disability on their non-disabled brothers and sisters.

Information from the charity called SIBS, which is a national charity based in West Yorkshire which looks after the welfare of brothers and sister of disabled children, SIBS tells us that brothers and sisters of disabled children would like more attention from their parents, would like more information about their brother's and sister's disability, would like to know how to cope with difficult situations, would like it if other people understood what it was like to have a disabled brother or sister and would like it if they did not have to do so much to help the family.

These are difficult and hard messages and I hope the Scrutiny Board will look into the special needs of brothers and sisters of disabled children and how these needs can be met. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Sue Bentley to sum up.

COUNCILLOR S BENTLEY: Thank you very much, Councillor Bentley. As you know we are doing an inquiry into what it is like for young people with special educational needs and disabilities, what it is like for them to grow up in Leeds. Our Board understands the importance of the whole family and working with the whole family and I am very pleased that you have raised this issue because this is a group of young people who are often marginalised and often unrecognised not only for the fact that they are often young carers but also they do get bullied at school and suffer unfortunately because of their siblings who have got disabilities.

You will be pleased to know, Councillor Bentley, that we shall be inviting the Chief Executive of SIBS to our Board meeting and we look forward to hearing her evidence, because I think there is a lot of information that a lot of us are ignorant about, so thanks very much for raising it. Thank you. *(Applause)*

(v) Scrutiny Board (Environment and Housing)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on page 209 Minute 56 but the bit that I am specifically looking at is at the top of 211, which is Local Lettings Policy.

As this Council will be aware, neither us nor the Greens have any members on the Housing Committee and it is very difficult sometimes to put our particular point across about what we think in our areas of the city. There is democratic deficit that needs to be looked at.

When we look at specifically Local Lettings Policy and certainly what has happened in Morley with Local Lettings Policies, they have been an overwhelming success. Certainly if we look at places like Elmfield Court or Lewisham Court in Morley, these are three-floored buildings where certainly historically before there were Local Lettings Policies we were in a situation where it was not unusual to have a

young person at the top, a middle-aged person in the middle and an older person at the bottom and trying to mix all of those different lifestyles clearly did not work, as a result of which you have got a lot of hassle and tension and a big drain in terms of housing management and trying to sort out those difficult and often competing lifestyle where people get up at different times and go to bed at different times and just have a different approach to the way that they live their lives.

We did introduce it to those particular blocks, Local Lettings Policies that basically said people need to be over 45 and as a result of that change, and that occurred when we did have the ALMOs, the ALMOs that worked well and actually put things down to a more local level and created more effective policies and approaches, what has happened since that particular point is the necessary housing management in those particular blocks has decreased and we have a more harmonious community than we have previously had and that has got to be all to the good.

We are not saying in any shape, way or form that you can have a Local Lettings Policy that basically says we will keep everybody over 45 out of Morley, no matter how much that might advantage us specifically. There are particular areas and estates in Morley where it does need to be a broader age range that exists at that particular point, but the Local Lettings Policies are particularly important in specific blocks and what we would say to the point where they are being examined by whoever at this particular point to look at the local impact that Local Lettings Policies have had, that is almost entirely and utterly universally popular, it is what a lot of the tenants are actually looking for, it makes for more harmonious communities and if we are revising or returning to that particular area I think it is very important that we keep hold of the positives that have occurred as a result of Local Lettings Policies not only in my area but also in other areas as well.

A review is a good thing but let us not do away with the Local Lettings Policies where they are working. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Right, it is 4.50 so I call upon Councillor Blake to sum up.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. A very wide-ranging set of Minutes today.

If I could interrupt on the domestic bliss of the Bentley family (*laughter*) and add to it, hopefully, I just want to say how much we welcome the enquiry. I think that these are aspects that often get forgotten and I always remember Middleton Children's Centre when it was first set up, one of the first in the city, employed their own social worker and one of the things they were able to do was help the parents get the fit children, if you like, the kids who are going to school, get them to school and not to focus on the child that was seen to have either the disability or particular issues that they were engaged with and it is that flexibility, I think, that we need to bring to the piece. I know Councillor Yeadon welcomes the inquiry that you are undertaking going forward.

I just want to reflect as well on the comments made by Councillor Lowe. I think, Alison, if you think about the contribution from the Honorary Aldermen and how many of them and Members of this Council who have been actively involved on the Police Committees and the Police Authority before, I think that you are quite

right, there is a democratic deficit and it is something that we are very grateful to you and your team for the work that you put in but it must be an incredibly difficult task to undertaken.

I did not realise the statistics about the numbers who are disillusioned of the PCCs. I think that is something actually we ought to look into very closely on behalf of the people that they are there to serve.

Moving on as well to align to that Councillor Iqbal's comments about recruitment, a very important issue and I am very pleased to have the update on the figures that you put forward.

Moving on to the Minutes which, by coincidence, all come under my portfolio from the first part of the meeting, I would just like to pick up Councillor Cohen's comments about the Capital of Culture. I think that it has to be the strongest thing coming through the bid, the diversity of Leeds comes through time and time again in every single conversation we have. The Steering Group is now established as you are all aware with an independent Chair and sub-groups looking at all the different aspects. Every single aspect has a dimension that relates to diversity. It can be diversity of communities but also recognising the breadth of different communities that we have across the city. If we do not capture everyone in that process, then I think we will have failed and this is such an opportunity to go out to communities who do not always feel that they are part of the bigger city and everything that the city has to offer and I think it is a very exciting piece of work and I hope that all the Community Committees also pick up the challenge and look at how the role that culture plays in all the different communities and how the elected Members on the Community Committees can work to help celebrate all of the different activities and really help us to drive progress to move us forward to a successful bid going forward.

There is a real theme running through the other papers that came to Executive Board before Christmas; ones of real opportunity. I think many of us in here have been working on some of the schemes that are coming into play in the South Bank, and Elizabeth mentioned some of the work that has been happening in her ward, those things do not happen overnight. A lot of the work around Holbeck Urban Village, for example, has been going on for 20-plus years. A great opportunity coming forward and picking up on the comments made by Councillor Wakefield in the Questions section of Council, the station coming in, a massive opportunity to bring regeneration right into the heart of the centre of Leeds.

Leeds is actually unique in having a single station. If you think about the other major cities across the North of England but even in the Midlands as well, we are the only one that has that opportunity to create something really special right at the heart of Leeds that will then open up so many opportunities in the South Bank.

Burberry, I know part of their decision to move to Leeds as well as the phenomenal site that we have heard about, was the fact that it is within five minutes' walking distance to the south of the station – a really important aspect to consider bringing it forward.

Burberry, I have to say, has given this whole city an incredible lift. I certainly, actually, was not aware of just how big a brand it is on the international stage. It is amazing how across the far east, across the world, Burberry is a brand that is

associated with the very best of British manufacturing and to have Burberry coming back into the centre of Leeds and, again, an unusual decision, right back at the cradle of the industrial revolution and particular reference to textiles, I think we are all very excited about the manufacturing element but also going forward about how we can assist them to bring a world class visitor centre right into the heart of Leeds, attracting people from all over the world coming to see the archives and the way they have built their company over generations.

I must admit I have never actually owned any part of Burberry, not even a scarf, but there you go! I can recognise quality – no freebies – when I see it and they are absolutely state of the art.

The other thing running through this, though, is the whole issue that Barry touched on that we have not had time to debate properly today and that is the State of the City Council meeting that we had on manufacturing. We have had phenomenal response back from those businesses who were delighted to be invited into the Civic Hall to meet with Members, to invite Members to go out to their premises, to help us to really understand just how significant manufacturing still is to the city of Leeds, 30,000 people directly employed in Leeds, 135,000 across the Leeds City Region, and we want that to grow. The breadth of quality manufacturing that we have in this city is really quite breathtaking, covering engineering, textiles as we have said, food and drink, medical devices and technologies and so many of the supply chain issues that go with that.

The thing I want to stress about the South Bank, the opportunities, the educational cluster that is developing there – City College, College of Building, a large secondary school and in September the first Universal Technical College – UTC – open in September and it was my great privilege last night to go to the first open evening of the UTC in the Civic Hall. We were able to facilitate that, bringing parents and kids and businesses together. Massive excitement in the room but we have huge challenges ahead of us.

One of the manufacturers said to us they had invited a group of kids round, they had had a really good visit and on the way out he heard the teacher say to the kids, “If you don’t do well at your exams this is where you will end up working.” How shocking is that?

I will wind up, Lord Mayor, but we have real opportunities ahead of us but we know enormous challenges as well, not least the financial challenges that have been outlined and we will come back to at the next Council meeting. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

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

The item I was going to discuss at the very beginning of the meeting I will do very quickly now, seeing as I forgot it. We are getting ready to begin fundraising for the Fire Walk that has become a habit, that the Lord Mayor does this event, except this time the Lord Mayor is actually walking on the coals herself, which I must be mad, I do not know how I managed to agree to it! However, I have asked Councillor Stuart McKenna if he would indeed head this up and help me organise it and he came to me today and he has agreed, so you will be hearing from one or the other of us and

I think it will be Stuart. Thank you, Stuart, for agreeing to help. Get the soles of your feet ready because I am really not convinced that if they put you in a room with somebody for an hour that they can talk to you so that you do not feel the heat of the coals. Really, I do not think they are going to be able to get that past me!

Time for tea, 25 minutes.

(Short break)

THE LORD MAYOR: Let us get rolling again.

ITEM 13 – REPORT ON DEVOLVED MATTERS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 13, Report on Devolved Matters. We have now got a period of up to 30 minutes; that does not mean we have got to take 30 minutes. Can I call on Councillor Blake first, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Do I take that as a subtle hint?

THE LORD MAYOR: No, it is just a comment.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Not so subtle! Thank you, Lord Mayor. This report is indeed following on from our intention to keep Councillor Members involved in the very important discussions that happen at the Combined Authority and indeed at the Leeds City Region LEP, the Leeds Enterprise Partnership.

We have discussed the particular issues around the devolution deals that are ongoing at the moment in this Chamber and, indeed, reported on the fact that several areas have agreed deals with Government. We are in the position that we have submitted a proposal for a devolution deal based on the Leeds City Region and there are very many sound reasons why that is the case, building on the strong working relationship between the Authorities involved in the Leeds City Region so the five West Yorkshire Authorities and Craven, Harrogate, Selby and York.

We are meeting with Lord Jim O'Neill fairly soon to see where they have got to but I understand that the Bill has now gone through Parliament, the City and Regions Bill has actually gone through today. I have not got any major update on that area to give you today but we are hopeful that there will be some discussions that lead to some information that I can report back to you all.

I think, looking at the paper today, it is very important to recognise that both of these bodies do consider very important issues that have major impact on all of us in the Region. Clearly the state of the economy in the Leeds City Region is very important to all of us but the other area that the work has been undertaken are a review into the whole area of Post-16 education, which has been done at an Area level and has been chaired by the Leader of Bradford Council, David Green. I know we are all very consciously aware that the further education sector in the country has suffered very – I do not know the word but really debilitating cuts to their budget in the sense that a lot of the work that they undertake is obviously for young people going into qualifications for the first time but also for adult returners, a whole range of issues, so that review is of huge importance to us here in Leeds.

The other area that we have been demanding for quite some time now is the establishment of a Strategic Land and Assets Board and we have had example after example coming to this Council of the surplus land from different public sector agencies and the whole debate not being joined up about how we can actually make sure that the public sector as a whole makes best use of the assets that are available and we can actually reduce the asset base if appropriate, or bring different pieces of work together, so this will bring the Homes and Communities Agency to the table in a way that we have not experienced before.

Some exciting work going on as well as the broader devolution debate that we have talked about a great deal in this Chamber. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Andrew Carter.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, my Lord Mayor. The brutal truth of the matter is that devolution progress is at best becalmed and probably dead in the water and when I heard Councillor Blake's comments, I contrast them with the seminar on devolution a little while ago, addressed by four senior Labour politicians, Council Leaders of Metropolitan Authorities. What struck me was the completely different attitude that there is in other areas where they have climbed on board with the devolution package, as opposed to the comments that we get from the Labour Leaders in West Yorkshire who seem to have contrived a situation where they are at complete loggerheads with other Council Leaders, including Labour Leaders in Hull, incidentally, across the rest of Yorkshire excluding South Yorkshire. Indeed, we are going to finish up with a Northern Polo mint if we are not very careful because everybody around us will have a devolved deal and we will be the hole in the middle.

To be frank, that is a massive, massive disservice to the people of this city because we are - and we have heard plenty about it today and I agree with a lot of it - the successful business, employment, education, commercial centre of the region and we are simply not making sure that we drive through the devolution deal that we need.

Members know my view about the City Region and its importance and we have to find somehow a way through the current impasse, but some of the performances of the Labour Leaders in West Yorkshire has made that approaching impossible but somehow we are going to have to do it.

I give you a quote. "The devolution deal has given us access to economies of scale, new funding streams and an opportunity for far more devolution." That is not me, that is almost a direct quote from the Labour Leader of a large Metropolitan Authority whose Authority has come together with other Local Authorities of different political persuasions to agree a package with the Government.

We are selling the people of Leeds short by not using that same pragmatic approach that has been used in the North-East, in the North-West, in Manchester, in South Yorkshire, in the West Midlands, in the Black Country. As I say, we will be

the hole in the middle and that is not something I want to see happen. I am more than prepared to do anything I can to try and find a way through the impasse but make no mistake about it, it has been made very, very difficult to the detriment of this city and funds available to this city that progress has not been made so far. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I sat listening to Councillor Carter's comments just then and his comments on the performance of Labour Leaders in West Yorkshire and I think he might have been asleep for most of the last five years because he has completely missed out on what we have achieved in West Yorkshire in five years which has put us ahead of lots of other areas of the country in terms of the investment and spending that we are able to see on infrastructure across West Yorkshire.

We have developed with our partners across West Yorkshire and the Leeds City Region a Transport Fund of £1.5bn which will see significant investment in schemes right across the city and right across the City Region it will bring improvements. That is way ahead of many other areas of the country, including those that have already done devolution deals with a city and I do not think any of us in this Council Chamber are going to apologise for being more ambitious than other areas of the country and perhaps the Government has been with other areas of the country.

We have seen through the devolution of the rail franchise, significant investment in railways in the North and let us not forget that when the Tory Government and their Lib Dem co-pilots at the time came out with the initial specification for the rail franchise in the North it was all about cuts and running down services and it was the work of Rail North, of Authorities across the North of England bringing in investment and securing a devolved rail franchise. We are actually starting to see some of the investments and the improvements we need to see in our rail network.

For Councillor Carter to stand up in this Council Chamber and say we lack ambition and we are not getting things done is misrepresenting the last City Deal we did with the Government, misrepresenting the work of West Yorkshire Leaders and we will not apologise for not accepting the first thing that the Government puts on the table. We will not apologise for saying we are ambitious for our region, we need to see the resources in infrastructure, in education, in training and skills that we need for our area and we are not going to settle for second best because it suits George Osborne's ambition to be Prime Minister to force through elected Mayors to satisfy his Back Benchers.

We have achieved a lot through devolution in West Yorkshire. Labour Leaders have worked together, Councils have worked together across West Yorkshire and, I have to say, we have had great working relationships with some of our colleagues from other Parties in the North Yorkshire Districts around us that have helped us to achieve that.

I do not recognise the picture that is being presented there. I think we have achieved a lot, we have done significantly better than has been presented and we will not settle for second best and that is why Councillor Blake and her colleagues are doing a fantastic job negotiating with the Government and we do have that ambition

and we do want to see that funding and we want to see the thing that sounds like the most boring bureaucratic phrase, genuine fiscal devolution so we have the resources to set our own destiny and we are not going to settle for second best. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake to sum up.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Lord Mayor, Members will recall Councillor Carter's contribution at the last Council meeting about how the West Yorkshire Labour Leaders were all falling out with each other and we could not agree on anything. I took his words to the next meeting of the West Yorkshire Leaders and I have to say they were aghast and appalled and they will set the record straight. It does not have to come from us, we have never worked more closely together on behalf of the people we represent to the extent that the districts, as Councillor Lewis said, in the Leeds City Region want to be part of the Leeds City Region. The difficulty is the legislation. Councillor Carter knows that only too well and refuses to accept that the area that we represent does not conform to the same area as Manchester, for example.

Let us be ambitious as the Leeds City Region. The performance of the Leeds City Region is going from strength to strength. I do not know if you are aware of the Small Report of Big Impact released in December which gave a very strong message about the performance of the City Region in bringing money into our area and particularly the performance on an economic model of £1 of taxpayers' money invested through the LEP has led to £10 of economic output. These are just some of the things that we are delivering. Why should we settle for second best? Why should we water down our offer just to suit the difficulties that Tory MPs and counties have in other parts of the country?

Let us be ambitious for our City, for our Region and go forward and keep negotiating, building on the fact that we have got one of the biggest growth deals in the country already before George Osborne became the Chancellor in a majority Tory Government insisting on elected Mayors. Why should we settle for a deal that does not acknowledge that we have already got in large part a significant amount of what is being offered to other areas?

We are having meetings later this week, I will report back but I have great disappointment to go back to tell the fellow Leaders, not just the Labour Leaders, of the Leeds City Region that you do not recognise the extraordinary work that we are doing together to grow and boost the economy of our region but also to help many young people, older people get the skills and get them into the employment that they need.

We are getting tired of your rhetoric, Andrew, it is doing a great disservice to people in this area and I think it is time you moved on and got a new (*inaudible*). (*Applause*)

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Rubbish.

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

WHITE PAPERS

PROCEDURAL MOTIONS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS 14 AND 16

THE LORD MAYOR: Now we move on to the White Papers. I call upon Councillor Jonathan Bentley. Procedural Motion.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I will second, Lord Mayor.

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

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 call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* The vote is CARRIED.

ITEM 14 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – PCSOs

THE LORD MAYOR: We will now move on to Item 14, White Paper Motion on PCSOs, and can I ask Councillor Barry Anderson, please.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In proposing this White Paper I genuinely take no pleasure in having to bring this forward. It has been brought forward because you are not wanting to protect the citizens of this city with the decisions that you want to make yourself and your PCC are looking to make. Nobody else is making that decision here so it is not us that are making that decision, it is your choice to put people at risk in their communities.

I have a number of concerns. I have a number of concerns over the number of PCSOs that you want. By laughing that just shows your total arrogance that you just will never, ever accept that you have got the budget, you have got to manage it, you put yourself up for election, you got elected, you have got to make the best of it, you have got to take the responsibility that goes with making these decisions all of the time.

At the moment we have 248 PCSOs in Leeds. How many are we going to have after your administration gets going in the future? At the moment Leeds spends just over £1.06m towards the cost of the 165 PCSOs that we have got, a 20% contribution, and the PCC, for those who are not aware, is looking for this contribution to increase.

Certainly the Conservatives – and I do not know whether the Liberal Democrats still want to be associated with it but we are very proud of the work that Councillor Les Carter did in terms of getting the £800,000 to make sure that we had five PCSOs in each ward in the city. We believe in everybody benefiting to the same way, nobody should be losing out under the views of the Conservatives and, as I say, it is up to the Liberal Democrats if you want to still be associated or whether you are still determined to forget that you were ever party to what happened.

We were told that the Comprehensive Spending Review was going to cut the budget. No, it did not. In fact, the Government said that overall spending will increase in line with inflation, meaning an extra £900m is going to be going into policing, so where are your scare stories that you keep putting out all the time, misleading the public so that you can then carry out your politically motivated changes that you want to introduce all the time and we have got to try to put things in a straight way forward.

Hopefully both Councillor Dobson and Councillor Blake are telling the Police Commissioner what we need in this city. We have heard just a few minutes ago from Councillor Blake as to what she is doing in terms of trying to represent us and trying to get a devolution deal. Hopefully she is taking forward a lot of movement back to the Police Commissioner and letting him know what is necessary. Is he really committed to PCSOs? He has said in meeting where I have been present that he is but by the mere fact that he is wanting to reduce funding on it, is that really correct in terms of what we are doing?

PCSOs are vital to us. They are a link to the community. They are the intelligence gathering part. When they go out there people will talk to the PCSOs where they might not talk to other police officers. They are a chance for people to impart knowledge to them that can then be brought back in again. They are a vital part of what we are doing and a number of senior police officers would not be able to police part of their areas if they did not pass some of the responsibilities on to the PCSOs in order to get things done.

Also, more importantly, communities actually respect their PCSOs, they trust their PCSOs, they are willing to work hard to getting things going.

The other part of our White Paper was about the national security issue. We cannot forget about that. We have had problems across in Brussels, we have had problems across in Paris. We have got a greater number of people coming into this area from communities throughout the world. That leads to community cohesion issues, that means we have got to look at trying to stop radicalisation. What are we doing? That is why we are suggesting that we need to get a group, a cross-party group together in order to develop a strategy because we do, at this side, have some ideas as to how you can meet the objectives that you want. If you would only ask and party with us we will help you to try and solve some of your problems but if you go ahead and keep sticking your head in the sand and keep criticising anybody who says something different, there are always alternative ways of doing things. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Amanda Carter.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. We see from the Order Paper that the Liberal Democrat Group did submit a White Paper on this subject which I have just withdrawn so that we could have a full debate, and perhaps a longer debate, and I am surprised, really, that Councillor Anderson is talking about five per ward and equal allocations across the ward because that is what our amendment is about, but it was not in the Conservative White Paper – that was all about funding, nothing about deployment, so if this Group is keen on deployment and equal allocations, I expect them to support our amendment, because that is what our amendment says.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Wait until I sum up.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: At present Leeds contributes 21% towards the cost of 165 PCSOs that Leeds funds, but when the Draft Budget proposals were being set in December the assumption at that time was that the police budgets would be severely cut back as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review, and in anticipation of this the Police and Crime Commissioner proposed that our funding for PCSOs should increase from 21% to 50%, but as Councillor Anderson quite rightly said, the Comprehensive Spending Review did not bring forward those cuts and so there is probably no reason now why the Police and Crime Commissioner needs to ask for an increase in our contribution.

We fully support the Conservative White Paper when it calls for the retention of PCSO numbers in the light of these developments and we urge the administration to negotiate with the Police and Crime Commissioner on this basis. However, only yesterday at Scrutiny we heard from the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods, Neil Evans, that the Commissioner was still sticking to the position of looking for 50% contribution from the Council. If that remains the case the decision is do we spend the same amount of money and get fewer PCSOs or retain our 165 PCSOs and try to find another one-and-a-half million pounds or so out of an already stretched budget and that is your decision, that is a decision for our Budget debate perhaps next month.

Initial budget proposals assume that we would spend the same amount as previously and fund fewer PCSOs so the issue here is how much do we value our 165 PCSOs and how essential is keeping that number and are they so valuable to our communities that we should be looking to find reductions of one-and-a-half million pounds in other parts of our budget in order to retain them. As I say, that is probably for next month's debate.

I know across all wards and in all communities those five PCSOs per ward are greatly valued and that brings us to our amendment. What, as I say, the Conservative White Paper does not mention, does not address, and why we put in our amendment, is the question of deployment across the city. The equal distribution of PCSOs across the wards, regardless of eventual number, is an important principle and one that has been debated in this Chamber many times and has been supported by the Opposition Groups.

When the Draft Budget was discussed at Scrutiny on the assumption that there would be fewer PCSOs, the implication was that the principle of equal distribution would be replaced by a policy of wholly demand-led allocation. True, many of our council services seem to be based on a reactive model, a demand-led model, whether it is street cleaning, litter picking, graffiti removal, dealing with potholes etc. There is not enough proactive, preventative work but a reaction once there has been a problem and it has been reported by a Councillor or a member of the public. The advantage of the current PCSOs model is that they are on the streets in their wards all the time, giving reassurance, picking up information, preventing problems. That is what our residents appreciate. They are not just turning up when there is a problem and when there is trouble. They are a resource for the whole city and should be equally deployed. I move the amendment, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell.

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

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

COUNCILLOR M DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In moving the Labour amendment I would just like to start by saying thank God I never really write too much down because I would have torn it up on the basis of what Councillor Anderson has brought forward this afternoon. You have got a budget and you have got to manage it.

What I can say to Council quite clearly is, we are doing just that. We are looking to put in the same amount of money next year to PCSO services as we have done this year against the backdrop of £180m cuts, we all know the figures, £34m more next year, £10m more than was anticipated and this administration is still committed to finding that funding, still committed even in those difficult times.

I think you have to frame this debate not just around the CSR this year and what the police have been given in terms of a settlement, but about a backdrop of five years before where the police have lost £140m in funding in West Yorkshire and what that actually means on the streets and with the back office staff, which are all essential and there are 2,000 of those now missing from numbers in 2010. We cannot simply say as a Council the CSR does not reflect what we thought it was going to do so therefore it is business as usual. We have to gear ourselves up, and I think Mark Burns-Williamson is doing that actually, in terms of looking forward to 2020 and saying what is going to be coming forward in terms of police cuts, and we have to make some pragmatic decisions now.

I think personally that the way that any joint funded Council, West Yorkshire Police, PCSOs, yes, there is always a strong argument to deploy them early on a ward basis and there is actually a stronger argument for our million pounds to say what we actually want those PCSOs to do in communities.

The conversations with the PCC are not complete because his budget is not framed yet, but what I can say is, Barry, we do not tell the PCC to do anything. We have a dialogue as partners and as part of that dialogue what we are saying is, Leeds has a case for as many PCSOs as we can possibly squeeze out of him. He knows that

situation. The situation is at the moment the dialogue has been very positive and we are moving to a much healthier position than we were based on this year's CSR.

I think it is fair to say that perhaps – and I only say perhaps because it is a conversation for a much broader debate – I was going to say, actually, is it time that we look at deployment, because actually the city is diverse, the city has got a huge amount of needs, different communities facing different pressures.

I think actually in light of the £140m that the Police Service has lost, in light of the fact that things are not going to get any better for the next four years, we have to have a serious, joined up, pragmatic decision about not just PCSOs' deployment but what uniformed deployment across this city looks like. If we do not have that discussion and if we do not have that debate actually we are letting everybody in Leeds down – not communities, everybody across the piece.

I think the Labour amendment makes it clear we are committed to PCSOs, we are committed to putting our money where our mouth is as an administration, despite having to find an extra £10m on top of what we thought. It also gives a real assurance that we are still battling for Leeds, for the Council with the PCC to get as many numbers as we can for Leeds but I think the whole dynamics have changed. Yes, Les probably cut a really good deal back in the day. I wish I had his budget with which to do it. I actually congratulate former Leader Keith Wakefield and Peter Gruen, his then Deputy, for getting a really cracking deal for Leeds two years ago but, again, these are changing times, they are changing quickly and in terms of finance, despite the CSR, they are not getting any better and Leeds has to do the very best it can in terms of the PCSOs that we pay for and deploy but we also have to have a broader narrative about what policing looks like in Leeds, what is the best we can do for our money. I move the Labour amendment, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Partnership working and accountability. The Police and Crime Commissioner was lauded by – and it was brought in by the Coalition Government before somebody says “Oh, you Liberals, you were there at the time” and it was supposed to add accountability to how decisions are made about policing within the West Yorkshire area.

I can see no extra level of concern from the person who is nominally in charge of policing through the very fact of being directly elected. The fact that Councillor Lowe has already given us a verdict on the record of the office of the Police Commissioner and she, who is nearest, perhaps not dearest but certainly procedurally intimate *(laughter)*...

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: That's even worse! It is libellous!

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...with how the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner works and she comes away very unimpressed just shows us actually how accountable and how interested and how responsive that office is to local need.

I think there are some things where we go above party and in this case the fact that the Police and Crime Commissioner happens to be a Labour representative should not stop this Labour run Council being very particular about what it expects as a minimum requirement from this accountable person and to actually get from the Police and Crime commissioner a recognition that the Council's budget has been reduced to a far more significant degree than the policing budget has been, and at a time when the policing budget is publicly endorsed and supposedly protected by the chancellor because of high public concern and demand, then we need to point out that the highest public concern and demand for us across the city, if there is going to be anything which will unite every community in this city, is that they should all have equal access to the same level of basic policing and PCSOs are at their very basis that bit that the community comes into contact with and appreciates.

It might not be specific in terms of its crime outcomes because it is not directly associated with any criminal aspect, it is not involved in murders, it is not involved in whatever, but that social intelligence that they can pick from the streets is invaluable not just to crime prevention but in terms of what we are responsible for, and that is to make people feel safe. It is not simply about tackling crime as several incidents all bunch together and it becomes a statistic. It is about how people live their lives and how well they live their lives. This therefore becomes part of our Health and Wellbeing Strategy as well as simply a Crime and Justice agenda item.

I think we need to be as straightforward and as emphatic as we can be as Leeds City Council to that Police and Crime Commissioner and say we want our five PCSOs, we can only afford this, you need to stump up the rest because you have got the leeway to do it. I hope that Councillor Blake will be able to do that. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Cleasby.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It does seem that we do have another political party involved in this, doesn't it, and I mean by that the police because they have been, in my involvement with them whilst I have been a Councillor now for 20 years, incredibly political, always taking advantage of us and always pleading poverty and not able to pay for things.

I have been on their website just before I started this afternoon. You will not like what I am going to read. It says, "Recruitment update January 2016. We regret that we are not taking applications for Police Community Support Officers at the present time. Please continue to monitor" blah, blah, blah. I will tell you what they are doing – they are asking our residents to volunteer and become police volunteers or to become Special Constables. They are wanting to take advantage of us and our residents without providing the professional backing that we believe is needed. If we, Heaven forbid, should have a London or a Paris in our city, could we survive with volunteers and Specials? They want those people to be at the football match and the cricket match and the rugby match and those events so they do not have to put proper bobbies on them to make up numbers, and then at the same time they are turning to us, using our CCTV that we have to pay for, and if you do not believe me see the figures for Horsforth and Otley on the number of times they ask for it to be used for their benefit and we pay for it.

It is a nonsense what the police are asking us. The Police Commissioner is playing, I believe, politics with our residents. He has the money, as I said earlier, in the proceeds of crime. That should be enough. Let us go for it and let us work together to make sure that our residents, through us, can feel confident that they are safe. Thank you, Council. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I think it is interesting that we discuss this issue on the day when Councillor Les Carter is made an Alderman. There is some irony in that because I think Councillor Dobson is right, Les did get an incredibly good deal for the city and things have moved on, but I think it has only become more and more relevant just how important PCSOs are in that time. We have seen big changes in our city and big changes in finance in the city. However, PCSOs' roles are still as vital and as important as ever.

I think we do owe some thanks to the Chancellor for actually protecting the budget in this time. There are not easy financial decisions to be made across the board; however, protecting police budgets at the moment is vitally important in light of what we have seen of extremism and radicalisation in all countries across the world, and it was one of the reasons why I was asking that question earlier in the Council debate.

What PCSOs do is they inspire confidence and intelligence gathering in the communities that they serve. I think that actually in many of our communities – and I speak from the Outer North East area – have actually invested in the police as well. As a Community Committee we have invested in the Farm Watch scheme, the Alwoodley, the Wetherby and the Harewood ward, to bring vehicles forward for the police and PCSOs to use in doing their job. We have also seen our Parish Councils have contributed to police vehicles which the PCSOs use.

In a way I agree with many of Councillor Cleasby's points, there are lots of contributions that are made across wards in this city that go to the police coffers that actually are not being taken into account here. If we look at the Outer North East, we have seen actually that burglary, burglary dwelling, theft from motor vehicles has gone up. If the Police and Crime Commissioner and the administration want to do this on basic numbers and demand we can play that game, because we have seen in the Outer North East that crime has gone up, we have seen that there have been drug offences that have gone up, crime in the Alwoodley ward has gone up by 6.2%; the Wetherby ward by 23.4%. That is violent crime increasing by incredible numbers that we have never seen before when I have spoken with other Councillors.

If we look at antisocial behaviour in the Alwoodley, ward, it has gone up by 6.7%; in the Harewood ward it has gone up by 9.5%. We can rattle off statistics all day but what I think is not being measured here is the vital research role that our PCSOs play and they do feed into our police officers, they feed into crime. If you look at having an equal number of PCSOs across the city, the reason that has such importance as well is because crime does not respect borders, it does not respect ward boundaries. If there is a crime that is going on in the Wetherby ward there will be similar crimes taking place in the Harewood ward and that goes all across this city as well, so to base the PCSOs allocation just on some crude figures, actually that does not take into account the complexities that we have to deal with. Having five or an

equal number of PCSOs across every single ward makes a massive, massive difference.

We have been asking our PCSOs to do far more in terms of environmental assistance as well and environmental crime that happens across the city. If we reduce the number of PCSOs and we reduce the allocation we again do not know what the impact of that is going to be.

The vital role of the police and the PCSOs is one of the basic tenets of our society and one of the basic tenets of Government, which is community safety. By taking some of these decisions and by risking community safety, I think we are rolling the dice and we are looking at a destination that we just do not understand. The best thing we can do for this city, the best thing we can do for our wards is to protect these PCSO numbers and to protect their allocation across the city and to make it very, very clear to the Police and Crime Commissioner that we want to do that. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Councillor Anderson introduced his comments by suggesting some people on this side of the Council Chamber had our heads in the sand, I think he said, and having listened to the contributions from the far end of the Council Chamber so far, I am really wondering where they have been putting their heads for the last five years because the picture they have painted is one that I do not recognise at all.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Pathetic.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I am not surprised you do not want to hear your own Government's record, Andrew, but I am still going to tell people about it.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: It is your phraseology.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: We hear the suggestion down there that we should be thanking George Osborne. What should we be thanking George Osborne for? Taking £180m out of Leeds City Council's budget to cover all the vital local services at a time that Councils in the South of England are seeing some of their grants increase. Is that something we should be thanking him for? Taking, since 2010, £140m out of the Police's budget for the whole of West Yorkshire. Is that something we should be thanking the Conservatives for? No, I do not think it is and I am not surprised that people do not want to hear their Government records down there because that is the reality of the impact of cuts on our communities, and to pretend that somehow or other we can magic up money to protect these things.

It is quite interesting again, listening to some of the comments from the Liberals and Tories who complain about the Police and Crime Commissioners. Some of us have got slightly longer memories in this Council Chamber and remember exactly which Government it was that imposed Police and Crime Commissioners so we ended the accountability through the Police Authority of the Police Service to Local Councillors so we could have that proper partnership working, and introduced these Police and Crime Commissioners, elected by a very small percentage of the public which I think responded to exactly how the public views some of the creation

of these figures (it is interesting that we start talking about the devolution debate and what the Tories want to impose on the public there) and gave us this model we have got. Reduced accountability, reduced funding and I think we all would want to say to Councillor Dobson and Councillor Blake and their work with the Police and Crime Commissioner, of course we want to see them get the best deal for Leeds out of that relationship but let us not forget we are talking about an ever dwindling pool of resources that we have all been given for that partnership work that we need to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour in our area.

I think sometimes all we want to ask for is fairness. All we want to ask for is a fair deal from the Government. I was looking, interestingly, at the Local Government spending figures produced by the Government for this time. If you live in Leeds we have seen just in the latest round a 3.6% reduction in our spending power for the resources we have got for local services. If you live in Windsor and Maidenhead, the constituency of the Tory Home Secretary, the rate of decline is half that. We are not getting a fair deal, we are not getting the resources we need. We have got a Labour amendment down for this White Paper which says we work together to try and provide a sustainable solution, partnership working. That is the right approach but let us not forget who got us in this mess. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Iqbal.

COUNCILLOR IQBAL: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and fellow Councillors. I am speaking in support of Councillor Dobson's amendment.

I am sure that Members feel the same pride in our uniformed officers and the work they do in our local community. We can all no doubt recall stories recently both from our work as Members where police officers have helped us, our families and constituents through some of the hardest times in our lives. You only need to look at the pictures from the floods in the last few weeks to see the police and other emergency services working hard to protect lives and help us. I am sure we can queue around the Millennium Square sharing our good experiences of working alongside the police, so we know the value this work has in the daily lives of our residents.

Good police work is not just the high profile cases but is about really getting into communities and being a clear and visible presence. I hope that whatever the result of the negotiations about PCSO numbers the focus on community policing remains - eyes and ears, not to mention high vis vests can make people safer and maintaining a visible police presence is very important to everyone in the city.

We cannot ignore the challenge of grant reductions on both the Council and the police since 2010, rightly mentioned by my colleague, Councillor James Lewis, over £140m cut by the Government on the police budget alone. As with my colleagues on the Police and Crime Panel, ably chaired by my colleague Councillor Lowe, we see both sides of this. We cannot ignore the funding gaps that austerity has given both us and the police since 2010. Clearly we need to continue with negotiations with police and the Police and Crime Commissioner that was introduced by your Government, Barry Anderson. This is not an issue that any side of the negotiations can wave a magic wand and resolve.

Barry, I am perplexed by the wording of the Conservative White Paper which seems to suggest that the Council, the police and the Police and Crime Commissioner could just find money without this impacting on other services and not forgetting, Barry, we introduced PCSOs, it was us who introduced them and you were opposed to them. What did you call them at the time?

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Plastic Policemen.

COUNCILLOR IQBAL: Plastic Policing, thank you.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: I did?

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: The Tories did.

COUNCILLOR IQBAL: Have you been listening to the last five years of budget discussions or is it like David Cameron's letter to this Local Council Leader supporting cuts in budgets but somehow not hit the services?

I am sure negotiations will continue between the Council and the police. Those of us with the privilege of serving on the Police and Crime Panel will do what we can to square the circle of trying to keep up front line services going while austerity remains across the public sector.

To my mind Councillor Dobson's amendment reflects where we are and sets a clear ambition for the Council to work to keep the numbers of PCSOs in the city the same. It focuses on, where there is agreement, what we need to be doing now to achieve this aim. I hope you will be able to support me in voting for Councillor Dobson's amendment. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I too am speaking in support of Councillor Dobson's amendment. We have heard several times that as a result of this Government's massive cut to the police budget, £140m up to March 2016 and £180m of our funding in Local Government in Leeds has been cut, we have now lost 2,000 police officers and staff in West Yorkshire. A thousand of that number are police officers – a thousand police.

THE LORD MAYOR: Excuse me, can I just ask you to stop for one minute? I will take this into consideration. There seems to be some dispute to my left as to who I have asked to speak, so if we can sort that out. Sorry.

Councillor Lowe has been to me and said that she wants to speak.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: I reserved my right to speak.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: You did indeed reserve your right to speak, as did John Procter in the last debate, and spoke.

THE LORD MAYOR: OK, just hang fire here one moment. The way that I see it, unless I am told that legally I have got this wrong, you did reserve the right to speak and so did Councillor Lowe, but Councillor Lowe indicated to me that she

wished to speak and came and spoke to me. I have not had a message to say that you wish to speak.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I came and spoke to the Solicitor about that saying...

COUNCILLOR LYONS: It is nothing to do with her speaking now.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: ...it is when they should be called.

THE CITY SOLICITOR: If I may, Councillor Latty, the advice I gave you was that the Lord Mayor would call when she has caught somebody's eye and I think she was waiting for your Member to indicate that they wished to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: She will speak after Councillor Lowe. Please can I ask that we start the timing again for Councillor Lowe.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Thank you very much. I am speaking in support of Councillor Mark Dobson's amendment. As we have already heard, as a result of this Government's massive cuts to the police budget - £140m up to March this year and to Local Government £180m between 2010 and 2016 in Leeds alone – we have lost more than 2,000 police officers and staff in West Yorkshire. One thousand of that number were police officers.

Despite the Chancellor's Autumn Statement which you seem to be repeating quite often and the promise to freeze police budgets, the PCC then received a letter from Theresa May – as we know she is God so she must be right – and she revealed that the truth behind the lie is that there is going to be a real terms cut to all police budgets, and particularly West Yorkshire, of 1.3% over the next four years. Moreover, that 1.3% cut will only be 1.3% if Forces increase their Council Tax Precept to the maximum every year.

I thought it was Labour who you said were the high taxing Government but clearly people are going to have pressure piled on them even more having to pay higher Council Tax so that they do not lose even more police officers and police staff.

Across West Yorkshire the Core Police Grant has reduced by £6m and yet you expect the same commitment from the police and from Local Government in spite of these cruel cuts.

In short, Councillor Anderson, you have got a damn cheek. You have got some brass neck and you are bang out of order. The Liberals, you are not much better because you were part of the Con-Dem Government that made these cuts in the first place so do not sit there thinking you know better than we do on this side. You are out of order.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: You tell them girl!

COUNCILLOR LOWE: We have already lost 59 PCSOs since 2010 and if we manage to keep the ones that we have got today it will not be thanks to you, it will not be thanks to this pathetic White Paper and it will not be thanks to everyone other

than this Labour Group who work hard for the people of Leeds. I wish you did too.
(*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Amanda Carter.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Follow that one, Amanda!

COUNCILLOR AMANDA CARTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In seconding Councillor Anderson's White Paper I want to remind the Council of what I think is a major opportunity. We have to ensure the Police and Crime Commissioner understands and accepts the importance of maintaining numbers of PCSOs across all wards in Leeds – an initiative put in place by the Conservative and the Liberal Democrat administration in 2004.

We will be challenging the candidates at the PCC election and I hope every party does that and challenges every political party to guarantee to maintain the funding in order to keep our PCSOs in place and, as Councillor Anderson has just said, we as a city should be guaranteeing our share of the funding; with the Chancellor leaving police funding alone in the Autumn Statement there is no excuse.

We live in an increasingly dangerous and difficult world. The PCSOs in their own community should not be underestimated. When it comes to combating crime they are there at every turn. They go into the schools and they speak to the young people; they talk to the PCSOs when they will not talk to police officers.

Today I have heard a great deal about cuts. The reason we have got cuts, my Lord Mayor... (*interruption*)... yes, that's right, that's right, because you do not take it on board, do you? It is your Government, your Government that left the note "There's no money left". That is why we have got cuts.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You spent all the money.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: You spent the money.

COUNCILLOR AMANDA CARTER: That is why we have cut the Police budget.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Good old Gordon, saved the financial world.

THE LORD MAYOR: OK, can we carry on now?

COUNCILLOR AMANDA CARTER: I think you will find I have got the floor so I am speaking.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we let her speak, please.

COUNCILLOR AMANDA CARTER: The PCSO is such a tiny part of this budget for the Council. It is stupidity not to ensure that there are five PCSOs in each and every ward. We have to combat this terrorism. It is the biggest threat to this country, this city, to everybody in this Council Chamber and their families and we rely on the PCSOs to help us out. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell, do I understand you now wish to speak? (*interruption*) He sent a message.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I wait for everybody to stop?

THE LORD MAYOR: OK.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I was just going to say thank you to Councillor Lowe and Councillor Carter for introducing a measure of restraint to the debate. (*laughter*)

I was mindful of something we did earlier which was give the Honorary Aldermanship to various people and we gave it to the Mayor's brother. I remember on a couple of occasions when he was Leader or Deputy Leader he had the courage to stand up and say, "We got this wrong. We should do it differently." Quite frankly, even though we happened to be in the Coalition Government at the time, the Police Commissioners, we just got it wrong. In West Yorkshire anyway it is an absolute disaster area, quite frankly.

I do not believe that the people of West Yorkshire are safer, that crime is really any better policed than it was in the old days when we had the old West Yorkshire Joint Board. In fact I think that in those days actually there was much better public control over the police and the Chief Constable than there is now. The response we have got from the Police and Crime Commissioner is really very narrow in my opinion, because OK there has been constraints to his budget, we have all had that and the simple response is to just get rid of people and that is because when there was money available they just got a few more. There is no logic, there is no rationale, there is no thinking out what are we trying to do, what is the best way of doing it.

Having said all that, the one success story, the one thing you could wave about and say what is everybody really satisfied about, it is PCSOs. Actually they are extremely popular, everybody wants a PCSO, everybody sees a PCSO. They regard them as the front line in fighting crime and quite frankly if you get to Otley and Yeadon, if we did not have any PCSOs that we fund, there would not be anybody fighting crime out there.

I will give you an example because we had the senior police officer came to the Town Council last week – the senior police officer is a Constable, by the way – and gave us a report on crime. He said we have had about eight burglaries this month, eight or so burglary other, five assaults etc – not bad by Leeds standards, yes, that is not bad. I am thinking well, it is not bad. Then I said to him, "Have you caught anybody for any of these?" "No, we have not." Where is the policing in this county?

Having said all that, I think the positive thing, and we will lay it at Les Carter's door if you like, but the idea that we all got that basic policing that we have to pay for, we are paying for it, we have to pay for it, and as Brian said we actually pay for a lot of other things as well that we do not put into the equation. I think, Judith, you ought to say to the Crime Commissioner we are paying for CCTV which you are using, then I think that was the one positive statement that has provided more safety, more security for the people of Leeds than anything else the Police and Crime Commissioner could possibly have thought of.

Under those circumstances we would be foolish to get rid of it, absolutely foolish. It is not that much money but the principle that we would all get a fair share is one that everybody supports and everybody will pay for. We will support that, Labour support it, I think everybody would. It is nonsense to get rid of that and I would urge you, do not even contemplate it. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. A lot has been said about PCSOs and I do not think that any of us are going to disagree that they do a wonderful job. When they first came about I know that some people were a bit sceptical but once they were on the streets they were doing the rounds of the ward, people could see them, they were visible. Before we got five PCSOs in my ward we actually had one PC walking around the whole ward and if anybody knows Farnley and Wortley, expecting somebody to do that was fairly impossible; he tried.

PCSOs, brilliant. People love them and we want to keep them in the wards and we want to keep an equal number of them in all 33 wards. I do not think that is unfair to expect because, as I said, we all want them. We know that, yes, people can go on about budgets and whatever but surely if people are doing such a good job and keeping crime down, they are collecting information from people because people trust them, young people in my ward if there is a problem I can speak to the PCSOs and they can name them – “Oh yes, it is so-and-so and so-and-so and so-and-so.” They are doing the good stuff so please do not let us lose them, please do not let us talk about just using them, rushing them into certain wards where there are problems because you lose half of the information if you do that because people build up information about the wards, so if you are just going to use them as a reaction thing going in this ward, going in that ward, then you are losing half of what they have built up.

We want to keep them and, more importantly, we want to keep an equal number in all 33 wards. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. When PCSOs were introduced by David Blunkett, back in 1998 or whenever it actually was, I was sceptical and the plastic police debates and discussions that were taking place even within the Labour Party at that particular point, we were not convinced but they have been an overwhelming success. Certainly in Morley we have seen that PCSOs have led to a significant drop in crime and the community has engaged more with the police than they ever had previously at this particular point, which is the reason confidence has gone up in the policing in that particular area.

The folk of Morley at this particular present time are saying well, we are paying three times for the police, we are paying directly to the Police Authority in our Council Tax, we are paying via what we are paying to Leeds City Council and we are certainly paying on top of that to Morley Town Council who also finance additional PCSOs, so from their particular point of view they feel that the crime levels that they are receiving at this particular point are down to the fact that they have been financing and putting their money where their mouths are.

It would be very difficult to explain to them, coming up to the local elections why, when the PCC basically has had his funding ringfenced he is getting the same money more or less to take that he was last year, why we are getting an extra bill in Morley for another 20% to cover up to 50%. In fact you have got a better deal than we were, we were paying 30%, you were paying 21%. Perhaps we should have negotiated and sent Les in to negotiate when we talking to the police at that particular point.

The fact of the matter is we are really basically asking people to be paying more and getting less and you have got to ask yourself if his budget has not been cut where is the finance going because it must be going somewhere. In the grand scale of things what is the PCC doing? You have got to come to the inevitable conclusion that what he is actually doing is re-allocating some of the police resource to other areas in the West Yorkshire area. Where is he going to be putting that?

I suspect he will be looking at putting them into Calderdale and into Kirklees and into Wakefield, all of whom do not pay a penny extra towards PCSOs, so what you have got is a shift and it may well be that my colleagues to the left think that is fair and reasonable and in those Labour controlled Authorities Leeds Council taxpayers ought to be subsidising them with a better police service. The fact of the matter is, if we are putting in the same money this year as we were last year and his budget stays the same, then we should be getting the same deal.

We would say that what we want to see is a guarantee that the five PCSOs will be allocated to each and every ward. There is already a reactive element that already works and we never see in the outer areas at this particular point. It is going to be very difficult to explain to the outer areas the fact that they are losing PCSOs and certainly Councillor Dobson seemed to be implying, and perhaps he could be clearer on this, that he is shifting resource from outer into inner and we find that entirely and utterly unacceptable.

The bottom line is we need to go back and negotiate hard, he is not having his budget cut and we need to make sure that those crime levels that have come down across the city in the outer areas are maintained by providing the PCSOs that those communities pay for once, twice and on some occasions three times. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: We have run out of time now on this White Paper so can I ask Councillor Anderson to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. How do you sum that up? At least it shows the importance of the debate, that is the important thing that comes out of this that, yes, it has got passion but it shows that we care in terms of trying to debate this through.

To answer the specific point, we do support the equality of numbers. Unfortunately – now you may think I am an awkward so-and-so, fine, but if you had approached me and said can we come up with a better ward thing to get it in, there are parts of your motion we cannot accept and like everything else, there might be some parts of our motion. If you had come to us we might have been able to do a deal *(interruption)* but that is why we are not explicitly accepting your amendment tonight.

Just to make it clear so there is no doubt about it whatsoever...

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we carry on, please.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: ... in terms of Councillor Dobson, unless I maybe misheard you you did not once say what you are currently saying to the PCC to convince them that the Leeds argument is correct, that we need to maintain the number of these PCSOs. You did not mention that so do we take it that that conversation is not taking place because I have not heard it explicitly, or is it implied by the mere fact that you have said what you have said?

In terms of Councillor Golton, yes, it is our job to express concerns and I think that is one of the important things. Councillor Cleasby is correct, the amount of money in the Outer North West and a number of other areas that we are putting into CCTV and other things, we are doing our bit in our own communities and unfortunately people are playing politics with the residents and leaving us to fight over things.

In terms of what Councillor Robinson was saying, yes we do need to protect the budget. Why was the budget protected? Because the Chancellor listened. You keep saying that they do not listen to you; if you make a coherent case and you make a good case the Government will listen and they will save money. *(interruption and laughter)*

You are laughing. I will tell you why you are laughing – it is because you will not make a coherent and sound case. All you want to do is carp the whole time about how bad everything is. You want the power but you do not want the responsibility that goes with that power. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Hear, hear Barry.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Councillor Lewis, you could do a lot more if you would get on with getting the devolution deal. You would have more power within the leadership to get things going. If you really were serious about some of the things you were saying you would do it.

Why are we in the position we are in today? It was your Government that effectively bankrupted this country. *(interruption)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You spent all the money.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: It was your Treasury Secretary who put the stupid note in the drawer, it was nobody else's, it was yours that did it. You have got nothing to be happy about.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: You believe in fairy tales.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: You are looking at the ruination of this city in terms of law and order. You are putting it at risk. You are choosing to put it at risk.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Hang on, police budgets...

COUNCILLOR: We have not said we are pulling funding, Barry.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: That is a priority. If it is not one of your top priorities it is our top priority...

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Since when did you become a stand-up comedian, Barry!

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: ...it is maybe not your top priority. Maybe you are happy to see criminals going around this city committing crimes all over the place...

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Actually that is an accusation. I am not happy at all. Give the police their money back. Let us have more police on the streets.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: ...but we do believe in putting law and order. One of the first things any Government should do is that law and order should be the fundamental thing that this country is built on. Law and order. Get that message home, law and order is by far the most important thing we can do. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Did you enjoy that? Now I am going to call for the vote.

First of all I am going to call for the first amendment in the name of Councillor Jonathan Bentley. (*A vote was taken*) The vote is LOST.

The second vote, the second amendment in the name of Councillor Dobson. (*A vote was taken*) The vote is CARRIED.

Now we are voting on the substantive motion in the name of Councillor Dobson. (*A vote was taken*) The vote is CARRIED.

Can I just clarify something so that we do not have the position again where I have to stop the meeting to sort out who was going to speak when they reserve the right to speak. There is nothing that says that the person first in order who said "I reserve the right to speak", speaks. You have to tell me, I will ask that you come and you tell me that you wish to speak. You do that and then you go straight in on the order and you will be the next one to speak which is, indeed, what happened with Alison and what happened over here.

If in future you reserve the right to speak, please come to me personally and then I will make sure you go back down on the list.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Lord Mayor, on a point of order and with the greatest of respect, that is not the tradition of this Council, that is not the Whips' agreement. The Whips' agreement and the tradition has always been those who reserve the right to speak come in immediately before the summer-up. That did not happen on the last debate, we understand why. However, that is the tradition of this

Council and if there is to be a new Whips' agreement that needs to be spoken of, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: OK, before I did that, before I went one way or the other I took advice from Catherine and she gave me the advice to carry on. If we need to speak about this at Whips' again I will do but do not want to waste any more time this week.

ITEM 15 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – AFFORDABLE ACCOMMODATION

THE LORD MAYOR: Let us get on with White Paper 15, the motion in the name of Debra Coupar. Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I do hope we can maintain the level of passion that we saw in the last White Paper and I thank my colleague Councillor Lowe for upping the liveliness of the debate in the Chamber today.

I hope that this White Paper reiterates the administration's commitment to Council housing despite the ever more challenging circumstances we face. Government policy continues to crack down on the ability of Local Authorities to implement secure and wide-ranging housing policy, undermining our efforts to provide a greater number of high quality affordable Council homes for rent by introducing a 1% cut in the rents, by extending and enhancing the right to buy, by abolishing secure tenancies and succession rights and by selling off high value properties and forcing households with income over £30,000 to pay a higher market rent.

The number of Council houses are in decline to such an extent that the city now has more privately rented property than it does have Council. The Prime Minister continues to drive home his complete disdain which he feels towards local Councillors and their tenants. His use of language recently, like that of "sink estates", which is dragged from the 1980s, has absolutely no place in 2016. The bulldozer approach simply does not work and the Government should take note of modern approaches that are delivering results.

Look at what we are doing in Leeds. In Little London, for instance, Beeston and Holbeck, those estates are being reinvigorated and reinvented and now see some of the best affordable accommodation in the city. Estates which had lots of issues are now pleasant places to live with residents who take real pride in their area. It is creating and sustaining positive communities.

The one per cent in rents has seriously undermined our capital programme, making further improvements in Leeds more difficult. This is very short-sighted of the Government and in fact it hides the real objective behind a screen of smoke and mirrors, which is to get rid of housing benefit altogether.

Colleagues, I ask why is Council housing so important? I know that we on this side of the Chamber have many reasons why it is but I will just outline three of them here today.

Firstly, for affordability. Market rents are on average £132 per week higher than Council rents and for households in the bottom quartile incomes, Council rent saves an average of 22% of their weekly income. Market rate rent, however, takes on average 59% of their average weekly income and in higher rent areas the average is an enormous 67% of the weekly income. Providing affordable accommodation to our citizens is extremely important to this administration.

Secondly, the quality of that accommodation. This Council is committed to providing good quality housing. The Leeds Standard sets higher aspirations for Council housing growth on things such as energy efficiency and building standards. We are also investing in better quality improvements and refurbishments for our tenants. Council governance and accountability provides assurances for tenants in contrast to that of the private sector.

The third reason is security. With the Council as landlord tenants can be assured they will be treated fairly and transparently. They are not at the whim of the private sector landlords, a small proportion of whom fail to maintain a good standard of housing or hike rents up at short notice, sometimes leaving tenants with no choice but to move out of their home. Of course, recent Government changes to tenancies attempt to undermine this security and place in peril efforts to build sustainable and harmonious communities.

Lord Mayor, in conclusion, I am sure that Leeds Council tenants and those who would like to become one are thrilled with this Government in supporting those people able to afford a quarter-of-a-million pound starter home rather than those on low or modest incomes who live in secure, affordable and good quality homes.

This White Paper will re-emphasise the importance of Council housing as part of a housing mix that is accessible to everyone in Leeds and I urge Members here to support it. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Walshaw.

COUNCILLOR WALSHAW: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In seconding Councillor Coupar's White Paper I will be speaking right now, just to clarify.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you, good idea.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Shame!

COUNCILLOR WALSHAW: Shame! You ain't heard nothing yet! I think Councillor Coupar has very eloquently set out a lot of features of the current Government's approach to housing and I would not want to go over all of those points in detail but I want to hit upon some points that particularly empowered myself as someone who was an urban planner and urban regeneration consultant for nearly ten years, God love me.

Anyway, how is this Government's approach to housing shaping up? We are seeing a massive extension of right to buy going from Councils to Housing Associations. We are going to see huge slices of housing stock sold off, the Council housing stock sold off. That is going to lead to, according to Shadow Housing Secretary John Healey MP, a loss of actually 200,000 socially affordable rented

homes in this country – that is 200,000 families who will now be forced to face market rents. I would imagine that is 200,000 families who do not have that kind of money going spare. I would suggest, colleagues, that is not a sensible approach for us as a country.

The Government talks a lot about affordability and as Councillor Coupar has pointed out, £250,000 is not really affordable, is it. Let's be honest, no-one in this Chamber genuinely thinks £250,000 is an affordable home for anyone who needs what we have always traditionally called an affordable home. In fact it gets worse than that. The Housing and Planning Bill is being debated currently and the Government has uprated affordable homes to include properties up to £450,000. I would suggest £450,000 to most people in Leeds is an emperor's ransom, let alone a king's ransom.

This is not a sensible approach, colleagues. The Housing and Planning Bill clearly, as this report said, is going to the House of Lords. It will come back to the House of Commons for its third and final reading so there is still time for Tory MPs in good conscience to put this mess right. I live in hope. I am one of those naturally optimistic people, as you all know.

We are going to see a lot of people pushed into the private rented sector. What does it mean for those people? For most people it is going to mean a lot more of their household income is on market rent. They are going to be at the behest of private landlords. Incidentally, there was a Labour amendment yesterday in the House and it would suggest that all landlords should have homes of habitable standards. I am sure everyone in this Chamber agrees that homes should be of a habitable standard if you are a landlord. I know there are some landlords in this room. That amendment was voted down by Conservative MPs, including – and perhaps we should write to him – Stuart Andrew, Pudsey MP. Perhaps you guys could ask Stuart why he thinks families in Leeds should not have a home that is of a habitable standard. I would love to see his response; I think everyone in this Chamber would.

We are seeing higher costs all round. Let us look again at those affordable homes. They are going to be so expensive that families are going to struggle to afford them so again we are going to see a net loss of income, so in terms of our communities, our local economies, what are we doing as a country again? Yet again the British disease, we are putting more and more money into bricks and mortar, yet more and more. What does that mean? That means less money to spend, less money to invest, less of everything full stop, really, doesn't it? No other country in Europe thinks this is a sensible approach to housing apart from, it seems, us and I suggest, colleagues, that is wrong.

I have got another minute so let us just look at housing investment. Let us call it – and I think I will use it, Paul – let us call it what it is. This is a shift of limited public spending from those who need it most, for whom sometimes public social housing is the only option and also the very best option given, as Debbie has pointed out, the quality of some of the housing in Leeds. For those people it is the best and only option, for people on upper middle incomes and upper incomes who I would suggest, colleagues, the entire housing market is organised for their benefit already so they get double good win for them, hurrah. Not really. This is going to cause tremendous housing problems in this country, tremendous problems for families in the communities we represent. The Conservative Party response to a social housing crisis

is to make sure there is much less affordable social housing. That is unconscionable – absolutely unconscionable.

Lord Mayor, we are in danger of drifting back to the 19th Century. It is a very real possibility. I fear for us as a city, as a community, how are we going to house those people who really need housing. I would suggest we should support this White Paper and oppose this Government at every turn. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. When I first read Councillor Coupar's White Paper - it is a very long White Paper - I thought perhaps she had submitted a draft of her speech instead of the normal pithy, concise, focused White Papers we are used to seeing from the Labour Front Benches.

Apart from the amendment, which I will come to later (and it is only a small amendment) we have not changed any of the wording, we do not want to change any of the wording in this White Paper because we share on this side the concern expressed in it.

This wholly owned Conservative Government, unfettered by any restraining influence inside it and untroubled by any realistic opposition from the Labour Party in Westminster, is clearly committed to dismantling the social housing sector in this country. What is worse, at the same time they are trying to present themselves as having the answer to the housing crisis.

What is their answer to everything? An obsession with home ownership. Get everybody on to the so-called housing ladder. The flagship for this, as we have already heard, is the so-called starter homes, so developers can price a £312,000 house at £250,000 and call it affordable. Who will these houses be targeted at? Well, couples, probably, on medium to high incomes with a deposit and qualifying for a mortgage.

The housing charity Shelter claims that only those earning about £50,000 or more will really be able to afford these affordable homes. Of course, these houses are only in that category once. Once they are sold on they are back at market prices so they are no longer affordable homes, if they ever were. Just to add insult to injury, these houses will be replacing the statutory affordable housing that developers used to have to provide, usually through registered social landlords, which were genuine long-term affordable rented homes.

The other way on to the housing ladder, right to buy. Opening up home ownership to a sector of society that had previously been unable to buy is a worthy policy providing that every house that you sell that comes out of social ownership is replaced by another one but, of course, that is not happening either. The estimate from Inside Housing is that of the 77,000 homes sold between 2012 and 2015, only 4,800 were built as genuine replacements.

What is the impact of fewer Council houses being available? More pressure on the private rental sector and, ironically, up to a third of right to buy houses actually end up in the private rental sector, with landlords then charging higher rents than the

Council did to the very people who need affordable Council houses and cannot get them because they have all been sold.

Having choked off the supply of genuine affordable housing, the Government then admonishes Local Government to build more and then through enforced rent reductions takes £2.6m away from the Housing Revenue Accounts across all the Councils in the country which is equivalent to something like 18,000, 19,000 new homes.

Finally, Lord Mayor, I will just come to my amendment which relates to the lifetime tenancies. This really does show the Government's true attitude to social housing. If you have been there two to five years it is time you moved on. Council housing is only a transition until you get something better. Far from discouraging long tenancies we should be encouraging them in the private rental market as well. People in rented accommodation should feel the same sense of ownership and commitment to their communities as people who own their homes. They should feel stable, confident that their children can stay at their established schools, feel a sense of pride in their neighbourhood and that helps with community cohesion. A constant turnover of tenants in an area destroys all that.

That is why I am proposing that this Council should say to tenants who are good neighbours, pay their rent, look after their properties that it will be committed to do all in its power to assure them of a long-term stable tenancy. I move the amendment, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I second the amendment. I am really glad that my colleague gave that speech because it was measured, it was to the point because I know how angry I am personally about this issue. I will come out unconvoluted, going all over the place, doing jazz hands Councillor Walshaw style!

I am so angry because the opportunity that is being missed is huge. I know that Councillor Lewis, for instance, thinks there is no redeeming quality to the Liberal part of the Coalition Government which was there from 2010 to 2015, but if you look at housing policy, if there was one demonstration about how the Liberals held back the Conservatives from their ideological zeal it is in housing because while the Coalition was in power we actually did what the Labour Party was too timid to do and that was to actually challenge the outcomes of the right to buy because, of course, Blair and Brown continued the right to buy and continued to hold on to the revenues that accrued from it centrally and then gave it out piecemeal to Local Authorities afterwards.

The one thing that the Coalition Government did was say, OK, your rent and your sales, actually you can get it back and you can actually have a Housing Revenue Account that you can plan with, that you can then put an investment programme in place and you can start to build new social sector housing because there is such a huge shortage of it.

Then as soon as the Tories are on their own what comes out of Government? A complete onslaught on to social housing as a concept, because the people in charge

in Government have no concept of how anybody can have any worth unless they live and think exactly the same as they do. They are not interested in diversity, they are interested in absorption and the only way they can do that through housing is to ensure that there is no Council housing left because Council housing people rent. They do not want to own everything that is around them and how can they ever really support us because they do not actually live and think like us. This is the consequence of it.

When it comes to housing estates, what is the first thing that the Tories do? Housing developers tell us that actually they cannot afford to build so we need to put less rules on them so first of all it is they do not have to do so much social housing because that spoils their profit margin.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: They do.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Then the latest wheeze is, oh well, we need to encourage them to do affordable housing but of course we do not want any affordable housing for rent, it all has to be to buy and actually we are going to classify what affordable is...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Untrue.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...and what we think is affordable is not the same as you think is affordable and then we are going to allow them to build these new housing estates and they will not be expected to put any infrastructure in place either, so all these people who are moving into these affordable houses, there will be no extra money for the schools that are needed or the roads that are needed because they did not have their 20% profit margin. That is what Tory housing policy is about.

This is the thing that really gets me because the Tory Party keeps talking about striving individuals and helping families push ahead (*laughter*) and then – this is national Government, this is Osborne and Cameron – but you know that this is a shameful thing, this is a shameful thing. You know what it is like for these families who are on lower incomes...

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Do you know what Tiny Tim said?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...and they find that a generation has to actually skip living in the same community as their support network so those parents and those grandparents who want to look after those children cannot do so because there are no houses for that next generation to move into and there certainly are not the private sector rented accommodation for those people to move into because everybody is buying it.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Stewart, do you want a membership form?
(*laughter*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Red light.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: The shameful thing is that you still spout the same rhetoric...

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Extend it!

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Last few words: Shirley Porter Mark II, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Before I ask Councillor Anderson to move the second amendment you might like to know that whilst I was waiting out there to come back after tea I was saying, “Oh, it has been quiet, it has been much more peaceful than I anticipated.” Well, I shall never say that again! *(laughter)* Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am very proud of the work I do in my area for my Council tenants and there are a lot of people on that side as well know that I genuinely mean that and what I try to do in terms of giving them a quality of life that we all aspire to. You might think nationally there might be but I can assure you that on this side we are not anti-Council Tax ... *(laughter)* ...I do talk a lot of rubbish half the time, don't I! We are not anti-Council housing or affordable housing. We do genuinely want the best.

We have a different way of going about it than you, and fine, we have just got to accept that. To answer the questions that we have got, starter homes do not start at £250,000, they start at a lot lower. One way you as an administration can do it is talk to your Planning Department. If they did not authorise the selling of green field and green belt sites in areas of high land value, the prices would not be up at that. If you put them into more sustainable areas you would be able to get it so that is a level within your own control that you can do something about.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: They do not like things in their own control.

COUNCILLOR: We try and do that with the brown field, Barry, but the developers want your green fields. I wonder why?

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Let us be clear, when a house is sold under right to buy it does not disappear. It is still lived in by someone who needs a house. The proceeds do come back in again. Yesterday, I do not think there was any Labour Member yesterday at the Housing Forum, if there was I apologise, but at yesterday's Housing Forum it was pointed out by a number of people and by officers present that if Housing Associations get together with the Council they can look at what they can do in terms of right to buy, the HCA confirmed as well what can be done so if you work imaginatively you can actually do something about it.

Anyway, what I really wanted to talk about was the Housing and Planning Bill, which seems to come in for some great kicking. What the Housing and Planning Bill does do is it does identify rogue landlords and letting agents to do something about some of the issues that you have raised, so it is starting to do something about that. It is introducing banning orders, something that your policy that you just espoused just now would surely be happy with. They are going to hold a database of rogue landlords and letting agents. Again, you should be proud that the Government are doing these things. Rent repayment orders when things go wrong. This is all that is coming. Recovering abandoned properties. There are a lot of things that are going on there.

For example, there is money being put in in terms of housing, £400m has been put in nationally to address the needs of the vulnerable and those of disability needs. These are important things that we are looking at, these are coming from this particular Government. We are promoting shared ownership so that if you are wanting to rent part and you have got something that you can invest in, you can start that way as well. We are not anti affordable housing in Council rents.

I am not – this may upset some of my colleagues now what I am about to say but I am not saying for one minute that this Government has got it totally correct. Let me say that. They have not got it totally correct. (*interruption*) I will finish, Lord Mayor, I will finish. At a number of Housing Boards, it is me that started the debate over a number of the initiatives that the Government has come up with. I have not waited on someone else raising them. I do genuinely care, as do my colleagues care about this. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I will second and reserve the right to speak and so I do not need to catch your eye, I will indicate now that I do wish to speak, Lord Mayor, so if my time could be fitted in before the summer -up of the motion I would be grateful.

THE LORD MAYOR: OK, it will be before that because we will run out of time but I will make sure you speak. Councillor Finnigan.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. This White Paper from Councillor Coupar is meek and mild and that is not something that I would normally associate with Councillor Coupar. It is wet and it is feeble.

At this particular point everybody knows that there is a problem, everybody knows that there is a crisis and it is the elephant in the room. We are in a situation where if you go back to 1980 Leeds had 90,000 Council houses. If you go bang up to date we are somewhere in the region of about 65,000. If you look at that we have got 24,000 people on the housing waiting list. You do the maths.

What we are proposing is something slightly more radical than getting a report from the Chief Executive or from somebody else. Let us try and actually do something about it. We are crying out towards the Corbynistas to my left at this particular point who will I am sure show they are not synthetic socialists and will be coming towards us and staffing the barricades along with us with some of the more radical ideas we have got at this particular point. There is no doubt whatsoever that the right to buy has to be abolished if we are going to ever get a grip on affordable housing. There is no doubt whatsoever about that.

Selling two Council houses to be able to build one Council house, even if you can do, does not make economic sense. There is no point going down that particular path. Certainly we have all got Council estates in our particular areas where you know somebody exercises the right to buy, five years down the line that is privately rented, the rent soars up and then you get to a point, certainly you are getting to a point in my ward where you are buying back Council houses that you sold for next to nothing in the first place. It is utterly and totally bonkers.

COUNCILLOR J McKENNA: Hear, hear.

COUNCILLOR FINNIGAN: What is the result of that? I am glad you will be voting with us, Jim. What is the result of that? We are in a situation where the private sector flourishes and you cannot get a fair rent registered in the private sector, so what is wrong with suggesting that we reintroduce those rent controls and we introduce a fair rent for the private sector, because you are all paying via the Housing Benefit Scheme for the lack of affordable housing. That does not seem unfair and unreasonable to us.

The third thing is at this particular point we are operating, we are getting 15% of affordable housing on new developments in our particular area. We think that that should be a minimum of 25% in each and every area. That seems fair and that seems reasonable to us.

The bottom line is we are now going to get another report and we do not disagree with the analysis that we have got here in front of us about what this Housing Bill is actually doing, or we can do something a bit more vigorous, we can do something a bit more positive and get out there and campaign for the real problems and challenges that we face.

To be honest, we owe that to the communities that we represent because the bottom line is they are the ones who cannot get affordable homes and that means particularly young people and other people are going to struggle to get on the housing ladder. We send out a positive sign that basically says whether you are a Council tenant or a private tenant or an owner occupier, you have equal worth. If we are going to do that we are going to have to do something slightly more radical than get reports from the Chief Executive about the impact of this Housing Bill. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Can I formally second that amendment, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Urry.

COUNCILLOR URRY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Ironically Tory Governments built the most Council housing in this country. They were in office in the 1950s and 1960s when some of the post-Atlee ideal that people mattered more than profit had rubbed off. By 1979 42% of Britons lived in Council property. It is less than 8% now. People need affordable and decent homes more than ever and Labour wants to build them and keep them but cynical Government actions, including the extended right to buy, are making this impossible.

The disastrous consequences of Thatcher's right to buy legislation are obvious on our Council estates. Many of our houses sold from the 1980s on to their tenants with a fanfare of Tory trumpets were later bought up cheap by speculative landlords for short-term let and became beacons of neglect on estates across the city. Go to any Council estate and see old roofs deteriorating year on year, neglected rubbish strewn in gardens, collapsing fences, decaying window frames with high turnover of tenants in these properties making stable communities impossible, all next to houses still

owned by the Council with new roofs, perhaps external insulation and every sign of continuing investment – the very homes Ministers now want to flog off. The loss of community can only get worse when this Government forces the ending of life tenure for new tenants, replacing long term tenancies with short term lets.

The Government claims (though I doubt it believes) that providing a housing mix and truly affordable housing can be done in thousands of unco-ordinated market moves by the private sector. Under the Housing and Planning Bill starter homes may be classed as affordable accommodation instead of Housing Association or Council homes. Shelter points out, Barry, that starter homes which can be sold at 80% of the market rate and for up to £250,000 outside London – and remember market forces will make sure that is the price – are seldom affordable. Starter homes for families earning average wages will be unaffordable in 58% of Local Authorities in 2020. In Leeds starter homes will be unaffordable for families and couples without children on the so-called national living wage, and completely unaffordable for single people not on a very high income.

Families on the national living wage will only be able to afford starter homes in 2% of Local Authorities. This might be OK if starter homes were just one option amongst several but the Government intends to make starter homes the only game in town for affordable accommodation, so incredibly that Government housing policy does not include provision of affordable homes, just getting rid of the public sector housing.

Their solution is rather different. It is called drafting your way out of a problem. They do it a lot. Worried about the living wage? Invent your own definition of the national living wage. Tripped up by your own promise to maintain tax credits? Pretend you meant something completely different and if that does not work reverse the policy and pretend that somehow your fantasy economics have magically made this possible. Worried about the lack of affordable housing? Redefine affordable housing.

What about people struggling not to buy a home but to get one at all and facing many years in short term, low quality lets with frequent moves and belonging to no community? Last autumn many people on these benches were out trying to get registered the people Government changes would banish from the Electoral Role on 1st December under their disgraceful manipulation of the electoral system. The Tories probably also hope their current war on the funding of other parties will stop us telling people what they are up to. Just tell them millions of people in the short term housing nightmare the Tory policy creates are being disenfranchised so they cannot vote against the maligned housing policy that hits them directly, and that the honest term for a Tory housing policy is electoral cleansing. Dame Shirley Porter taught them well. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Chancellor's Autumn Statement states the Government's intention to build new starter homes for first time buyers under the age of 40, costing up to £250,000 in areas outside London. There will be a problem unless you are in decent employment actually being able to afford one of these homes. I say that, I am talking about a lot of people now in temporary employment or they are on low wages. We know there are

people out there on contracts. Not everybody has a load of money so what else has come up?

We add to this that we know that there are a number of Housing Association homes that could be sold under the new right to buy scheme and also the amendments to the Housing and Planning Bill which, if passed by Parliament, will result in any new Council tenant not having a lifetime tenancy.

What have these people got to look forward to? They will be lucky to get a Council home and if they do, they will have to reapply to keep their tenancy every two to five years, so they will be driven into the hands of private sector landlords. We all know that they will have to pay a lot more rent and we all know that some landlords are not very good, to put it mildly, and so what sort of life is it going to be? This surely cannot be right and we have got to do something about it. It is not fair just because someone is not getting much wage that they are going to be really at the bottom of the ladder with housing. It is not fair and I think most of us would agree with that, so let us do something about it. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Truswell.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In 1978 a very young reporter on the YEP – me – met the then Chair of the Housing Committee, Councillor Andrew Carter. I am sorry he is not here. We met, ironically, on Middleton Estate where he was quite rightly and justifiably publicising the conversion of a pair of semis into a single property to house a large family. A decent bloke, I thought naively, for a Tory.

Lord Mayor, how times have changed. In those days the Tory Party still had a conscience, a one nation outlook and a commitment to the concept and provision of social housing. Not any more.

I should declare an interest. My parents and brother moved into a brand new Council house in 1949. 67 years later my brother is still the tenant of the same house. My dad was a low paid foundry man and my mum a launderette attendant. They had been lodging in two rooms with shared facilities and paying an exorbitant rent.

Lord Mayor, I cannot imagine what life would have been like for me, my family and millions of other families like us but for the security of a decent affordable Council house. Well actually I can, because today in Leeds over 25,000 households are on the waiting list and the national figure is 1.4 million. Cameron's vicious and vindictive vendetta against social housing means most of them have no realistic opportunity whatsoever of obtaining the decent affordable home that they crave.

When I was first elected in 1982 the Council had 98,000 properties; today I think it is around 57,000. Yet, as Councillor Urry says, for 35 years after 1945 Tory and Labour Governments competed to build the most Council houses, tens of thousands a year, often over 100,000 and occasionally almost touching the 200,000 mark. Then came the cataclysm of Thatcherism. Council houses were sold and not replaced, investment in Council housing was slashed by around half in real terms, the funding regime made it almost impossible for Councils to build new properties.

Many former Council properties, as we have heard, were snapped up by private landlords. The billions of pounds in housing benefit that have flowed into their coffers is an affront both to the taxpayer and the aspiring Council tenant and I have to say, Lord Mayor, party politics to one side, only an idiot could fail to see that directing some of the money lavished on private landlords into Council housing will be a win-win proposition for both tenants and taxpayers.

The Party opposite will bleat that the last Labour Government did not build many Council houses and unfortunately that is true, but what they always fail to add is that Labour almost totally restored Tory funding cuts and that investment brought tens of thousands of Council homes in this city up to decent standards after years of Tory neglect.

Lord Mayor, I am proud that this Group is leading the way nationally with a much-needed and long overdue Council housing programme to provide a thousand more Council properties.

If Thatcherism was the cataclysm for Council housing, the Cameron clique represents a tsunami and, Barry, if you had put down an amendment that matched your speech you might have had a bit more respect on this side because if you really believe what you said in your speech, then you would be going to this rich, privileged, callous, arrogant and self-serving clique that are governing in your name and you would tell them for pity's sake, their policies on social and affordable housing...

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: What about Tony Blair?

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: ... as has been said today, are destroying the lives of our people not just today but for generations to come. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR: That boy will go far!

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Lord Mayor, thank you. The truth will out – the truth will out. What this White Paper was all about was the Council, Leeds City Council, owning houses and being at the discretion of this Labour administration. That is what this is all about. The number of times that the mover of this motion mentioned the Council owning houses, which is not reflected in the wording of the White Paper. That is clearly what it is.

Lord Mayor, if you actually look at who has done more to further the development of new Council housing, who are the two names you come up with? Councillor J L Carter, actually, and our joint administration. They were the people who started off the rebuilding of Council housing in this city. We honoured Councillor Les Carter earlier today. Who is the other person you have to thank for the development of more Council housing than this city has seen in many a long year? Councillor Gruen, and look at the thanks you gave to him for his efforts *(laughter)* in the largest Council house building plan this city has seen for many a year.

Council is good, private landlords are bad, are they, Councillor Coupar?

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Yes.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Really. I suggest, Councillor Illingworth, and those others who say “Yes” you refer to the Register of Members’ Interests because I will tell you something, there are way, way more private landlords on *that* side of the Chamber than there is on *this* side of the Chamber.

COUNCILLOR: Absolutely.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: You know it and we know it. People in glass houses should not start throwing stones because they are likely to get thrown back at you.

Lord Mayor, the same applies to right to buy. A wicked invention by a Tory Government and clearly no Labour elected Member of this Chamber would dream of buying their Council house, now would they? Now would they? Of course they would! Of course they would, Lord Mayor, because it was the right policy at the right time in terms of owning property across this country.

Lord Mayor, it is quite farcical when I hear Councillor Golton talking in general terms about housing. Stewart, you need to come and sit on a Plans Panel. You need to get some experience of how these matters actually work on a day to day basis.

The real crying shame of this White Paper motion, Lord Mayor, and the reason why the Labour Group really do need to look deeper into this matter – and Councillor Truswell, you should know better more than anybody – affordable housing is in the hands of the majority group because they are the people who sit on Plans Panels with majorities. You are the people and your officers are the people who see planning applications come in at an early stage and you can influence them. The policy of this Council is that 50% of all houses that are built are two bedroomed. That is the policy, that is what it says in the Core Strategy. What are we doing to achieve that as a Council? What is the current build rate of two bed? Go on, Councillor Truswell, what is it?

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: You missed the last meeting, John.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: 10% is it? 10%? It should be 50%, you are achieving 10%. That is a point Lord Mayor, there are policies already here in this Council that you are not implementing and time and time again you fall for the soft words of the volume house builders to build four, five bedroomed houses costing fortunes in the outer areas rather than more affordable properties. *(Applause)*

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Viability, John.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Can I now call upon Councillor Coupar to sum up, please; we have run out of time for any other speakers.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor and I surely was not let down by the resulting passion during the debate on that White Paper.

Can I thank Councillor Walshaw for demonstrating the true and the real objective of the Government housing policy and Councillor Urry for getting it

completely right about the starter homes. It demonstrates how out of touch this Government is when it comes to what real people in Leeds can afford.

Today the average two bedroom property in Leeds costs around £125,000, just half of what the Government deems as a starter home. Councillor Bentley and Councillor Golton also got it completely right about the Government's housing policy and I thank them for their support in the wording of the White Paper. We do have some sympathy and allegiance with you in your amendment and we agree in many ways and understand where you are coming from with it. However, given the Government remains unclear on many of the detailed aspects of this policy, it would be unwise of us to commit at this point locally until the national picture is clear.

Councillor Anderson, well, what can one say about that? Just to agree with Councillor Truswell's comments completely about Councillor Anderson. Your speech related nothing whatsoever to your amendment and as far as you are concerned everything is wonderful and rosy with the Government. You obviously live in a very different world to the rest of us in this Chamber.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: I am probably one of the worst off in this Chamber.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Councillor Finnigan, the right to buy. I never thought I would say in this Chamber that I have some sympathy with Councillor Finnigan's comments, so you can imagine, but as an administration we need to work within the legislation that we have got and we cannot really throw the baby out with the bathwater on that one right now.

Councillor Procter brought very little to the debate, it has to be said...
(*interruption*)

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: But you didn't like it!

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Just things you did not want to hear.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: ...and I am sure that you absolutely left your constructive comments at home today. We are not on these benches saying at all that the private sector is completely bad.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Some of you did.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: We did not say that in the White Paper and nobody said that during the debate.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: The houses you own, you mean.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Councillor Truswell, thank you for pointing out the real need for Council housing in this city that we really do need to find for families who live in our communities and thank you as well for pointing out the improvements as well that have been made to the housing stock over the years in this city.

It is abundantly clear that this Government wants to see the end of social housing as we know it. The 1% reduction in rent veils their attempt at squeezing the poorest households even harder by reducing the Housing Benefit Bill and putting a stranglehold on Local Government's ability to invest. The effect of this in Leeds could be dramatic as we have an ambitious programme to deliver many more new Council houses that will undoubtedly be in jeopardy due to this legislation.

The so-called Pay to Stay, which means that neighbours could be paying differing rents for the same accommodation, but even worse than that a couple earning £15,000 each could have to pay over £100 more a week for their rent. With the removal of the security of tenure and the reduction of two to five years' tenancy, the end of succession rights, add to this Local Authorities having to sell off the high value homes to fund affordable housing development, or so-called affordable housing development, will result in even fewer Council houses here in Leeds.

I am sure that in London and the South-East some of their high value properties will bring a handsome receipt.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Coupar, you have got a red light.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: We on this side of the Chamber will continue to voice our concerns and I urge Council to support this White Paper. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I would like to call for the vote, firstly on the first amendment in the name of Jonathan Bentley. *(A vote was taken)* The motion has been is LOST.

The next vote, the second amendment in the name of Councillor Anderson. *(A vote was taken)* That vote is LOST.

The third amendment in the name of Councillor Finnigan. *(A vote was taken)* That has been LOST.

We are now going to vote on the motion itself. *(A vote was taken)* The vote is CARRIED.

Thank you very much – an interesting meeting! Have a safe drive home.

(The meeting closed at 7.35pm)