

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday, 29th June 2016

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC HALL,
LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE LORD MAYOR
(COUNCILLOR G HARPER)

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 29th JUNE 2016

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon everybody. Welcome to today's Council. Can I tell Members that the meeting is being webcast and can you please ensure that your mobile phone is switched off or on silent during the meeting, otherwise I will be after you for £10. Who said only £10! Not Euros.

Can I first of all congratulate some of the following Leeds citizens who were honoured in the Queen's Birthday Honours List:

Mrs Hazel Haas, who was granted the MBE for services to wounded and injured service personnel in the RNLI;

Alexander James McWhirter, MBE, for services to business and the economy in Yorkshire;

Rashiklal Parmar, MBE, for services to innovation and business;

Stephen John Wood, MBE, for services to maritime safety;

Hanif Malik, OBE, services to sport and the community particularly in Yorkshire;

Dr Nima Poovaya Smith, OBE, for services to arts and museums in Yorkshire;

Dr Geehta Upadhyaya, OBE, services to South Asian arts in the UK; and

Peter Smith, BEM, services to community safety in Rothwell, Leeds. I think we can give them a round of applause. *(Applause)*

Council, it is with great sadness that I would like to offer my sympathy on the death of Jo Cox MP for Batley and Spen, as well as to those affected by the terrible events in Orlando and those in Istanbul last night.

We are a city that promotes diversity, tolerance and peace and, as Jo Cox said, we are far more united and have more in common with each other than things that divide us. I would like to call on all Members of Council to join me in expressing their sympathy and support and stand for a minute's silence.

(Silent tribute)

ITEM 1 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 19th MAY 2016

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 1, Minutes of the meeting held 19th May 2016. Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote. That is CARRIED.

ITEM 2 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 2, Declarations of Interest. Have any Members got any disclosable pecuniary interests? Please show. No.

ITEM 3 – COMMUNICATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 3, Communications. Chief Executive to report on appropriate messages.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to inform Council that two responses to Council resolutions have been received from the Right Honourable Alistair Burt MP, Minister of State for Community and Social Care, in respect of the White Paper resolution passed by Council in March 2016 in respect of pharmacies, and Marcus Jones MP, Minister for Local Government, in respect of the White Paper resolution on Local Government Finance, also passed by Council in March 2016. The responses have previously been circulated to all Members of Council.

ITEM 4 – DEPUTATIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Item 4, Deputations. Chief Exec.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. To report that there are three Deputations: first, a group regarding the future of the Green Residential Care home and Day Centre; second, a local group regarding safety at a school crossing at the junction where Shadwell Lane crosses Leeds Ring Road; and third, the Leeds Coalition Against the War group regarding the relocation of refugee children.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I move that all the Deputations be received.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

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

Deputation one.

DEPUTATION ONE – GREEN RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME

AND DAY CENTRE

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. Please now make your speech to Council, which should not be longer than five minutes, and please begin by introducing the people in your Deputation.

MS L CANON: The people in the Deputation for Save the Green Residential Care Home are Bill Askey, Laura Denbigh, Gill Denbigh and Tony Canon and myself, Lindsay Canon.

The Green consistently delivers on its unique purpose of residential care for those with dementia and Alzheimer's, when home care is no longer possible. In general, the residents have been previously cared for by family and friends until this arrangement is no longer feasible. Other types of care, including sheltered housing, would be inappropriate.

The staff members of The Green are well trained and provide excellent care of their residents and users of the day centre, another vital commodity, both medically, physically and pastorally.

They provide many regular and varied activities to which families and friends are always welcome to join. The residents are not left to vegetate, which would be the easier option. The mood is always calm and caring, which in turn gives us peace of mind because it is not easy to commit to placing your loved one into care.

The staff have also taken the time to support the residents' families and friends. We know their names but, more importantly, they have taken the time to learn ours and we have become one cohesive family group because of their abilities.

In our opinion The Green is a Flagship for Leeds City Council and should be celebrated and supported.

The Green was recently inspected and once again received a "Good" CQC report. This is in greater contrast to many private sector competitors who received "Required improvement", or "Inadequate" CQCs.

Very pertinently, the inspection at Seacroft Grange Care Village, next door to The Green, found "Care requires improvement". The inspection of Donisthorpe Hall, around three miles from The Green is "Inadequate" in relation to safety and effectiveness, "Requires Improvement" in relation to caring and responsiveness, and is "Inadequate" in relation to leadership. The Ashlands Care Home, six miles away from The Green, is "Inadequate".

Some of our residents formerly resided at private homes and were moved to The Green by their families because of the inadequate care they had received.

We primarily held a public meeting in Seacroft, following family and friends' meetings of residents. We also attended the Health and Scrutiny Board meeting in March, where Laura Denbigh presented her online petition, which at the present time has 4,155 supporters. At the meeting we were allowed to voice our concerns, then subsequently ask questions and join in the debate. We were also invited to the HSB decision making meeting in April

In May, accompanied by local Councillors Dobson and Hyde and along with local Richard Burgon MP we held an outside two hour petition locally to The Green. Although this was only a snapshot in time the support we received was immense, with many people at times queuing to sign. Local people who are currently caring for loved ones with dementia were distraught that their local Council run dedicated facility was under threat of closure. This revealed to us that the public opinion in the local area was strongly that The Green remain open.

Leeds is a fantastic, thriving City. However sourcing all Council resources to the private sector, particularly care of the elderly with dementia and Alzheimer's, would be a mistake.

We collectively believe that the Health Scrutiny Board did an excellent body of work on this matter coming to a view whilst making the clear and unequivocal request that the Council Executive adopts the recommendations made by the HSB which were:

Any decision regarding the long-term future of The Green be deferred for a minimum of two years, in order to:

reconsider the comparative costs of provision as the impact of a national living wage and the requirements of the Care Act 2014 take effect locally;

assess the occupancy levels achieved through positive promotion of The Green to local residents and beyond;

reassess the overall quality landscape across the care sector in Leeds and specifically the quality of alternative nearby provision in the independent sector.

Outsourced new builds can never replace the quality of care received at The Green. We do not chase the Utopian dream; we already claim ownership to it. It is already in the possession of Leeds City Council and is called The Green.

In conclusion, we therefore implore the Council to adopt and vote in favour of the Health Scrutiny Boards' recommendation. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I move that the matter be referred to the Director of Adult Social Services for consideration in consultation with the relevant Executive Member.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

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

Thank you for coming to today's meeting. Officers from the relevant department will be in contact with you in due course. Good afternoon.

DEPUTATION TWO – SCHOOL CROSSING AT SHADWELL LANE/
LEEDS RING ROAD

THE LORD MAYOR: Good afternoon and welcome to today's Council meeting. Please now make your speech to Council, which should last longer than five minutes, and please begin by introducing the people in your Deputation.

MR M DAVENPORT: Thank you, Lord Mayor and Members of the Council. My name is Matthew Davenport and we are parents from Highfield Primary School. We are here to ask for your help to improve the safety on our school crossing. The crossing is where Shadwell Lane meets Leeds Ring Road near Highfield Primary School in Roundhay.

So, what is the problem? Firstly, cars travel too fast. The junction in this highly populated residential area is too complex for the current speed limit of 40mph. In January 2016 there were two accidents directly at this junction in question, thankfully without any fatalities. One of the accidents resulted in a car smashing into a tiny pedestrian island where young families stand four times daily. The metal safety barriers were completely destroyed and the island was left covered in debris. Had this occurred during half an hour before and during school run times, a fatality of a young child would have been inevitable and we would not have needed to stand here today as changes would have to happen anyway. Please introduce a variable speed limit at this junction to 30 miles an hour.

Secondly, motorists are unaware school children are crossing. The recently installed 'School Children Crossing' signs are ineffective and unnoticeable due to all of the other signs that go before them. They are too small and are only metres away from the junction. Cars regularly change lanes at high speed right before the crossing and the school hazard signs are very easily be missed. This could be dramatically improved by installing flashing amber lights to help raise awareness to motorists.

We have held numerous meetings with Highways Officers who have verbally agreed there is a requirement for flashing warning signals. These were promised to us in January but have failed to materialise. It is imperative that these hazard lights are installed before dark nights set in once again in September. Please ensure flashing lights are installed to ensure motorists are aware that our children are crossing.

Thirdly, the junction is too complicated, with many hazards for both motorists and pedestrians. This junction comprises of ten individual lanes and is on the main walking route to Highfield Primary School. The school has rapidly expanded and this academic year had take in a three form entry bulge year. As a result the pedestrian islands are now too small for the amount of people crossing with pushchairs, bikes and scooters. Families stand marooned on a tiny central island just inches away from articulated lorries and cars whizzing past at 40 miles an hour in both directions.

In reality the whole junction is badly designed for current pedestrian traffic and needs re-thinking. The lack of visible warning signs alerting motorists that children and pedestrians are crossing makes it even more dangerous. It is only a matter of time before a serious accident occurs. The Council do not consider the great number of near misses when assessing safety issues, and I can assure you there have been many very near misses on the school run.

So how can you help?

- (1) You can vote to help us;
- (2) Reduce the speed limit at this junction to 30 miles an hour;
- (3) Install flashing amber lights to ensure that motorists are aware that school children are crossing;
- (4) In the long term consider to re-structuring the whole junction so it is fit for current purpose.

The thing we ask ourselves is how can a 40 miles an hour limit be justified by Leeds City Council when Government policy advocates that school crossings should have a 20mph speed limit, even on A roads and B roads?

Most importantly, we would like to request equality with other very local schools such as Roundhay Primary School on Wetherby Road, previously 40 mph, and Gledhow Primary School on Lidgett Lane, both of whom have had a variable speed limit introduced.

There is massive local support for the reduction in the speed limit. Our petition has achieved over 600 signatures and comments. People are precious and irreplaceable. We strongly believe that in this current state it is inevitable that a child or an adult is going to get knocked down and possibly killed at some time in the future. Please do not leave this issue to make changes once a life has been lost.

According to the Think! Campaign, if you hit a child at 30mph they have an 80% chance of living, but if you hit them at 40mph they have an 80% chance of dying. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: 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: *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

Thank you for coming to today's meeting. Officers from the relevant department will be in contact with you in the near future. Good afternoon.

DEPUTATION THREE – LEEDS COALITION AGAINST THE WAR

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 S TAYLOR: Hi, my name is Sean Taylor, this is Isabella Di Martino, Liam Naylor and Thomas Brownbridge. We are here on behalf of Leeds Coalition Against the War.

Firstly thanks for allowing us to bring forth this deputation. It has recently come to our attention that despite the Dubs Amendment ensuring that refugee children are to be taken in, the process is moving very slowly. I stand here to implore you to make this an absolute top priority. In the wake of the greatest humanitarian crisis in recent memory, the first time people of my generation have witnessed hoards of fellow human beings in such a desperate time of need, this is the time to call on our sense of empathy and humanity, which we seem to be struggling to do as we do not understand the urgency of the crisis that is their lives.

We see the humanity in lions and gorillas when the time comes so why can't we see it in these humans? These are people fleeing unimaginable suffering. For us a bomb goes off in Paris and we are stricken with almighty fear, fear that gripped our nation by the lapels, fear caused by events transpiring across the channel. These people on the other hand are expected to endure conflicts that are at their doorsteps. Maybe one day the storm will hit your front door and then I wonder where you would go running, what lengths you would go to in order to keep your children safe. What's more is that these are children we as a nation have already promised to take in, and though you may be able to busy yourself with other things as you push it on the back burner, these people and their families cannot escape their chilling reality. It is their 24/7, their yesterday and their today, but it does not have to be their tomorrow.

The time you spend to act passes by gently for us, but for them it is a precious commodity when they do not know how much longer they will last, where their next meal will come from or where they will shelter for the night. The charity shown by some of the people of this nation at grassroots level towards people they have never met speaks volumes, but you who have the power to make such a difference now need to recognise that every second passing by without giving these children a safe space to live is a second that they live a life that to you could only consider hell itself.

I do not believe that anyone in this room would contest the urgency of the situation. It is for this reason that we as a group believe this matter is bigger than politics, bigger than bureaucracy and bigger than the differences many of you people sitting here may have, and it must be put on a pedestal and dealt with immediately so we can save the lives of these children and take one of the baby steps forwards to a better world for all of humanity. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: 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: All those in favour. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

Thank you for coming to today's meeting. Officers from the relevant department will be in contact with you in due course. Good afternoon. (*Applause*)

ITEM 5 – REPORT ON APPOINTMENTS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 5, Report on Appointments. Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Catherine Dobson.

COUNCILLOR C DOBSON: I second, Lord Mayor.

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

ITEM 6 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL – MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

THE LORD MAYOR: Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel – Members' Allowances. Councillor Blake.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I second, Lord Mayor.

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

ITEM 7 – REPORT ON THE LEEDS AWARD

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 7, Report on the Leeds Award. Councillor Graham Hyde.

COUNCILLOR G HYDE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have the great pleasure of speaking about two nominees who have been unassuming and done so much work in this city.

The Leeds Award Panel would like to nominate Kenneth Reid. Kenneth has worked 35 years in this city in the realms of further education and many people in this room will know Kenneth – an unassuming man, but what a man. He has challenged many of the perceived ideas regarding learning for all, particularly people with learning disabilities, and Kenneth is the Chair of the Faculty for Creative Arts. He is also actually the Deputy Principal of the Leeds City College.

Kenneth has worked tirelessly and challenged many of the beliefs and prejudices around people in regards to extending those opportunities, but he has not just done it here. Kenneth has challenged and made Leeds one of the most prominent creative arts environments for people of all ages and all abilities. He has also now extended our reputation as a city into Europe and far afield and is well respected by many people, so I am absolutely delighted to propose Kenneth for the Leeds Award; he has done so much.

The second person who many people in this Chamber know very well is Simon Lindley. I have known Simon in the 70s, believe it or not, and we first met at the Leeds Parish Church many moons ago when I did some work there as a joiner. Simon is also the Master of Music and has been for four decades now at the Leeds Minster. That is only one of the aspects of Simon's work.

He has promoted and delivered an inspired music genre in Leeds. Not many people know that he actually has an outstanding reputation in the city for promoting the music environment, so the Leeds Award Panel were delighted to receive the nomination for Simon Lindley and I think after four decades of promoting Leeds to the country and abroad for the music achievements on behalf of the residents of this city, I think he deserves the award.

Lord Mayor, with those brief words I would like to nominate with great pleasure those two nominees. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

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

ITEM 8 – SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 8, Scrutiny Annual Report. We are now moving to the Scrutiny Annual Report for a period of up to 30 minutes. Councillor James Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Adam Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Barry Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I just want to reflect back on the previous past year which was an exceptionally busy year, certainly for our Scrutiny Board and I know that Councillor Procter also had a busy year, but we would not have been as successful if we did not have the support of Angela Brogden who is a credit to the work that she does and the support that she gives us all,

the even-handed way that she looks after us all and keeps us right, particularly on my Scrutiny Board when I might decide to go off message or, I will not mention any names but some other Members might go off message as well. She is tolerant with us in terms of what we do but it is vitally important that we have good quality staff to help us.

Also I would like to thank the commitment and the support of the officers, the Executive Board Member and the actual Members of my Scrutiny Board for the last year because we have, as is my wont, put them through the wringer in terms of the amount of work I expect from people when they come to the Scrutiny Board and they have all responded very positively to it.

We have looked at some important issues. John this year looked at PCSO numbers and the impact of that and how controversial that proved to be at the time and how we were able to come forward with a way forward. On my Scrutiny Board we looked at migration and we were actually complimented both by officers and by outside bodies about the way that we conducted that enquiry in a non-partisan way, we discussed the issues openly, honestly and I think we came forward with a constructive way forward to try and address some of those issues.

We looked at community hubs. I would have said something about this later on this afternoon but I am not, purely because we have now got a call in on it so I am not going to prejudice my views on the quality of the report that I brought forward, if you see what I mean.

We have also had one on Community Committees, which was really good, and Universal Credit.

One thing I just want to quickly mention is a concern I have got – the downgrading of the commitment to Scrutiny in terms of the staff reductions that we are getting. I do not think parity of esteem is no longer applying, I do think we need some more support in terms of what we are doing, otherwise the quality of Scrutiny could regress down within the Council. Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Kim Groves.

COUNCILLOR GROVES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am reporting on the Annual Report for the Chair of Scrutiny Board for Strategy and Resources.

I would firstly like to thank the Board for all their hard work and commitment over the last year. Together we have achieved a lot through our combined efforts. Over the past year the Board has successfully completed a number of enquiries, all of which have contributed to the drive to become an efficient and enterprising administration. We have seen the great influence that Scrutiny can bring through our fees and charges inquiry. The inquiry was a critical examination of how fees and charges may effectively ease some of the budget pressures we face as an administration. Through this inquiry we have now a revised fee strategy which instructs officers to look at ways in which any subsidy can be targeted towards priority groups.

We have perhaps seen the most significant value of our work as a Board through the non/off-contracts inquiry. By working with a number of teams and directorates across the organisation we have successfully identified efficiency measure to reduce off-contract spend. As a result, the organisation has seen significant savings and this allows us to further extend our resources to other priority areas.

Members will be aware that we are also looking into commissioning and hopefully we will report back at a later stage.

The Board also reviewed the development of career families throughout the organisation. This is extremely important for the workforce going forward, a shift in both the demands of the organisation and services means we need to be ready to meet the challenges. We will need a workforce that possesses a wide variety of skill set and our work on career families will greatly aid on this front.

I would like to finish, Lord Mayor, by asking Councillor to thank Peter Marrington, Head of Scrutiny and Member Development, who is leaving us after many years of dedicated service. I thank Peter for his advice and support during my time as Chair. He helped me work towards delivering single inquiries which I firmly believe that by focusing on one inquiry we will make the very best use of the limited resources available to us. I thank Peter for all of this and wish him the very best in all his future endeavours. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Paul Truswell.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Time is short so I am going to gallop through our three main enquiries over the last year but before I do I would like to express my gratitude to Board Members and to our support officer, Sandra Pentelow, for their energy, enthusiasm and tenacity.

Lord Mayor, we looked at the digital divide. Our world is increasingly digital by default for job and benefit applications, for accessing services, for obtaining information or purchasing goods. We must strive across this city with our partners to equip people with the digital skills they need and that are rapidly becoming as vital and the three Rs.

It is good to see that this is now a measure – I thank the Leader for this – for our success in this year’s Best City Plan. At the same time we must make provision for those who continue to lack these digital skills so that they are not pushed further to the margins of our society.

Lord Mayor, together with the Environment and Housing Scrutiny Board we conducted an inquiry into housing mix. We set ourselves as a Council a huge housing target. The joint Boards felt that this target should be reviewed but our greatest challenge, Lord Mayor, is not achieving this overall target, whatever it might be; it is ensuring that house building meets our citizens’ needs in terms of house types and tenure, number of bedrooms, specialist housing for older and disabled people and, most vitally, affordability.

We are severely constrained by Government Planning guidance. It stacks the deck in favour of developers and gives them the trump card of viability. They will

always tell us they cannot afford to deliver what we want, but we as a Council still need to challenge ourselves, officers and developers to do all we can to achieve the housing mix that our citizens need. Our proposals include that Ward Members should be involved, closely involved in local housing needs assessments to which we would then expect to hold officers and developers.

Lord Mayor, we are finalising our enquiry into bus services. Whatever big transport ideas are dead and buried and no matter how much we talk about HS2, new stations, extended rail lines and rolling stock, one thing remains absolutely certain – the bus is likely to remain the future mainstay of public transport. Every Member in this Chamber, Lord Mayor, knows the impact on their community of the Thatcher Government's handing over our bus services to private operators. It is vital we now achieve a better balance between the interests of the community and bus operators' profits.

This year, my Lord Mayor, the Board has been charged with the unenviable task of looking at NGT, for which we fervently thank the Leader. *(laughter)* Besides examining how NGT developed and why it was so comprehensively rejected, we also want to consider now how we move forward. Lord Mayor, Supertram failed, NGT failed – let us ensure that it is not a case of three strikes and we are out. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Peter Gruen.

COUNCILLOR P GRUEN: My Lord Mayor, I think for me in my first year as Scrutiny Chair, this was a pretty steep learning curve. I realised very quickly that I had some very illustrious predecessors. Most immediately before me Councillor Coupar, we have also had Chairs of Scrutiny Board in terms of John Illingworth, Mark Dobson, Paulene Grahame and further back I think Lisa Mulherin and Richard Lewis, and there is a well-worn path, I can see, from Scrutiny Chair into the Executive Board. *(laughter)* Can I share with you that I am nearing a move in the opposite direction!

The second thing I learned very quickly was the fact that I was wrong to think that education and schools had cornered the market on acronyms and abbreviations. The NHS beats you hands down. They have a totally different language to most of us and you have to learn that language in its initiation right to start off with.

We decided we would not look at a single issue but we wanted to look at various issues across all three parts of the Scrutiny Board's remit, so we looked at autism in particular. I have to say, the Board was not just disappointed but it found it harrowing to see that the waiting times for referral for children who had been diagnosed with autism was wholly unacceptable. It was more than 16 weeks, in some cases it was a year or longer than a year and we were very critical of the process and the priority being given to that. In fairness the providers and the commissioners responded very well indeed and they are now at a twelve week waiting list for initial assessments, they are back on track to fully, I think, come into line by February 2017.

The second inquiry where we think we have made some difference was in terms of cancer waiting times. Again, these are harrowing times for people diagnosed with cancer and it is incumbent on everyone to pull together and do their work and do their assessments as quickly as possible.

The third area I want to comment on is our forensic investigation into CQC reports. They are exceptionally important because they tell us what judgments are made both in our and private sector homes, not just residential but across GPs, dentistry, etc. I believe we carry on this work to make a practical difference to people's lives. We could go into much bigger issues, like the Sustainability and Transformation Plan, but it would take all of the resources and beyond to do a single item, so I think we should carry on properly making a difference to people's lives. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Sue Bentley is unable to be here today so we go straight to summing up. Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I know Councillor Bentley is not here but adding to the list of inquiries I think it is worth reflecting the important work that Children's Scrutiny have done this year, particular around special educational needs and the life of disabled children in Leeds. I think the work that all Scrutiny Boards do is incredibly important. That is why again I wanted to pick up those couple of ones, even though Sue is not here.

I do not want to speak on this item, I think it is for the Scrutiny Chairs to speak on behalf of their Boards on this item, but I would also add my support to the comments about Peter Marrington's leaving after a very long career in the Council. I think he has been in this building almost as long as the gold owls have been on the roof of the building and he has brought a great deal of experience and support to Members and I think we all wish him well in what he does next. With that I would move the report. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Can we move to the vote? *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 9 – QUESTIONS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 9, we move to Question time. We have got a period of 30 minutes where Members of Council can ask questions of the Exec Board Members.

Question 1, Alan Lamb.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I welcome the Executive Board Member to the seemingly revolving door post of Children's Services, and if she would kindly tell us if she is satisfied with the continuing overspends on school expansion projects, given the limited resources available.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I just very briefly take leave of Council to just firstly congratulate Children's Services on receiving the MJ Award *(applause)* but also to thank my predecessors in this role, Councillor Yeadon and Councillor Blake, for all the work that they have done to make sure that that was achieved.

Also yesterday we got honourable mentions in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's last report, Annual Report on Social Care around the best practice that Leeds is achieving for children and young people in this city.

With that, sorry Lord Mayor, I would like to note that Councillor Lamb has referenced the limited resources available in his question. I know that he is more than aware of the huge pressures that we are facing as a city. As Councillor Lamb knows, and indeed it was discussed at the last cross-party steering group, school places were facing a shortfall in funding of £67.5m. This is because the funding from Government is inadequate and does not take into account site acquisition costs, demolition costs, abnormal costs etc, all of which are expected to be covered by the Local Authority. We are also facing rising costs in the construction industry and all of the easier expansions have already taken place to these schools that we have in Leeds and we are left with those that are now bringing significant additional site pressures and issues.

A Programme Capital Risk Fund was set up to provide an agile way of responding in a timely and proportionate way to variations which were needed to individual project budgets. Eight of the schemes within the current programme have required applications to that programmed capital risk fund to supplement the original estimates, costs. For five of these schemes the initial funding envelope had been based on the Education Funding Agency's funding rates which were insufficient to deliver the complexity of the schemes required by the programme, and a high level desk top viability study of additional accommodation was required to facilitate those expansions.

Due to the need for school places to be ready by September in the academic year, the process for approval of expansions is under way before the full details of site conditions and associated specifics are fully known. It is for this reason that the Capital Risk Fund was established. It was and remains the responsible thing to do and I would like to thank Members from across this Chamber for supporting the establishment of the Capital Risk Fund. I would hope that there is cross-party support for provision of school places and that this includes the need for financial flexibility to enable us to reasonably plan and deliver school places. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lamb, have you got a supplementary?

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Lord Mayor, and can I thank officers for preparing such an extensive response for Councillor Mulherin. Perhaps she would like to share what she thinks now and does she agree with me *(interruption)* Lord Mayor, that when we do not have enough money for what we need to do it is simply not acceptable that we have so far overspent by £4m on four schools and that we need to get a grip of this and ensure that we stick to the original estimates and hold our contractors to account to make sure we can get the best value for money. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: The latest two applications for Castleton and Roundhay are being driven by the revival in the construction industry, or at least they were doing pre-Brexit. The construction industry was buoyant and recovering from

recession and therefore building inflation was higher than expected, which has been reflected in recently received tender submissions.

Despite the challenges we face I am pleased to report that since 2010 the Learning Places Programme has delivered £62m of investment into 27 projects providing an additional 1,283 reception places in the city, ensuring that every child in Leeds has a sustainable good learning place.

The 22nd June Executive Board Report sets out the detail of the scope of the current Learning Places Programme and that programme contains capital investment of £51.5m across 16 schemes, five of which are due to be removed from the current programme as they are completed and in the defects liability period. Of the 16 schemes only one, Pudsey St Joseph's, is showing an overspend of £356,000 against its approved design and cost report. This represents 0.69% of the current programme budget, currently totalling £51.539m.

The score cards produced by DfE provide a snapshot of the cost of providing pupil places and Local Authorities' plans to meet demand for new school places by September 2016. The 2015 DfE score cards show that the average per pupil cost of expansions in Leeds is 24% lower than that national average, making us one of the best Authorities for providing value for money. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Question 2, Jonathan Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. With the benefit of hindsight does the Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning regret any aspects of the Council's case presented to the Inspector at the NGT Inquiry?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. That is an interesting question, Jonathan. I am actually looking forward to the Scrutiny Inquiry. I know the Chair is not but I think that is the real opportunity for us all to examine this in detail and already, almost as soon as we had a pronouncement, we had people re-writing history and I wish I had brought down that press release that I had from your beloved MP saying how he welcomed NGT at the time, and he seems to have changed his tune.

I am really looking forward to the rewriting of history and the reinterpretation of it that will come up at the Scrutiny Inquiry. I will not be rewriting history. I do think there are things we could have done differently but I think we would have still ended up with the same results. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

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

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Yes, thanks, Lord Mayor. In view of the fact, then, that the Inspector and the Secretary of State rejected every aspect of the business case and called into question all its assumptions and conclusions, would the Executive Member confirm that the officers, external consultants and experts responsible for putting together a totally flawed scheme will not be involved in any future transport planning for the city?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Again, I think that is for others to examine all the facts and then come back, but let us have a look at the reality of inquiries into tram systems that have been going on at the same time. Both for Birmingham and Manchester they came up slamming the proposals for tram extensions, so we have got a clear pattern in terms of public inquiries with Inspectors saying they did not approve of such schemes, and we have got an interesting response from the Government of a similar nature.

I would have to say that I think it was a good scheme, I remain committed to believing that NGT was a good scheme – it was not a perfect scheme – but I think everybody in this room should, if they really think that the Inspector came out with a balanced judgment, and a balanced judgment based on facts, should actually read the report. I would not say read all 800 pages. I would read the summary and if there is anybody here who starts reading that and who does not question many of the assumptions and comments made by that Inspector I would be very surprised. If there is anybody here actually who agrees with everything the Inspector has said, please come and talk to me because I think you are in need of therapy. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Jane Dowson.

COUNCILLOR DOWSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Please will the Leader of the Council update Members on the outcome of the MJ Awards?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Judith Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: We have had a little sneak preview of the outcome but I am delighted to be able to announce to Council that at the Municipal Journal awards just less than two weeks ago, a very prestigious awards, the major journal for Local Government in the country, that Leeds City Council was awarded Best Council of the Year. *(Applause)* You can see the award across the Council Chamber.

Also, as Councillor Mulherin said, another prestigious award for Children's Services around innovation and impact. Really, truly a great award reflecting on the fact that Leeds is now, as Councillor Mulherin said, recognised as one of the country's leading Authorities on work with children across the city.

We also achieved a joint award for commercialisation of property services so, again, a real tribute to the work that we have put into place.

I hope, Lord Mayor, that everyone in Council will join with me in thanking all of the staff in the City Council who on many occasions go above and beyond the call of duty in putting forward and implementing the policies that we make in this Council Chamber. I think the awards also reflect the strength of the partnerships in the city.

The awards really highlighted the clear improvement vision for the city and in conclusion I would like to say these awards are very, very welcome to the city in recognition of the enormous effort that goes in but we are never, ever complacent

about the job that we have to do and in particular in the light of the challenges facing us.

Could I just also pay tribute to Councillor Dowson who, on the circumstances of the day with the horrific events in Batley and Spennings, took on the responsibility from myself and Deputy Leader James Lewis of going down to collect the awards on behalf of the City Council.

Can I ask with you to join with me in saying an enormous thanks to everyone involved and show a great appreciation of the efforts from all of the staff in the Council for helping us to achieve this success. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Dowson, do you want to say anything else? No. Councillor Tom Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Does the Leader of Council agree that, following the outcome of last week's referendum, the shifting relationship between Britain and the European Union is likely to present challenges to a city of Leeds which depends heavily on legal, technical and financial services, retailing, warehousing and manufacturing, which often have an international aspect?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Councillor Leadley. Can I just say, the referendum is less than a week away and I think it is fair to say that we all acknowledge that the outcome of the referendum has led to initially a period of great uncertainty in the city and I think it is fair to say that before the result started to unfold, I do not honestly believe that even the main protagonists in the Leave campaign really believed that they were going to achieve the majority, and it would seem that there are some gaps in the planning for dealing with the immediate aftermath of the outcome.

My message – and I want to be really clear about this – to the people of Leeds is one of huge respect for the people who voted in the numbers that they did and we have to take notice of the vote that came forward. The message I really want to get across, Leeds is a resilient city, it has enormous strength and depth in its economy and we have withstood economic shocks on an enormous magnitude over many decades in Leeds and because of our diversity in the economic sector we have been able to respond appropriately.

You would expect that I have started to have discussions, meetings with key partners in the city to make sure that we are very alert to the implications of the vote in the short term and making sure that together we can give the reassurance to everyone that we can to continue and not to do anything in haste, because I think the clear facts are that we do not fully understand as yet what the implications are going to be. The very strong message that we are getting across is that Leeds is open for business. We have partnerships with people all over the world. Leeds is a globally recognised international city and the strength of those partnerships will help us at a very difficult time of uncertainty.

One of the things we have to be aware of is that there is a major disconnection between some of our communities and economic progress in this country and in this

Chamber we have repeatedly stated how grossly unfair we think the funding settlements are for cities like Leeds and the communities that we represent and it is no surprise to me that many people are feeling very disadvantaged as a result of that.

We are working, as I say, not only with business but with the LEP partnership for the city region, with universities and crucially with Government and we are asking very serious questions of Government as to how we can deal with the implications of this going forward, but a very serious message for all of us.

We have to recognise the incredible contribution that people who have chosen to come to live and work in Leeds from across the world make to our communities (*applause*) and it is up to all of us in our representative roles to make sure that they have the reassurance that they are welcome here and we will do everything we can to support the needs of everyone in the city that we represent. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

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

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Yes. Would she agree that the referendum has stirred up sinister forces in English society and if she has any influence in these matters and in the national interest, would she consider trying to persuade Hilary Benn MP to stand for the Labour Party leadership?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Yes, as the Chinese proverb goes, we live in interesting times. I am sure you do not expect me to answer the last part of your question but I think I will re-emphasise the comments that I made before that on a very serious level this vote has exposed real divides on a whole range of areas, whether it is between young people and older people, people who have more affluence and those who have less, different parts of the country. These are really serious issues that have really been shown in sharp relief and we all have a duty and a responsibility to listen to the outcome of the result and make sure that we do everything we can to pull all sections of our communities together to help us move forward. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Salma Arif.

COUNCILLOR ARIF: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Would the Executive Member update Council with information on the budget gap during the years 2017/2018 and 2019/2020? Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The Government in its 2016/17 Local Government Final Settlement announced a four year offer to Local Government. This included indicative funding levels for 2017/18 through to 2019/20 which will see the Council Settlement Funding Assessment, the core funding received from Government, reduced by a further £53m, or 22%. That is on top of a reduction in the last five years of £214m.

Taking account of the spending pressures, this gives the Council an even greater funding gap. It is intended that a report is brought to July Executive Board on the scale of the reductions we will have to make over the next three years because of the Government's austerity agenda but an early assessment puts the funding gap in excess of £90m over the next three years and, given the circumstances that Councillor Blake has just replied to, we can only fear that this will get worse.

THE LORD MAYOR: Have you got a supplementary? No. Councillor Matthew Robinson.

COUNCILLOR M ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Would the Leader of Council like to apologise to parents and young people of East Keswick and Bardsey for the problems and expense they have experienced with school transport?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Lisa Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It has been passed across to me because this relates to my portfolio, my new one. The need to achieve very significant savings as a result of Government funding cuts led to the Council withdrawing discretionary transport assistance from 2013 over a two year period of phasing across the entire city. Following policy changes the number of new applications for assistance fell from 6,188 in 2013 to 1,465 a year later. The number of appeals against refused applications remained broadly consistent with previous years.

I am sorry that those policy changes were not expressed clearly enough for a number of families in Bardsey and East Keswick and we recognise that communication of those changes could have been better. Some families in the area were therefore not fully aware that the Council would no longer pay for their child's bus passes to school.

When the Council became aware of the need to improve communications we provided a free bus pass to a small number of families in Bardsey and East Keswick in very specific circumstances whilst they adjusted to those changes. The Council also strengthened communications at the earliest opportunity following two appeals in summer 2014. As of summer 2015 the Council sends additional school transport information to every parent before they apply for a High School place. This specifically includes information of relevance to families in Bardsey and East Keswick. We continue to provide free transport to children from low income families across the city, including the Bardsey and East Keswick areas. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Robinson.

COUNCILLOR M ROBINSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. That was not quite an apology, it was "I am sorry that this was not communicated well enough", it was not "I am sorry." In light of that and in light of the Local Government Ombudsman's decision and the calls from parents to make compensation available to all eligible students – not just those who appealed – and to do away with this discredited policy in favour of a far more flexible approach that would benefit the students of Leeds.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. There was clearly no intention to mislead parents. I clearly accept that the Local Government Ombudsman found that the way in which this was communicated was not clear enough and once the issue was drawn to our attention the Council amended the way in which the difference between the nearest school for admissions purposes and the school for transport purposes was communicated.

It should be noted that the Local Government Ombudsman did not find issue with the school transport policy itself.

The parents of 17 children at East Keswick and Bardsey did not apply or did not appeal against a refusal to provide assistance. It should be noted that we have undertaken to reimburse the families who did appeal to the Local Government Ombudsman and the families in identical circumstances who unsuccessfully appealed against the decision to withdraw transport assistance. The policy has been successfully implemented across the rest of the city without issue. *(hear, hear)*
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Colin Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Lord Mayor, can the Executive Member please advise how the closure of the Council's consultation portal is forecast to affect engagement with the public and the steps being taken to rectify this?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am pleased, delighted, to update Councillor Campbell on this. The steps that are being taken at the moment is a piece of obsolete software is being retired, which is the closure he refers to, and we wish it well in its long and happy life and whatever it does in the future. The piece of software did not work on smart phones, did not work with social media and things like that so as we move into the modern age I am sure Councillor Lay can show you Twitter and things like that about how people engage in the future. We are looking about doing it in a modern fashion.

For consultations that happen in the short term there are a couple of more options available to the Council to carry out consultation. We are doing a full review of all the software and platforms to make sure we can engage with people, and engage with people in a modern way and the systems we use are fit for purpose.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary?

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Of course, Lord Mayor. Would the Executive Board Member care to comment on the fact that he obviously got the same briefing that I did but he missed the sentence off which said we would be expanding the information on the current website and bearing in mind that the old system retires tomorrow and, as you say, we wish it a long and happy retirement, and the new system will be in place from Friday, there actually is no reference whatsoever on the City Council's website to this new policy or any new consultations we may currently be undertaking.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I wanted to keep something back for the supplementary. I know how thorough Colin is. Clearly through the Communications Team we have got through the various channels we have got through social media and the traditional media we can always get our messages when communications are happening. Like I say, we are looking at a proper appropriate consultation in the future. I am sure we will be able to engage people as we move forward using all the various tools and channels available to us.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Alice Smart.

COUNCILLOR SMART: Would the Executive Member for Children and Families care to comment on the recent Government U-turn regarding academies?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you – you are keeping me busy this afternoon.

I think we were all surprised when Nicky Morgan made her U-turn with regard to the forced academisation of all schools by 2020. This particular aspect of educational policy had proved to be one of the most unpopular in recent memory. It had led to strikes by teachers and teaching staff and widespread criticism from the unions, teachers and governors.

We have always been clear in Leeds that we will continue to work with schools in the city regardless of their governance arrangements, as we believe that a family of Leeds schools will produce the best outcomes for children and young people in our city, but we have never and never will support the forced academisation of our schools. We believe very strongly that the people best placed to make decisions about the governance of schools are the schools themselves.

The policy as it stood would have seen local authorities stripped of assets, parents stripped of representation on governing bodies of their schools and a system with absolutely no democratic accountability.

It is not just us who believe this. Before the announcement came the Leeds Primary Headteacher Forum had written to Nicky Morgan outlining their concerns about the policy and the high regard with which they held their relationship with this Local Authority. I would like to quote a little from that letter. They said:

“We are proud of our heritage and partnership with our Local Authority and this has only strengthened in recent times with the formation of the Children’s Services team in Leeds City Council. Testament to this is the excellent Ofsted report that the Local Authority received in 2015 where its leadership and the management was judged to be outstanding.”

We believe we are a great example of what can be achieved when schools work in close partnership with their Local Authority officers and advisers. In short, our schools do not want to be forced to convert to academy status. Although this rather embarrassing about turn is welcome news we must not be too quick to

celebrate. I have no doubt whatsoever that this academisation programme will continue to be pushed through under the guise of Local Authorities hitting a tipping point of schools who have already converted.

We need to wait and see the detail of the policy change but I am pleased to say that Leeds remains in a strong position with around 93% of our primaries rated as good or outstanding and 80% of our secondaries. In fact we are above the England average on both counts.

We remain committed to all schools in Leeds and are determined to work together to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people. It is just a shame that our teachers, school staff, governors and parents had to endure months of worry and uncertainty before the Government saw sense and pulled back on their hugely unpopular and ill thought through policy. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Smart, have you got a supplementary? No. Councillor Kim Groves.

COUNCILLOR GROVES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to ask the Executive Member for Environment and Skills to update Council on what type of support we will be offering the staff of the British Home Stores' stores which will sadly be closing at the White Rose Centre and Leeds City Centre. Councillor Mohammed Rafique.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: Thank you, Councillor Groves and Lord Mayor. The Council's Employment and Skills Service has been supporting working with DWP where appropriate to link employees to other retail vacancies within the city and providing skills training where required.

To date 67 BHS staff from the two stores have attended sessions held by the Council and DWP which provided information on benefits claims, pension, employment support services and skills retraining. 44 former BHS employees requested and are receiving further support. Workshops are planned to take place on CVs and job searching today and interview techniques tomorrow at the Council's Jobshop and learning centre, the Point, which is based at the White Rose Centre.

The Council continues to identify ongoing support recruitment via our business customers finding opportunities where the affected BHS staff can apply. We put the Operations Manager for the BHS stores in contact with the John Lewis recruitment team. The team also delivered an additional session to enable former BHS employees to compete for vacancies at their Victoria Gate store, including job roles in catering, stock management and selling. To date 29 former BHS employees have been offered jobs. Recruitment is still ongoing so this figure may increase. BHS staff can also access the Jobs Fair to be held on 16th August at the White Rose Centre and meet the employers.

Working with White Rose retailers the Council has delivered a very successful Seasonal Jobs Fair at the Point. Recruitment to cover the lead-up to the Christmas starts in early September and it can generate in excess of 200 additional vacancies at the Centre, Lord Mayor. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Is there any supplementary?

COUNCILLOR GROVES: I would just like to thank the Executive Member for the swift action that was taken on the news and I am sure that I have personally heard local people who have got into jobs because of the action taken.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Billy Flynn.

COUNCILLOR FLYNN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Will the Executive Board Member for Children and Families ensure that the roofing contractors to be employed this summer to finish off the roof at Adel Primary School are fully competent and that their work is closely overseen by Council officers?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you. I know Councillor Flynn has taken a really close interest in this one and I think he has had a really useful input. I can confirm that officers in PPPU and Children's Services supported by our Strategic Design Partner NPS are committed to ensuring that a fully competent contractor is employed for all works as part of the maintenance programme.

A pre-start meeting with each contractor will set the scene for how the contract will be managed and expectations set by the team will be involved in this. Following on all works will be closely overseen during the construction phase by a team who will monitor each scheme and any potential issues flagged early to enable the appropriate action to be taken.

As a result of a good working relationship developed between the Headteacher at Adel and Council officers during the previous phase, the same project manager will oversee the Phase 2 works at the school to provide continuity.

30 of the 31 maintenance schemes have now been returned from tender, four have been awarded and the remainder are being rigorously evaluated by the Project Officer team supported by NPS.

THE LORD MAYOR: Supplementary?

COUNCILLOR FLYNN: Thanks very much, James. Could you ensure or give us an assurance that the contractors used last year will not be used again on this particular school and that the Headteacher is kept fully informed of progress?

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you. I understand the Headteacher is being kept fully informed and just to reflect that last summer 35 out of 37 schemes were delivered successfully. Obviously it is a great concern to us that two were not. We experienced issues with a couple of contractors, one we had not worked with previously and both have been excluded from the contract list going forward.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. End of Question Time.

ITEM 10 – MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD AND THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

THE LORD MAYOR: Can we go to page 9, Item 10, Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing board and the Executive Board. Councillor Judith Blake.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Consideration of comments and we go up to 20 minutes. Councillor Latty.

Health and Wellbeing Board

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, I wish to speak to Minute 78, page 49, on the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Minute 81, page 52, on the importance of the emerging Sustainability and Transformation Plan, or STP, for Leeds.

Health and Wellbeing Boards have been asked to create local sustainability and Transformation Plans to speed up the implementation of local health priorities. These plans should be focused on local areas and built around the needs of local people with the aim that they will help to ensure any investment is used to transform patients' experiences and the health outcomes over a long period.

I must stress, I am most concerned that the Leeds STP does remain the Leeds STP and does not get subsumed, I suppose is the word I want, into the wider West Yorkshire STP. This could well happen if we do not keep our eyes on the ball.

Putting that on one side, the Leeds STP will sit under the refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy and it is important that the two documents complement each other. When developing the Leeds STP, despite what I said earlier, there has to be acknowledged links with the West Yorkshire level plan, it has got to work as one right across the region. Current areas being considered in the West Yorkshire STP level include urgent emergency care, cancer, mental health and specialised services. Of these, improving the effectiveness of our mental health service is certainly one area in which I would like to see us make more progress. For too long mental health has been almost a poor relation compared to the treatment of physical health and it has to change. In particular, more of us will be living into dementia – not speaking personally.

The approach being developed here, and one which I wholeheartedly approach, is to look at the importance of social prescribing which provides GPs with non-medical referral options that can operate alongside existing treatments and this can hugely improve health and wellbeing. This method treats patients as more than just passive recipients of services and it promotes the importance of building community networks – relationships, friendships that can provide caring mutual help and empower individuals. Patients' health and wellbeing can be supported through improved self esteem, coping strategies, resilience skills and relationships,

friendships, personal resources, can empower communities to control their futures and create tangible resources within those communities.

The other key area that I want to see built on is that of intermediate and integrated care. It is important that services such as I have just described work alongside medical provision towards reducing avoidable hospital admissions. It is most important we do not worry just about bed blocking on the way out but also worry about stopping people going in.

THE LORD MAYOR: Can you wind up? Time is up.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I see I have exceeded my time, Lord Mayor, so I will call it a day there but just hope we take with both hands the opportunity the STP provides. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Flynn.

COUNCILLOR FLYNN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I will be speaking to Minutes 78 to 81 but concentrating mainly on Minute 61, the West Yorkshire Sustainability and Transformation Plan.

The plan will provide a blueprint for delivering the NHS five year view in the city. It must emphasise links and co-ordination across West Yorkshire, notably in the areas emphasised by Councillor Latty a few minutes ago on emergency care, cancer services, mental health and specialised services.

I appreciate that the plan had to be delivered within a very short timescale but I understand the deadline has been extended to September and this is very good news. This is a one-off opportunity and we must get it right first time.

The plan must provide a clear strategy on how the gaps already identified in Health and Wellbeing, care and quality and finance and efficiency will be closed. It is essential that the plan includes all the elements to achieve this. It must contain clear plans for measuring outputs and it is critically important that the city provides the leadership and collaborative skills to make it happen. It must also demonstrate plans for a health partnership between the NHS, the Local Authority, the voluntary sector, residents, academia and local business.

The development of the Leeds Academic Health Partnership is a very welcome innovation in this latter regard. The partnership is a unique organisation but it must be used to help us achieve better outcomes rather than conducting pure research. Failure to include all of these elements may well mean a delay in transformation funding and may even lead to the process being taken over by NHS England. We must get it right.

NHS planning guidance makes it clear that one of the main measures of a credible and compelling STP will be evidence of early progress in key areas such as the introduction of innovative and integrated models of care. I know that much work on the Urgent and Emergency Care Vanguard has already taken place in West Yorkshire through a federation of acute Trusts. However, there are 50 Vanguard initiatives around the country including seven others on urgent and emergency care.

It is essential we share learning and good practice with and from the rest of the country.

The city faces huge challenges right across Health and Social Care. There are issues with reduced life expectancy, we need to improve Adult Social Care and Mental Health Services both for adults and children as well as promoting equality between mental health and physical health. I have not touched on primary care.

Of course, the shadow of the projected financial deficit lies across everything we do on the Health and Social Care front. This is not meant to be a criticism of the Sustainability and Transformation Plan – quite the opposite – but it is essential we get it right. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Eileen Taylor.

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR: Lord Mayor and my fellow Councillors, I would like to speak today in reference to Minute 78 page 49, the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy from 2016 to 2021. This Strategy follows the first Health and Wellbeing Strategy from 2013 to 2015 and sets out the work to reduce health inequality in Leeds.

In Leeds we want to create the best possible conditions for people for to live fulfilling lives. We aim to be a health city with high quality services. Our Health and Wellbeing Strategy from 2013 to 2015 laid firm, positive foundations for us to reach the aim and we have already seen a reduction in infant mortality rates across the city. As a direct result of our more preventative approach in our most deprived wards we are seeing a decrease in the rate of early deaths from a variety of causes.

We also became the first major city to implement integrated electronic patient care records, which has greatly improved access to patient data and met the demands of clinical practice.

However, challenges in Leeds still remain. 12% of our households in Leeds remain in fuel poverty and Leeds is well aware that there remains a ten year difference in life expectancy between those who live in Hunslet and those in Harewood. People living in the most deprived neighbourhoods in our city are still likely to experience multiple disadvantage, shortness of life and spend more years in long term unhealth.

We still have 164,000 people in Leeds living in areas ranked among the most deprived 10% nationally. This is addressed in the refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Our vision is clear. Leeds will be healthy and caring city for all ages, where people who are the poorest improve their health and wellbeing faster. To achieve this we are putting people at the heart of our new strategy. We have 12 priority areas which show how we reduce health inequality in Leeds and we have five clear outcomes we have to achieve. We want to see the people of Leeds living longer and healthier lives which are active and sustainable.

We are well aware that our most vulnerable group lives in poverty including poverty, migrants, refugees, homelessness and those with disability all experience health inequality. We know that our BME communities are prone to particular poor health outcomes and the communities.

Lord Mayor, I could go on and say a lot more but we this time are really putting things together to improve the health of the Leeds community. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Ghulam Hussain.

COUNCILLOR G HUSSAIN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am also speaking on Minute 78, page 49, relating to the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The importance of partnership working across all relevant sectors, whether it is health and care providers, commissioners and importantly the third sector, is vitally something we should promote and I am very pleased to see that the new strategy emphasises the importance of all stakeholders.

Crucially I think what is also worth noting is that everyone from providers to individuals are all clearly identified as major key stakeholders to helping to achieve the bold ambition of Leeds to be the best city for Health and Wellbeing.

Another important aspect of the plan I am pleased to say is the priority of the plan for stronger focus on prevention, with a particular interest on issues such as smoking and harmful drinking. Moreover a recognition of the need for services in the city to be more proactive and preventative in their approach is also something very positive to note in the strategy.

While on a local and city level we are rightly supporting the prevention agenda, it must be noted that there is a growing disconnect between what local services are saying and what national Government is supporting when it comes to the issues of prevention.

Indeed, we are told that the Government endorses and supports the NHS five year forward view in setting out a long term vision to ensure the sustainability of the National Health Service, yet some have rightly questioned their commitment to this plan when you consider the action it has taken which have had a detrimental effect on the prevention agenda.

Indeed, we have seen the impact of Government action in this city when you consider the huge cost to the Council's Health budget which has been £2.8m cut last year and a further £3.9m cut this year, a total of £6.7m in the two years. Furthermore, the effects of this are already being seen that NHS England Chief Executive Simon Stevens recently told the Health Select committee that the Council funding cuts to public health are adding pressure on the health service.

Despite this lack of support from Government I am pleased to say we at local level at least for now, despite cuts, have remained committed to this prevention agenda. We must ensure through this strategy we can mitigate the impact of these cuts and try our best to make our commitment to relentless focus on tackling health inequalities, especially in our deprived areas, become a reality. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Christine Macniven.

COUNCILLOR MACNIVEN: Lord Mayor, I wish to speak on Minute 78, page 49, on the subject of Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Minute 82, page 53, Leeds Better Care Fund and issues which significantly affect both pieces of work.

A key part of the refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy is the importance of prevention in health and care. The first strategy, which ran from 2013 to 2015 laid foundations for Leeds to be the best city for health and wellbeing, to be a healthy and caring city for all ages where the poorest people will improve their health the fastest.

Some of the priorities relating to social care include being an age friendly city where people age well, providing the best care in the right place at the right time, supporting self care, more people managing their own conditions. Acknowledgement of the environment in which this must be achieved is vital. Costs of high quality care continue to rise. Over the next 25 years the population of Leeds will grow by 15%. The number of people over 65 is estimated to rise by almost a third to 150,000 by 23013, resulting in greater need for care, sometimes complex care. Life expectancy of adults with additional needs continues to increase, thankfully, as a result of ever burgeoning progress in the provision of health interventions.

Throughout this there will be huge financial challenges. The 2015 Spending Review gave Councils the option of an increase of Council Tax by 2% providing that it was used on Adult Social Care, further imposition on the cash strapped citizens of Leeds. The share of the Adult Social Care budget allocated by this Council has risen since 2010 from 20% to over 40% in 2015/16 and it is still inadequate. Financial pressures on this Council of the National Minimum Wage, increased nursing homes, really has resulted in a backs against the wall attitude beginning to dominate.

Pressures include demographic increases, increased life expectancy, complexity of service provision to match complexity of need. Simultaneously and rightly there is increased service user expectations and greater support for people to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. There is a potential significant financial gap across Leeds Health and Social Care organisations of £700m between resources and requirements. The decision by the Government not to recognise the financial challenges, hoping things will miraculously work out, is reckless in the extreme. Local Authorities are calling for real funding commitments taking into account all pressures.

I have just one other thing that I would like to say. I meet with the Adult Care and Public Health teams regularly and I am seriously impressed by the professionalism and the creative solutions that they devise to come up with answers to these intractable problems. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: We have run out of time for comments. It is now Councillor Charlwood to sum up.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would just like to firstly say I am delighted to be addressing the Council as the new Executive Board Member for Adults, Wellbeing and Health and the new Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, so I would like to thank colleagues for their contributions to this debate.

Councillor Latty raised the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the STP and I think Councillor Flynn also did raise the STP as well, and not getting subsumed into the West Yorkshire Plan. I would just like to say I am looking forward to working with Councillor Latty particularly to help us to keep the strategy and the Leeds focus right at the heart of what we are doing.

I would also just like to agree with the sentiments about mental health services because certainly it is a passion of mine, I used to work in mental health services, that it should have parity with other health services. Councillor Ghulam talked about preventative measures for smoking and drinking and I think Councillor Latty also mentioned social prescribing. Again, this is right at the centre of what we are trying to do with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy so I really welcome those comments.

Then the comments about the Leeds Academic Health Partnership, I really welcome that as well. I was very pleased to open the first event that the Academic Health Partnership put on and that was a men's health event, and that was a really important, a really good event. Everybody who attended gave me great feedback about it and it really focused on holistic and preventative work which again shows just how we are all signed up to the same message, so it is really great to be taking over a portfolio of work which has already got great partnership working where everybody is working together.

I would just like to address some of the challenges which Christine, Councillor Macniven, also highlighted. You know, the extent of the health challenge in Leeds is very high. Health is worse in Leeds than the national average in England. Thousands of people, particularly in our most deprived communities, live shorter lives than they should and the cost of providing high quality services continues to rise, not to mention the increasing demographic challenges we will face obviously in the decades to come.

The Council is very familiar with the financial challenge which faces these sectors. The rising pressures in terms of cost could mean a potentially significant financial gap in the whole of the Leeds sector of an estimated £700m between resources and requirements by 2021. Furthermore, as has already been stated, the lack of the perceived commitment by the Government to the prevention agenda, highlighted by millions of pounds worth of cuts to our public health funding, also represents a huge cause for concern and we cannot afford to let the people of this city down, who we are here to represent. We must do everything we can to mitigate the cuts and pressures and ensure Health and Wellbeing in Leeds can be better, fairer and sustainable.

The challenges demand that we as a city must be innovative when working together with key partners in the Health and Care sector and within this Chamber to fulfil the bold ambition that we have set in the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Yes the challenge is great but this is not an excuse to lower our ambitions and I am not prepared to do so, and I am really pleased that the new Strategy, supported by our partners, commits to a relentless focus on reducing health inequalities in the city, as well as creating a high quality and financially sustainable health and care system.

Our vision is very clear. Leeds will be a healthy and caring city for all ages where people who are the poorest improve their health the fastest. This is set against

five clear outcomes which Councillor Taylor mentioned, where we want to ensure people live healthier independent lives as well as to have access to quality services and to be part of safe and sustainable communities. Also, our twelve priorities in the strategy, some of which have been mentioned today – and by the way I have asked for all Members to get a copy of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy as well and it puts people right at the centre of everything we do.

This I hope will send a real message loud and clear that as a city we see that wellbeing starts with people and that everything else is connected and everyone is connected. I am really sure over the coming weeks as we begin to launch the refreshed strategy and also develop and progress the development of the Sustainability and Transformation Plan which will sit under the strategy – I will not go into that further today but I know there is clear interest in it.

What I will say is that as we now have set our plan for the next five years to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of the city, I am very much looking forward to working with all partners here and outside this Chamber to build on the achievements that have already taken place.

Lord Mayor, I would also like to take this opportunity and put on the record recognition and thanks to my predecessor, Councillor Mulherin, as Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board for all the hard work, passion and support that she has given that process and particularly her profound commitment to tackle health inequalities in the city, her work in forming the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy and I really look forward to continuing to work with her on the Board in her new Executive role.

Furthermore I would like to thank Councillor Neil Buckley and Councillor Yeadon as former Members of the Board. The Health and Wellbeing board has been on a tremendous journey over the past three years and I know your combined contribution to the progress of the Board's ambitions to be the best city for health and wellbeing...

THE LORD MAYOR: Could you wind up, please.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: ... and the formulation of the new strategy has been very important. I am also looking forward to working with colleagues on all sides as we continue to face the challenges ahead. Thank you very much.

Executive Board

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Can we move now to the Executive Board consideration of comments on the Exec Board Minutes until 4.10pm.

- (i) Environment and Sustainability/Environmental Protection and Community Safety

THE LORD MAYOR: Number (i), Environment and Sustainability/Environmental Protection and Community Safety. Councillor Jonathan Bentley to move a Reference Back.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on the Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility Update Report contained in Minute 169 and I am proposing that this be referred back to the Executive Board for its decision to be reconsidered.

We welcome the introduction of the incinerator, we see it as an economic and environmentally sound way of disposing of residual waste that would otherwise go to landfill and incur ever increasing landfill charges. It is really pleasing to see that the initial estimate of £2.7m annual saving has in fact increased to nearer £7m a year saving, far from the financial disaster predicted by the Labour Group when it was in Opposition.

One prediction about the incinerator that came from the Labour Group may be coming true and that is something that my friend Councillor Mick Lyons said. He talked about the danger of reducing incentives to recycle. He feared that everything would be chucked in the incinerator and the imperative to recycle would diminish. I think it was a fear shared also by our colleagues in the Green Party.

In six consecutive years from 2008 to 2014 recycling rates in the city increased, reaching nearly 43% in 2014/15, but then reducing significantly by three percentage points – that is actually a 7% reduction – between 2014/15 and 2015/16. How much of that 7% reduction has in fact ended up in the incinerator? What is the administration doing not only to prevent the decline but continue the upward trend in recycling rates?

This update report on the incinerator makes no significant proposals as to how just a proportion of the huge financial savings we are making could be leveraged to increase our recycling rates from the very unambitious 40%. In 2011 when Councillor Mark Dobson was running the show he said that even then 40% was out of date and even the 50% target by 2020 was a bit lame. There was an implicit commitment to use part of the savings coming from the incinerator to increase recycling rates, and again to quote Councillor Dobson he said, “This is an opportunity to do something really special in the city and be as a Core City a prime mover in terms of recycling rates. I am confident we can do that.”

How can we be a prime mover amongst Core Cities when we are the only Core City that does not have kerbside glass recycling? We must up our game on recycling. We have a huge resource of recyclable glass and food in the city that does not get recycled. It used to end up in landfill and now goes up in smoke. Let us invest some of our savings from the incinerator into food and glass recycling. It is good for our citizens, it is good for our city and it is good for the environment. I move the Reference Back, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Stewart Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thanks, Lord Mayor. Councillor Bentley has basically covered the argument for the Reference Back. I just thought it worth mentioning that today we are celebrating being the best Council and one of the awards that we got was for our Children’s Services where they dared to think and implement policies which were different to what the rest of the country were doing and they have been congratulated for an award in innovation and impact.

This is why we have brought this Reference Back now, because sometimes this Council actually can make its own weather and we can create our own projects which actually give us a sustainability because they provide us with an income so, for instance, we sold the airport and instead of distributing the money willy nilly across the city, we actually invested it in something else which was a great asset for the city and now that asset brings in £1m a year of income into our city.

The incinerator – that is bringing in £7m a year into this city. Unfortunately in both those cases that money gets banked and gets put into general funds and we do not actually think about anything creative that we can do with it. We have the opportunity to look at these opportunities where we are getting income coming in from innovation that we have done in the past to invest in innovation for the future.

Lord Mayor, our amendment this year in the Budget was to bring in glass recycling which, of course, is one of the major aspirations for our citizens in the city. They really want to make an impact on recycling and we should be able to take some of that money that we make out of our incinerator and reinvest it in proper recycling investment so that we can have glass recycling in this city. They can do it in Bradford; they are nowhere near as innovative as we can be and yet we do not do it. That is shameful; we should bring it here.

Also, of course, we have food waste recycling in just one small part of the city. That was a legacy of the joint administration when us Liberals decided that we wanted to be the best recycling bit of the city in our small outpost in Rothwell. We still manage to do that and it is actually a real disappointment that the city has not taken the opportunity to expand that programme and through so doing and investing some of that money from the incinerator into an anaerobic digester, we could actually create investment in our recyclables, we can get income through the fuel which is generated from the methane, we can actually put that into our own vehicles that then go out and collect the waste again. It is a virtuous cycle and we really should be doing something about it and that is what this Reference Back is about because instead of actually going forward with our recycling through the £7m that we make out of our waste, we are actually falling back. We really need to rethink this.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor John Procter

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Minute 169 on page 61, the Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility.

The Scrutiny Board which I chaired last year made a visit to this particular facility and it was an historic visit, I have to tell you, Lord Mayor, because in the preceding months Councillor Michael Lyons had protested that under no circumstances would he cross the threshold of that building and yet he did, and he went along with us to see the facility.

What struck me and every Member who went along on a bus, Lord Mayor – we had no choice because there is no visitor parking, can you believe, at the facility – what struck us was as soon as the doors opened of the coach was the stench that hit us and I use the word pointedly, because that is what it was, that is what it is.

The officers, some of them seemed to be slightly oblivious to the smell – maybe they have been too many times – but it was there, every Member of the Scrutiny Board noticed it and, frankly, something needs doing about it. We as a Scrutiny Board are determined to follow that through. The officers have been left in no doubt that it was a promise that was made to local residents that there would not be undue smells coming from this facility and there is. They are not coming from the exhaust though, they are coming from the general waste that is collected. More about that later, Lord Mayor.

Councillor Bentley, unfortunately I cannot agree with the basis upon which he is making this Reference Back because it is the old story that is repeated again which is glass and food waste. Laudable though they may be, those are not the issues that those operating that recycling facility have, as you heard, Jonathan. When you ask them what they would like to see taken out of the waste stream they have no hesitation telling you straightaway – textiles. Textiles are the biggest issue for them. It causes the biggest number of stoppages to the plant, it is a Council with the largest volumes of residuals that they have to process, clogs up the machinery. They would like to see textiles taken out of that waste stream.

We contracted this facility to Veolia, they are operating our facility on our behalf. As a city we should listen to them and actually act upon what they want to see taken out of the waste stream, not necessarily what some Liberal Democrats have been peddling for years and years, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Barry Anderson.

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. As you can see from the Order Paper, I wanted just to talk about this Minute but I wanted to concentrate on Minute 17 and Minute 18. I feel a bit of a proper Charlie here now because what I am about to say has got nothing to do with the Reference Back whatsoever. Not a thing.

The issues I wanted to raise were in respect of the non-urgent tree works. *(laughter)* Absolutely nothing, but because of the Council's constitution I have got no option but to address it just now. I wish you could amend it, it is a waste of time this but fine, I will do it.

My concerns about the non-urgent tree works are, whilst I welcome this fully and it will help us, there are a number of questions that remain to be answered. What is the admin fee going to be? What do we do when there is a disagreement on the action proposed, that the resident wants to do X but our experts or their experts say Y and Z and how are we going to resolve those particular problems? Do you actually have the resource to manage it because every time I contact the Forestry people they are so short of staff, have you actually got the resource to manage this?

What about the cost of the tree work? What happens if the private sector can actually provide that service cheaper, how are we going to resolve those issues?

We need some clarity as well on new tree planting, what are we going to do? It is fine removing a tree but certain I do think, or certainly I believe that we need to start planting, the same way as we do on a planning application, round about three to one and I certainly think that we should follow that type of thing.

In respect of the cremator replacement, will you reconsider after NGT being unceremoniously thrown out that you would now consider extending Lawnswood Cemetery again, because we lost our extension because the people for NGT wanted it to give for an all weather football pitch, whereas it is needed. Will you now prioritise looking at expanding Lawnswood Cemetery because it is needed, it is full.

If you do go ahead with this you need to think about how you are going to explain to relatives about the potential logistics of moving bodies, because if you do operate the services still from Lawnswood but you need to use the facilities up in Rawdon, some people might find that insensitive, so you need to think about how you are going to approach that.

You also need to look and get it in quickly in terms of the land availability and the site allocations plan. If you are going to do it you need to get it in quickly before something is done so you need to be very clear as to where you see it going to be.

The other thing, and I regret to mention it, is what the effect of Brexit might be in terms of some of the negotiations.

THE LORD MAYOR: Barry, would you wind up?

COUNCILLOR B ANDERSON: On those points thank you very much and I apologise for mucking up... *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Colin Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Thank you, Barry for that interjection there. I was a little bemused and I am assuming you are proposing that we turn the Mick Lyons Memorial Incinerator into a wood burning stove *(laughter)* but we will see.

I think, Lord Mayor, we are trying to articulate not what a company that we employ want but what the people of Leeds want, and I think it is fair to say that we all on a regular basis get comments from our residents about glass recycling, or should I say the absence of glass recycling. I think it is also fair to say that residents are very broadly supportive of expanding recycling in all areas, and so it is somewhat disappointing that we have a very successful facility which is in fact earning us much more money than we ever expected and yet we seem to lack a vision about how we take that forward.

There were comments, I think, when the incinerator was proposed. I do not think it was 100% supported by all sides on this house but I think it is fair to say that actually I suppose a number of the people who strongly opposed it have suddenly become much more supportive when it started turning a profit. I respect the Greens who have consistently taken that particular view.

Having said that, I think probably the Greens would agree with me that we should be doing more for recycling, particularly as our recycling rates seem to be falling. It seems to me that even a small injection of capital from this what is in effect a windfall into the recycling budget could produce a dividend way in excess of the investment involved.

All we are really asking is for the Executive Board to look at this again and see if we can come forward with some positive suggestions about how we up the recycling rates in this city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Minute 169 page 61, Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility update, otherwise known as the incinerator.

During the long negotiations on this incinerator Green Councillors were told that the contract would last for 25 years and that it would be for Council household waste in Leeds. After that time it would be reviewed. We made sure we kept mentioning this, would it be reviewed – yes it would, yes it would, yes it would. Now we find that is not the case.

We are finding, as has been mentioned, that the incinerator has just started and it is causing smells, it is causing problems for the local people but also we are concerned of what is now stated that the contract has been extended to Veolia for another 15 years and it will be that Veolia can use it for commercial waste. This commercial waste could come from anywhere, I doubt that it will be just in Leeds, so more lorry movements for another 15 years meaning 40 years in all.

As you know we did not agree with the incinerator anyway but surely after 25 years we should be looking at it – do we still need it running full-time? We should be looking at it but no, suddenly because of the monetary things, people say yes, we can save this money if we can have it another 15 years. I can understand, yes, we are short of money but we should not be doing this. It is totally wrong and that is our view. We are totally against it being looked at for another 15 years unless after 25 years it should be looked at again. That is our view and that will remain our view. I do not think we are being fair to the people in that area at all. It is totally wrong. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Alex Sobel.

COUNCILLOR SOBEL: I would also like to speak on Minute 169 page 61. I think we are all – times move on, issues move on. Ten years ago when this was first proposed I was implacably opposed to the incinerator, I was concerned about particulates, I was concerned about local air quality, I was concerned about climate change, but the way that it has developed and the way that it is now implemented means that we can review that thought, we can think about how it is now and the reality is that with our climate change obligations as a country and ours as a city, the RERF as it is called, the Recycling Energy Recovery Facility will mean that we will actually reduce carbon emissions by 62,000 tonnes a year and potentially more in future.

Obviously we have to pay heed to the Reference Back, although I was not intending to when I first was asked to speak on this subject because we did not know about it, but we can clearly do more round this agenda and we are doing more. We are using the RERF to really help bring a whole range of projects to help reduce climate change. We have got the Energy Services Company which is about to launch

and that is going to include advice and support to people around reducing their fuel use which will reduce emissions. We are working with people to reduce their waste, to improve their home recycling on things like plastics and metals. We installed solar panels on the Council houses and Council buildings. We have got ongoing work in terms of energy efficiency measure in homes and businesses. We are doing all of these things to reduce our carbon emissions as a city, of which the RERF provides a part of that.

Going forward we are going to have a new Leeds Standard on Housing which will reduce the emissions of those houses, which will look at waste from those houses, we are working with CITU who are building very close to the facility over 500 homes which again will be low carbon homes and will be looking at their own waste management and reducing down to looking at zero waste facilities.

We are working around this to help our climate change ambitions but it is not all going forward in the way that we would like. We have in the last few months started to work on a Horizon 2020 European Funding bid to support the work of the RERF. Who knows what will now happen to that? We have started talking to the European Investment Bank - those talks clearly are going to have to cease.

Our ability to deliver on this agenda and to work on some of the gains we have made and clearly and mutually inhibited, but I changed my mind the last ten years about this so hopefully there will be some other changes on this agenda. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Mark Dobson.

COUNCILLOR M DOBSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Speaking to the same Minute, until the Reference Back I too was not going to make comment on it but actually it is really relevant to the points I wanted to make. Stewart, making our own weather and we do not do things creatively. I would suggest we are making our own weather, very much in terms of this facility. If you wonder where the £7m has gone, it has gone into the base - check the budget, it will tell you exactly why we have had to do that. Apart from that, put that to one side, there are amazing opportunities around this facility and one that the Council will be heavily investing in if things to go plan, and that is, of course, for our ambitions for district heating.

When I pass a street now and I see black bins, the first thing I think of is "That is no longer going to landfill, it is going to be incinerated and it has the capacity to generate 11 megawatts of electricity. That is brilliant but actually if you use heat from steam that energy is amplified by five times. That means we could potentially have the ambition to heat 10,000 of our Council properties. These are properties that have got the worst kind of heating, underfloor heating, often antiquated, out of date. That will take more than a quarter of residents classified as being in fuel poverty out of the equation straight away. That is a fantastic ambition and I think rather than talk about food and glass, let's get real. Let us talk about the big ambitions for the city and what this incineration process can deliver for us.

On top of that there is also the environment. Already the Energy from Waste facility has given us massive carbon reductions in Leeds, but if we could convert 10,000 houses to steam heat for their properties, that would take a further 22,000 tonnes of carbon out of the equation for Leeds every single year. That equates to 11,500 cars off the roads of Leeds. Add to that the savings for the individual. Each

householder would save £250 on his or her bills. That equates to a bundled-up saving for Leeds residents every single year of £2.5m.

I think we owe it to people living in fuel poverty to develop that and actually what this project does, it epitomises everything we should be doing as a Council – supporting the vulnerable in fuel poverty, creating quality employment, using technology, the Green agenda, existing facilities and joining them up to create a modern, green, sustainable 21st Century economy for Leeds.

We cannot miss this opportunity, it is too big to miss. Forget the Reference Back, it is a side show; look at the real issues that this facility can bring us if we play our cards right and do it properly. I had five years at the department and I know we have got across the department the staff that can carry this off. We have got the ability, we have got the ambition, we will deliver it, it is in our hands. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Al Garthwaite to be making her maiden speech.

COUNCILLOR GARTHWAITE: Lord Mayor, I am speaking on Minute 169, page 61, the Recycling and Energy Recovering Facility. I was told that maiden speeches would be non-controversial but nevertheless I am going to talk about recycling.

I was pleased to see in the report that education about recycling was going to be included during tours of the facility. We should all promote recycling. Probably we all do. The Recycling and Energy Recovery Facility exists at the end of the process for the waste that cannot be used and cannot be recycled. Incinerating waste, even to get energy from it, has to be the last step. We need to make sure that everyone does what they can to increase the recycling that they do.

In 2014/15 the waste recycled weighed more than 2,000 double-decker buses. That is a huge amount but recycling has stalled. The message is getting out but we do have to remember that the rates only measure the amount that ends up in our systems. If people are giving money to family members, friends or charities we might not know about it. That is why we need to continue working with local charities and furniture re-use schemes and embed them in our own facilities and services, because that way anyone can benefit when someone no longer needs a bed or sofa, and we do see a lot of them out and about in Headingley during student changeover and we are dealing with that situation.

An important message we need to get out is what recycling can mean for local services. Almost everyone knows recycling can help to save the planet, but do they know that by recycling they are saving the Council money and themselves? We know our Council services are strong – we are Council of the Year – but the message is worth repeating, the simple act of placing the right thing in the right bin repeated hundreds and millions of times in a year can make a huge difference to the amount of money we have to provide vital services.

We need to explain and emphasise how individuals could benefit. Long term they themselves will save money. It will appeal to self-interest – it does work. Much of this work is about helping people to understand the impact of what they do. One

simple action makes a lot of difference. The facility will make a huge change for what is left but let us get the message out that recycling is great for the environment, for the city, for the services everyone in Leeds relies on and for themselves. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Lucinda Yeadon to comment on the Reference Back.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thanks very much, Lord Mayor. First of all I would just like to start by saying how much I am looking forward to working on this new portfolio. I made the joke previously that I am in a game of Cabinet bingo and I have nearly got the full house! I am very much looking forward to this and want to pay tribute to Councillor Mark Dobson for all of his hard work on this portfolio and hope that I can progress the agenda that he started.

Thank you, Councillor Bentley, for giving me an extra three minutes to take about Energy from Waste in my first Council with a new portfolio. It is much appreciated.

It is a subject that is incredibly important. Obviously you put down a Reference Back but the recommendation in the Exec Board paper was to note the paper. It gives us a good opportunity to talk about something which is incredibly important.

As has been acknowledged, recycling rates, Councillor Al Garthwaite in her maiden speech articulated fantastically why recycling is important and the progression that has been made over the past ten years in doubling our recycling rates in the city has been significant, yet we still have ambitious targets and we still are determined to reach those as creatively as possible.

Just picking up a few of the concerns raised, Councillor Bentley, there is a recycling facility at the RERF which does go through the waste before it goes into the incineration process and that does pick up a significant amount of recyclables before it gets there, Just commenting on Councillor Procter and Councillor Ann Blackburn's concerns regarding the odours, I will be going out myself to visit the RERF I think next week, so I will make sure that I will monitor those odours myself and I will report back with any odour I find. *(laughter)*

I think as Councillor Sobel mentioned, we have all been on a bit of a journey with this particular facility where many of us had concerns but we were given a pathway that we are now travelling upon and the savings that it has made to the Council are significant, and the reductions and benefits it brings for carbon reduction and energy from waste, as Councillor Dobson mentioned, are also very important.

I think we all are in a position where we would like to see that funding put back and invested into recycling. Unfortunately due to the financial constraints that have been forced on the Council with reductions in our budgets, we have to use those savings in other ways but that does not mean that we stop being creative and that our commitment to recycling is diminished. We will be bringing an Executive Board report to the next Executive Board regarding how we hope to work with communities and individuals to increase our recycling rates. I will talk about Councillor Anderson's trees when I sum up at the end of the Minutes, Lord Mayor. Thank you.

THE LORD MAYOR: At this stage can we move to the vote on the Reference Back in the name of Councillor Jonathan Bentley. (*A vote was taken*) The Reference Back is LOST.

We move on to Councillor Paul Wadsworth.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I want to comment on Minutes 17 and 18 of the extra pack which is last week's Executive Board, with regard to non-urgent tree works.

Clearly with this policy the devil is in the detail and at the outset it looks like a good policy because, in fact, we are just extending what we have done in our social housing properties by trees that have caused nuisance to residents have been trimmed and in some cases have been felled and that has been reimbursed back to Forestry through the HRA. Obviously some of our residents who have trees and some trees can be very negative to people's lives. I have a current case at the moment where the gentleman is being made quite ill by the effects of the tree and he cannot get Forestry to deal with that in a manner, and I cannot get Forestry to deal with that in a manner. Whether this policy will actually help him is another matter because he has to be backed by an arboriculture assessment; we cannot just go out and say, "We will cut anything down, if you can pay for it we will chop it down", because I do not want people to think I am anti-tree, I am sure the Forestry Department do think I am anti-tree but I am really not, I am in favour of planting trees particularly in areas where we need them to soak up water to stop that water going into Councillor Yeadon's ward like it did on Boxing Day and we need to have programmes to do that.

We need to have this provision where residents who are in a situation where the tree work falls into 4A and 4B and realistically with our budgets we are never going to get to that work and they can afford to pay for it and they want to pay for it, they should be allowed to get that work done to stop it being a nuisance.

Bullet point (2) where it speaks about the effect of trees affected by developments worries me quite a bit because I do not want that to be development where people use that to get rid of the tree to enable development to take place, and I think we can be really careful about how we deal with that.

As I say, it is a case of working a strategy out where people get harmful trees or trees that are causing a nuisance trimmed and we get the right result for the tree and the right replacement.

With regards to bullet point (18), which is the cremator replacement, it is prudent that we look at other areas of the city to provide a new cremator but I think we should not look back and say we are going to close the door on Lawnswood because people have very sensitive views around where people are buried and where people are cremated and you have to get really into that to understand that, and for us to close the door on Lawnswood and lock the gates and say we are only going to provide services here but we are going to do the cremation actually at Rawdon or somewhere else is the wrong way to go but I do think that we are missing a trick if we do not look in other parts of the city because all our three cremation places are in the same part of the city, particularly Lawnswood and Rawdon are very close together and we are probably missing out on some income. It is not about generating income,

it is about delivering a service to people but some people in the East of the city are having to go into other Authorities to get the service. I will leave it there, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Dan Cohen.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I too will be speaking on Minute 17. Members right across the Chamber will know that being a Councillor is not necessarily the glamorous, high octane political drama that some people may imagine. *(laughter)* You know, perhaps in Kippax but aside from Kippax – maybe you get more allowances in Kippax! – the majority of us I am sure get by on a diet of dealing with constituent issues, problems with dog poo, potholes, bins, parked cars, speeding cars and many of us also deal with issues that residents have with trees – trees blocking light, trees knocking against houses, trees shedding leaves constantly all over the garden, trees that are blocking TV signals. While lots of us love trees, trees that are really posing a real problem for the wellbeing of residents.

I am really pleased that finally something has been brought forward because for as long as I can remember every time I go to Forestry and say “I have got a resident who has got a real problem with a particular tree on Council land”, all I get back is the leaflet on the Council policy on dealing with trees that basically says, “We don’t touch them” which is incredibly frustrating.

This is incredibly positive. I do have one or two worries, obviously. It is expensive. We are asking residents to pay between £240 and £765 to deal with these trees and I think that is a massive sum of money that is simply not going to be affordable for the vast majority of local residents. I think it is unfair to simply say “Well, if you are wealthy and you can afford it that’s great but if not, you have just got to suffer in silence.” I think that is manifestly unfair.

I hope this is not going to be used as an excuse by Forestry to get out of doing some of the works that they should indeed be doing, and I have a real worry that they will say “No, this is something that you can pay to address.”

Also, this does not address in any meaningful way something that we have been talking about in Alwoodley for some time, the issue of orphan copses where housing developments have sprung up years ago where there were trees that were planted and nobody seems to have any meaningful responsibility for those trees.

In summary, it is a very positive development but I do hope the city will, across the piece, have a look at our policy on trees to make sure and review our policy on trees to make sure that we are not simply having trees that are in effect overgrown weeds because they are in the wrong place and not being properly managed. Thanks. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Neil Buckley.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to just associate myself with all the remarks made by my colleagues on this. We are all singing from a similar hymn sheet. This is just to confirm on extra pack Minute 17, the same Minute.

We have had quite a bit of turmoil in the country in the last week and some tumultuous events and some something like this happens once in a lifetime, I thought this morning I am speaking on this particular Minute about trees and it just sounds a little bit insignificant, but actually when you boil it down, life goes on. Ordinary life does go on and the small issues like this, what we think are small, actually bear down on us in our daily lives and the people that Councillor Cohen and Councillor Anderson referred to, and Councillor Wadsworth, simply because they are so close to us and so close to home; in the case of trees they are obviously literally so.

I also welcome these proposals as far as they go but Councillor Cohen referred to specific Alwoodley problems and the ones that we have had there. Deep shade is the one that I get often, nearly all the time, and this is deep summer shade where people think it is going to be a lovely sunny day and in fact they cannot enjoy their own gardens which are plunged into shade and gloom.

As somebody else mentioned before (I think it was Councillor Anderson) residents actually get quite depressed about this. It is quite a lowering thing to have to contend with. It is a significant issue. Some might be able to make a financial contribution or certainly might welcome the opportunity to consider it as suggested.

Would the Executive Board Member just look into two specifics, or two issues which are specific to this patch? There are two examples where land apparently has no owner and the City Council says we do not own it and yet the builder who then say owns it went out of business 50 years ago, he is nowhere to be seen and nobody will actually take responsibility for it. It does not matter who is going to pay for it because nobody will take responsibility.

Secondly, developments which in this particular case Wimpey Homes developed something like 1960, the City Council is now saying the paperwork was never transferred and so they still own this copse. Of course they do not but nevertheless nobody is taking responsibility and the resident has not permission or the wherewithal to do anything about it in a small housing estate – these are not big houses, these are small houses.

Everything costs money. This is what the whole thing is about but what we need to do please, and I would just ask in conclusion, Lord Mayor, is to make the whole system more friendly and user friendly for the individual concerned. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Stewart McKenna.

COUNCILLOR S McKENNA: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am also speaking on Minute 17 of the extra pack, non-urgent tree works. Whatever else we do on the Council we are all ward Members first and foremost. There is not a single ward in Leeds that does not have Council owned trees in them and each of us have probably been contacted by residents concerned about a tree – in fact I had one last week, as Councillor Yeadon will back me up on that. In Garforth and Swillington ward we do have these kind of queries quite often and we do what we can to try and resolve them.

As ward Members we all know there is nothing worse than a response from an officer saying “Sorry, Councillor, there is nothing that can be done in this case.” Even when we all know the policy and have to try and explain that to the resident, we

know that they will hear what we are saying – however, will we explain it as “Computer says No.” It is not an easy conversation to have and it is one where we can easily understand why people are concerned and upset.

For me this paper does something different. It looks at what can be done and what can be justified financially at the moment over “No, can’t be done.” We can tell our residents, “Yes, it can be done but as the person who is going to benefit from it you need to cover the cost.” As some trees affect multiple homes I am sure that neighbours will be able to work together to spread the cost between them.

There are so many services that we would never want to charge for that the Council does as a duty and not based on people’s abilities to pay, but charging for non-urgent tree works does make sense. Whilst the overall cost to the city of undertaking these works would be huge, often the individual cost would be moderate and it will be up to residents to choose if they want to spend their money in this way.

It also fits in with what the Scrutiny Board has identified about charges and fees for services. Trees bring us shade and help us breathe. They make the city look great, which you will know if you have ever seen a picture of Leeds from above. Finding a way through the perennial problem of complaints about Council-owned trees is not going to be easy but this approach does give us a way to move from “No” to “Yes”. It will make our jobs as ward Members easier and give people the choice to have works or not.

I am glad that we are only seeking to cover our costs in doing this as it is not a service that I feel we should be making a profit from. Lord Mayor, for those reasons I support this approach. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Jack Dunn.

COUNCILLOR DUNN: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I also would like to comment on Minute 17 of the extra pack. As the Lead Member for Parks & Countryside and working alongside Councillor Yeadon, I see the work that officers do day in, day out, whether it is planting, getting ready for events such as triathlon, or just making our city a better and greener place to be. There are, of course, difficult decisions to be made just like any other service. At the moment we want people to have green spaces to visit, areas to play and great exercise. We want the whole city to look good and cared for. We want to ensure that trees that are a risk to health and safety are pruned or, if need be, replaced. I am proud of that service, they are doing a great job in each of these areas but we know that people expect the Council to be able to do more, especially when trees interrupt their way of life. Whilst non-urgent compare to other works, we know that people can be concerned about this.

Up until now the Council has adopted a fairly firm line on doing works that can be seen to be urgent. I am glad that we are moving away from this and offering a solution that people can choose to undertake if they wish. As a matter of fact, we already do some undertaking of urgent tree works for Housing Leeds to make sure that our tenants are able to fully benefit from these properties. A good landlord knows this charge brings private properties, whether they are owner occupied or privately rented, in line with what we will do for Council tenants. Of course there is a cost which is borne by the person who benefits from it. That is only right, especially when you consider the financial challenge of the city. We will not be prioritising non-

urgent works over more pressing jobs, but we are giving residents a way to get things done.

I will make one observation and that is on the paragraph on development. I hope Members have seen it. This section make clear that when a tree on Council land is to be removed due to a development, the developer will have to pay for three replacement trees to get permission. That is absolutely what we would expect and I hope these changes receive the support of Members. Thank you, Lord Mayor.
(Applause)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Brian Selby.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is Minute 18 in the extra pack. Lord Mayor, we are a diverse city, a city with many cultures, many languages spoken and in this Council Chamber we have different views, different comments and attitudes but we all have one thing in common – we are all going to die. *(laughter)*

What happens then? What happens then? We hope that our families and next of kin, our friends, colleagues will come to our funeral, some may come to our funeral just to check that we are gone *(laughter)* but where do we go? *(laughter)*

Over the years for those who believe in an afterlife some may go in one place, some may go in another place but our bodies are disposed of, but where? Either it is by burial or it is by cremation and over the years more and more people in the city have chosen at the end to be cremated. In 2008/9 5,343 people were cremated; in 2014/15 5,432 and as the population of this city increases, the demand for burials, the demand for cremations will increase as the report highlights. Work has been done over the years at Guiseley and at Rawdon and at Cottingley and work needs to be done in due course at Lawnswood.

When one looks at the developments in the city that are going to take place, particularly to the east of the city whether it be at the Thorpe Park area, whether it be at the Seacroft Hospital site in my ward, whether it be the Barnbow site and the Leeds Orbital area, there will be a demand for cremation facilities on the east of the city. This report highlights that research should be done. I would say there is a benefit for it. At the moment we have funerals taking place, people travelling large distances from the east of the city to either Lawnswood etc. Can I suggest that we look at what highlights the possibility of looking at sites in the east of the city? I believe that is something that would be of benefit to families, it would reduce congestion and it would improve in the long term things that happen.

In those circumstances I welcome this report. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: With all that is going on I was depressed before I got here – I am even more depressed now! *(laughter)* Councillor Lucinda Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you very much. I think that just goes to show what a diverse new portfolio I have.

Just summing up, looking at the comments regarding the non-urgent tree works, I think they were broadly in support of the direction of travel that we are going

in so thank you for those comments. Looking at some of the concerns, I think Councillor Anderson and Councillors Wadsworth, Cohen and Buckley raised, particularly around orphan copses which is a very heartbreaking term, I do think there is definitely the need for us to have a review of the tree policy generally and Councillor Carter raised that in Executive Board and I said that I would go away and have a look at that, so that is certainly something that I am going to speak with officers to look how we can review that and see if those issues can be addressed with a review of the tree policy.

At the same time just to back up the comments made by Councillor McKenna, the costs that we will be charging is only to cover the costs of the tree work themselves. We will not be seeking to make any kind of profit or income and I just want to reassure Members with concerns.

For trees which may pose a problem to a community, a collective group of people, I am sure the ward Members in those areas might be imaginative to how they may address some of those costs, whether it is through MICE money or so on and so we certainly do not want anybody being put at a disadvantage. We do hope it is a creative way of dealing with a problem that for the past few years we have not been able to deal with.

On the issue of the Lawnswood and the cremator thank you, Councillor Selby, for reminding us of whatever happens over the next few months and years we all end up in the same place. *(laughter)* This paper is about looking at what our options are. There will be another paper to be brought back to Executive Board which I hope will also look at those concerns raised around the future of Lawnswood as well, so this is not about making a decision at this particular time, this is looking at all our options and ensuring that we can come back to bring a report when that work is being done.

Joining my colleague Councillor Dunn on the work of Parks & Countryside officers, they do do a fantastic job and I am very pleased to have taken over this part of my portfolio from Councillor Coupar and I have an interesting few weeks of visits with Councillor Dunn to go round some of our incredible parks, so I absolutely join him in paying tribute to officers who, under quite difficult circumstances, manage to achieve some very great things, so thank you very much. *(Applause)*

(ii) Communities

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Can we go on to Communities, Councillor Stewart Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am talking on Minute 168 page 60 and Minute 15 in the extra pack. This is to do with the Community Hub model.

Lord Mayor, I am very, very concerned about our Community Hub model and also the affordable housing policy which is going forward. I do believe that too often when we are looking at policies like this we do not take into account the locality within which we are meant to be implementing the policy. There has been a Community Hub which has been set up in Rothwell which has been lauded as being a fantastic facility for the local community. However, it has been moved into the local library which means that there is less space for books, there is less space for that

library to be a place of learning. The community space within it has been reduced so that officer space can be expanded and yet it is still an overcrowded environment for our Council workers and is not fit for purpose.

At the same time, the municipal offices which were built by the people of Rothwell and were an investment from the Rothwell Urban District Council have now been passed over to Asset Management for possible disposal. This is not the outcome that the people of Rothwell would want and the people of Rothwell have not been consulted on this either.

A similar situation is happening in Horsforth in terms of their heritage and their community assets and in common with this, and also with the Council's policy around affordable housing; there has been no consultation at all with the Neighbourhood Fora, for instance, in that area.

This is an example of how different departments in the Council do not work together and do not take into consideration how they can best talk to local people. Talking to local Councillors is not the same as talking to the local community, especially if talking to the local Councillors there is a split vote and you go with the majority.

What I will say is, please stop this now and consult with local people properly. Do so through the Neighbourhood Fora because these are people who have specifically put themselves forward in terms of talking about how they want their community to develop and please do not asset strip our community assets to sell off to invest in your programmes elsewhere. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Campbell has withdrawn his comment. Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on the same Minute but also on Minute 15 from the extra pack on Community Hubs.

Ensuring a range of housing is available is important to create mixed communities, giving residents a choice of how to meet their housing need and I welcome the creation of a Council owned housing company following the successes by Liberal Democrat administrations in Sutton and Sheffield who have also created these housing companies. I am hoping to see more detailed information on the proposals in the near future.

However, with housing comes the need for community facilities to support the new residents and in Weetwood Ward we do not even have the capacity for our current residents, never mind any growth. We had a library but it was shut down; we had a vibrant and thriving community centre in West Park but it was allowed to fall into wrack and ruin and demolished; we have no Community Hub, no One Stop shop, no Housing Office. We have nowhere for our residents to come to seek advice or help. We have church halls and churches and schools etc but because of the lack of other facilities they are permanently booked up due to high demand. We have put money into youth schemes but the providers have nowhere to provide their services. We have tried to help set up tenants' and residents' associations but they have nowhere to meet.

We are now relying on a local charity, OPAL, to set up a community centre and we would like a commitment from the Council that it will help it become the Hub that Weetwood deserves, housing all the services that the Council has withdrawn. Our residents deserve more than they currently receive. They deserve to have facilities that other communities take for granted.

The Council has approached this issue of Community Hubs as an asset management exercise looking at the buildings and how they can be maximised or rationalised instead of looking at communities and seeing what they really need. The Minute shows how areas that already have facilities are gaining even more. We would like the Council to commit to providing some of those facilities in areas with none. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor John Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Page 60, 168, the creation of affordable accommodation to buy and rent in Leeds.

Lord Mayor, I am sure many Members of Council who either deal with planning matters or see them during the course of their constituency work will be as frustrated as I often become when you see a planning application that would attract affordable housing as a contribution and yet the detail of what will be provided is not contained in the submission documentation for the application. Why is it not there? Because Leeds makes a choice. We choose to validate planning applications, that is to say we accept them, put the stamp on to say we have received them without insisting at the same time we receive the Section 106 agreement in draft. Many other Local Authorities insist they have the Section 106 at the same time as the planning application. If they do not get it they will not validate the application. I would like to see us do that in Leeds as well, Lord Mayor.

What is the benefit in doing that? The benefit is that we as local Councillors and, more importantly perhaps the communities we represent, see from Day One what the Section 106 offer is with every planning application and so we are able to see what the affordable housing contribution per site will be from Day One, so we know from Day One if the application is policy compliant, Lord Mayor. As things stand now we do not know any of those matters, we do not know any of those things and, indeed, a developer who is planning to bring an application for just under a thousand houses in my ward, when we pushed and pushed and pushed again at a pre-application discussion we were having with them, eventually we got to the point that no, it is not going to be policy compliant, no they are not actually going to come forward with 35% affordable housing on this scheme. Eventually I think, after maybe 20, 25 minutes my colleagues and I got them to admit that it would probably be around 20% they would be coming in with on the scheme, none of which will be assessed, none of which will be known until way, way, way down the track, maybe only at the point of determination of the planning application.

So, Lord Mayor, what I am saying is that one of the ways we can bring about a clearer process of delivery of affordable housing is to ensure that the Section 106 comes in with the planning applications, Lord Mayor. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Cohen has withdrawn his comment. Councillor Ann Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Yes, thank you, Lord Mayor. I do understand obviously what Councillor Procter has just been saying and I think that that would be very useful because we all know that developers will try and wangle out of paying Section 106 so that is an idea John has come forward with which I think is a good one.

My concern is when we talk about starter homes and the Government giving 20% discount to a cap of £250,000 and we call it affordable. For most people it is not affordable and we are talking about affordable as well to rent but, of course, as things are there is going to be less properties to rent, so it is all very well saying in this that we will do what we can to provide starter homes, that is OK, it is providing some homes for some people but it is going to be the people that are not going to be able to do that. I know that this paper is trying to do what it can because the problem is what the Government has come out with, that is the problem. We can only work with it, but I think we have got to look where we can at getting more rented affordable homes because a lot of people now will never be able to own their own home. We know with people not even having permanent jobs now, some being on contract basis even an affordable house they are not going to be able to afford. (*interruption*)

I am not going to be a Member of the Labour Party but I think we have all got to be concerned, we all I think have got concern about this matter, about where do people go if they cannot afford a home. We have got to be looking at more affordable rented accommodation and when we sell off brown land, then to me we should be looking more at that being affordable rented accommodation rather than affordable to buy accommodation. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Sharon Hamilton.

COUNCILLOR HAMILTON: Lord Mayor, I would like to speak on Minute 168 on page 60. Government policy is failing to meet Leeds housing needs. The Housing and Planning Bill gives high earners the chance to buy property but reduces the housing option available to residents who require affordable housing.

As set out in the Exec Board papers there are currently only 12% of householders in Leeds who have the income to buy a home. The starter homes policy within the Housing and Planning Bill is proposed to allow people to be able to purchase their own property. However, it is clearly devised by people with no appreciation of ordinary people's spending power. The price cap for starter homes is £250,000 – way beyond the means of many people in Leeds. Those who can afford starter homes are not those in the greatest housing need.

I know from speaking to people in my ward that there are many people, especially young families, who would love to be able to own their own property. Unfortunately for them this policy does nothing to help those on low or even average incomes.

Another aspect of this Bill that I want to talk about concerns new powers for Central Government to force Leeds City Council to sell off some of the city's more valuable assets with money raised to go back to the Treasury and who will decide which property we have to sell off? The Secretary of State for Housing, from his

office in Westminster, will decide – someone with no understanding of the housing situation in Leeds and probably no interest in Leeds housing needs.

This seems to be at odds with the Government's proposed devolution agenda. Even the Conservative-run LGA has stated quite correctly that this policy effectively gives the Government the freedom to decide how much it would like to tax each Council with housing stock.

In Leeds we are working hard to make sure we are still able to provide affordable accommodation despite the constraints placed on us by Central Government. We are looking at ways of generating greater borrowing powers through potentially setting up a local housing company. This could help us in our aim to produce more affordable housing for rent and I am really pleased that this is the path we are taking and I am proud that in Leeds we are reaffirming the importance of affordable accommodation. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Caroline Gruen.

COUNCILLOR C GRUEN: Lord Mayor, I am also speaking on page 60, Minute 168, in relation to the creation of affordable housing to buy and rent in Leeds, and I would like to endorse everything my colleague Councillor Hamilton has just said in her speech. I am deeply disappointed that this Government's Housing and Planning Bill and the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, to which this Minute refers, places the central emphasis on home ownership and for those on higher level incomes, so reducing the options for people urgently needing to rent affordable housing.

I think the best contribution that I can make, Lord Mayor, to this debate is to give a bit of a case study from Bramley so that I can explain how that from a ward context we approach the task of creating more much-needed social housing for local people to rent.

Firstly, we welcomed this Council's ambition to build 1,000 Council houses in order to plug the widening gap caused by the right to buy and fewer opportunities to establish social housing through the planning process. At around the same time we also embraced the Council's new Nuisance and Eyesore Policy, which enabled us to get the derelict and increasingly dangerous and misused Lord Cardigan pub demolished – an immediate benefit to the community.

The owners of the site then had to be persuaded not just to leave it to become untidy and overgrown, as they were inclined to do, but to take advantage of its ideal position near to an infrastructure of shops, bus routes, the library and other community amenities and services, and to use it for local housing.

It took a lot of discussion, negotiation and time but eventually a deal was struck that, provided the building specification at least adhered to the Council's required standards, we would purchase all units in advance of building to add to the Council's stock. I am pleased to say that we are nearing completion of what is now known as Cardigan Green, the development, and recently looked in detail at these high quality, spacious, sensitively positioned houses which sustain high efficiency levels and blend in very, very appropriately with the immediate surroundings in Bramley.

This, Lord Mayor, illustrates what can be achieved when partners work together and the Council is prepared to be brave, think out of the box and take risks in order to achieve its vision but, Lord Mayor, all of this for a tiny development of eight Council dwellings in a context where we desperately need many more. I remain very disappointed in this Bill. We need easier and faster ways of establishing social housing if we are to put a stop to the sofa surfing, overcrowding and homelessness that we are experiencing in many of the low income areas of our city. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Julie Heselwood.

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: Lord Mayor, comrades, also speaking on Minute 168 of page 60 – well maybe not you but this side!

I am very grateful to have the opportunity to speak on the actions that have been taken in Leeds to minimise the scale of homelessness in our city. Since 2010 Tory Government policy has adversely affected those in society who are most vulnerable. One of the results has been a huge rise in homelessness figures across the country in many of our bigger cities. In Manchester, for example, the number of people sleeping rough has risen from ten in 2011 to 43 in 2014 and to 70 in 2015. In Bristol this has more than doubled to 97 people sleeping rough in the last year.

Fortunately in Leeds we have managed to avoid these levels of homelessness and at the last count there were just 13 people sleeping rough in Leeds, which has remained static since 2013.

Much of the credit for this comes from our partnership work. The Safer Leeds Partnership focuses on supporting individuals to overcome their drug and alcohol problems. The partnership has worked hard to hammer home the message that no-one needs to sleep rough in Leeds and that Housing Options will find people somewhere to live if they are willing to engage with them.

You will be aware that there are many people begging on the streets in Leeds who, whilst they are vulnerable and with serious problems, often around drug and alcohol misuse, do actually have accommodation. The message that needs to be reiterated is that the way to support these people is not by giving them money, which will only support their addictions, but by donating to organisations such as St George's Crypt. As we Lord Mayor know, the Crypt does a lot of work in helping people who beg in Leeds. One example is providing the food vouchers through their excellent Give Us Some Credit initiative and if you have not already bought your vouchers I urge you to go and get them. They are £5 for five vouchers and by doing that you can hand them to people who are begging in the streets in Leeds, they can then redeem these at the Crypt for a meal and the opportunity to talk to staff about the things that are concerning them and engage with staff at the centre. You can buy them at Leeds Building Society (there are other building societies available) and at the Crypt and at the local libraries - they are now back in the libraries, all your local libraries.

Please, I urge you to go and buy the vouchers and support the Crypt in the essential work that they are doing. It is really important that we support the most vulnerable in our society, which is why the work that is being carried out to help those who are begging or homeless in Leeds is so encouraging. It goes to the heart of what

we are trying to do in the city to have a strong economy and to be a passionate city in Leeds. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Barry Anderson. You are not speaking. Councillor Collins.

COUNCILLOR COLLINS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking on Item 15 in the extra pack. Horsforth is and has historically been a prosperous town. The Mathieson family, a large landowner in the town, were a very generous family and gave Horsforth Hall and its grounds to the people of Horsforth. The grounds are now known as Horsforth Hall Park and attract Leeds residents from a wide area.

Unfortunately the hall is no longer there and was demolished after the Local Authority allowed it to fall into neglect. The stables and the outbuildings are still there, however, and have become one of Leeds City Council's Parks & Countryside's offices and depot. They are not in a very good state, however, and pleas from local people keen to help to work with Leeds regarding the redevelopment of the site, have had only superficial notice taken of them.

The hall is not the only thing that has been lost. Horsforth used to have its own recycling centre. It used to have a police station located just off the ring road in the centre of the town. It used to have a church hall. All have now been sold to developers and are no longer available for the public and the people of Horsforth. The Horsforth Clinic is now being closed and is due to be sold very soon. Manorfield nursing home is also scheduled to be closed by Leeds City Council and sold. Horsforth residents will soon only have the museum run by volunteers left, and now officers are trying to close and destroy that.

The museum is an extremely important asset to the people of Horsforth. Not only do the volunteers there spend a lot of time looking after the objects they have been given over the years, they also support the local schools and regularly rotate the items on display so that everyone in the town can have the opportunity to witness their past. The museum opens its doors throughout the summer and is available for people to use their toilets and other small facilities when there are other events in the town.

Not only am I furious that officers think they can just evict the museum without any real effort to find them an improved and larger home; I believe officers have also been extremely underhanded and deliberately tried to mislead the Executive Board at last week's Exec meeting.

At no point in the papers submitted to Exec did officers refer to the tenants in the house adjoining the Horsforth officers as "the museum". They only ever referred to them as "the tenants". Officers said in their report that the buildings were now predominantly vacant.

THE LORD MAYOR: Would you wind up, please.

COUNCILLOR COLLINS: Right, thanks. The Executive Board needs to challenge officers on why they tried to mislead them on this item. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Chris Townsley.

COUNCILLOR TOWNSLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Yes, I am speaking to the same Minute 15 in the extra pack and seeing as my colleague Councillor Collins was, I suppose, cut short in hers, I will take up the reins from there.

Lord Mayor, I think putting the cart before the horse springs to mind with regards to this issue. I would have thought that with such an emotive subject as the ousting of a community museum housed in the same building as the Horsforth Area Housing Office who have occupied that space since the mid-1980s would have been handled with more sensitivity.

Let me actually just put a little bit of context to this. I actually started the historical society in the 1980s and actually I opened the museum and started the museum again in the mid-1980s, so you can imagine the anger that I felt when I read in a public document which was the Executive Board papers on 22nd June, Community Hubs Phase 2 Business Case page 301, and I quote:

“The buildings housing the Horsforth Housing Office now predominantly are vacant with only one tenant. Future solutions with the tenant to be discussed further but in principle the assumption is made that the tenant will come out of the building to enable its disposal.”

Let me advise Council that until I arranged a meeting between Asset Management and the museum committee which took place only yesterday, the museum committee had had no communication whatsoever from the Council with regard to having to move out, so remember page 301 again where the officer writes, “to be discussed further”. You can only have a further discussion if you have had one previously. Council, there has been no discussions with the historical society.

Lord Mayor, finally I would like to add that by a Deed of Variation dated 3rd October 2002 pertaining to an original lease by the Council to Horsforth Village Historical Society dated 7th December 1999, the museum holds the lease on that property until 2029. Surely full consultation should take place with all parties before such a report is put before the Executive Committee.

Ward Members have only had one meeting which was called by officers, which took place on 6th November last year. A further meeting was asked for, asking for an update on 12th February and one site visit on 10th March also called by myself, (so I called two meetings there; officers have only called the one. I even called that meeting yesterday between the museum and Asset Management) which has turned out to be a non-starter.

Lord Mayor, this has got to be looked at again, this is just not acceptable the way that Asset Management and the Council have treated Horsforth Museum. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Mick Coulson.

COUNCILLOR COULSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking – mine is a good luck story. I cringe when I listen to Horsforth and I curled up and died when I listened to Jonathan. Mine is about progress, working in partnership with Council

departments, all working together to get a successful Hub. Did you hear, Hub. Pudsey has a new Hub. State of the art, all by hard work by Council officers, Councillors, all working together, several meetings with Asset Management. If you insist enough you will get the meetings. I did not have any problems.

Really what I am talking about is the newly refurbished library building, now the Pudsey Community Hub, had brought together customer services functions that operated from Pudsey Town Hall and the library service which has operated from the library for the last 50 years and has been threatened, same as all your libraries was.

It is not simply a question of offering the two services from under one roof but working in this way has meant we have been able to bring together most services such as Leeds City Credit Union, Housing Options, police who come once a week, it is a contact point for them as well. They are a new service not previously delivered from the building or the Town Hall and they are gathering and gathering every week, we are getting something else new.

That is a good luck story for us and it is about working together. They need to take it on board, I think. The good part about it is the Town Hall where we have vacated the bottom floor is going to be offices, social services are already moving in, they already occupy 80% of the building, they soon will occupy the whole of it. The good story on that one is with negotiations with Asset Management we have managed to keep the public toilets public; even though the building will be closed off, the public toilets will remain public.

Ours, with a lot of hard work from everyone, not always amicable but you do not expect to always be amicable but if you sit back and let them walk all over you they will do. Mine is a good luck story, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Mohammed Iqbal.

COUNCILLOR IQBAL: My Lord Mayor, fellow Councillors, I would like to speak on Minute 16 from the extra pack. Government policy around welfare reform is a complete disaster. Time after time we see that this Government seeks to punish people on low income with the latest round of welfare reforms meaning that hardworking families lose out further.

The third child policy means that working families are punished for choosing to have more than two children and will not receive additional tax credit or universal credit for third or subsequent children – an extremely morally dubious policy, I think everyone here will agree.

The botched Universal Credit Policy, beset by endless delays, is still being forced on Local Authorities who did not want it and despite warnings from across the political spectrum of the dangers of this policy. The Government talks of the devolving power to the regions yet insists on imposing schemes such as this on Local Authorities.

Welfare reform and continued austerity measures mean that food banks are relied on by too many of our most vulnerable residents. Almost across 2010 and 2011 when the Conservative- Lib Dem Government Coalition came into power, the Trussell Trust reports that just over 60,000 emergency food packages were handed

out. For 2015 and 2016 that figure stands at a whopping 1.1 million. The Conservative led LGA understands what an appalling impact these policies will have on vulnerable people in Britain. Talking about the housing benefit cap the LGA has stated that many supported housing schemes could be forced to close if the cap is introduced, leading to a shortage of available houses. I sincerely hope that those in Central Government listen to these warnings from their own Party colleagues and see some sense, but I will not hold my breath. For the people of Leeds we will do everything in our power to minimise the impact of these unfair policies on our people and to support families when they are affected. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Catherine Dobson.

COUNCILLOR C DOBSON: Lord Mayor, I am commenting on Minute 16 of the extra pack and in particular the impact of Government welfare reports on children and families.

Poverty affects one in four children in the UK today. When children grow up poor they miss out on things that other children and families take for granted, like holidays, school trips, out of school activities. Moreover, child poverty has long-lasting effects. By GCSE national figures show there is a 28% gap between children receiving free school meals and their wealthier peers in terms of the number receiving at least five A* to C GCSE grades. There are also longer term health implications going right up to life expectancy, with someone living in Harewood expected to live ten years longer than someone in Hunslet. This simply cannot be right.

There were 3.7 million children living in poverty in the UK in 2013/14 – that is 28% of children, or nine in a classroom of 30. In Leeds that figure was 28,000 children living in poverty and what I want to emphasise is that nationally 64% of children in poverty come from a working family. This means that 18,000 of the Leeds children in poverty are in working families. Over 80,000 households in Leeds were claiming one or more Local Authority welfare benefits in 2015. Of this figure almost 15,000 householders were of a working age and in work. This is almost 20% of Leeds households impacted by in-work poverty.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies projects that the number of children in relative poverty will have risen from 2.3 to 3.6 million by 2020 as a direct result of tax and benefit decisions made since 2010. Again, this simply cannot be right.

The vicious Tory welfare reforms are pushing more and more children and families into poverty. We cannot allow this to continue. Failing to tackle child poverty now means paying the price later on, a price that is estimated at £29b, a price society as a whole and our children as individuals cannot afford to pay.

We are showing that as a Local Authority we are doing all we can to mitigate the impact of these cuts, but to be honest that we even have to is an absolute disgrace. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Debra Coupar to sum up.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I did wonder whether we may actually run out of time for me to actually sum up on the Minutes and I know that there are a lot of issues discussed there on several different reports that I have

taken to Executive Board. I will start with the affordable housing report where there seems to be much more agreement on what we are actually proposing to do in the Council around that.

I know that Councillor Hamilton has made the point that in Leeds our ability to provide a desirable range of housing for all is hampered by the Government's piece of legislation, the Housing and Planning Bill. The plans that we have set out look to counter the negative effects of this Bill wherever possible and to look at affordable accommodation is seemingly not on the Government's agenda, but it is on our agenda, please rest assured, which is why work is beginning to be carried out to ensure that the Council can support the growth of affordable housing in Leeds.

I would like to thank Councillor Gruen and agree with her on the point that she made around the Housing and Planning Bill and the direction that the Government is taking in forcing people into purchasing rather than renting and unaffordable accommodation, so thank you for making that point and it was good to come over to Bramley and see the scheme that is actually happening over there coming to fruition to help out with local problems and local issues.

For those who, thanks to the Government's actions, are threatened by homelessness, there has been some excellent work in Leeds to ensure that people know they do not have to sleep rough. At the last count, as Councillor Heselwood said, 13 rough sleepers in Leeds and at the last count 13 rough sleepers is still too many, but compares favourably to 70 in Manchester and 97 in Bristol. I want to thank Councillor Heselwood for highlighting that work and continuing Councillor Urry's work on the homeless agenda, but also to highlight the partnership work that is going on in the city to actually bring those numbers down, so thank you for that.

I know you all understand that in Leeds we are expecting to have a difficult time with the Housing and Planning Bill and I know people on the opposite benches also accept that, and it is because the idea that Councillor Blackburn actually said is the Government's idea of affordable is not necessarily the idea of all residents in Leeds, which is why we are hoping to provide a variety. The private developers will make the other housing available in the city, I am sure, but it is incumbent on us as a city to make sure that we ensure that there is affordable accommodation, both to purchase and to rent in the city, so thanks for the comments around that.

Councillor Procter, I think most of your comments were in regard to planning so I shall leave those to others to pick up on that.

If I can move to Community Hubs, and I am going to give a light touch to Community Hubs because I do know that there is a call in regarding the Executive Board report, so I do not want to prejudice anything that is going to be said at the Scrutiny Board.

I do just want to say that we are changing the way we are delivering our services by bringing together a whole host of services including housing, libraries, welfare, benefits, police, health and as I said a whole host of people. Evidence shows so far that after the Hubs have been open with the shared services being used, that more people are attending the Hubs, the libraries are open for longer and as various Members have said, including Councillor Coulson in Pudsey, that local residents are really pleased that actually they have got local services at the heart of the local

community. I am pleased that that is being able to be done and I do think that particularly talking about buildings and not people is not always very helpful.

I want to talk a little bit more about welfare reform, the effects of which Councillor Iqbal impressively covered. There is real worry about what the impact of Universal Credit will be when it hits here in Leeds. We have seen a variety of problems in areas where Universal Credit has already been implemented and many of them caused by the six week long wait claimants have to endure for their first payment. I know that several colleagues on this side have raised this issue, not the least of which Councillor Ron Grahame in his own ward of Burmantofts and Richmond Hill where they are having real difficulties. People in urgent need of financial support are being forced to food banks and can find themselves with significant rent and Council Tax arrears. There is also a fear that people will resort to using low cost lenders and loan sharks, so it is really why this portfolio of communities, trying to bring all those things together to deliver services centrally and in localities in the community where they are seriously needed.

One reason for the ridiculously long waiting period before people receive payment is the Government's assumption that everyone is paid monthly and will therefore have one month's severance pay to hand over to them when they become employed, but this just is not true and it is not actually what is happening at all.

Councillor Dobson, I would like to thank you for your comments as well on child poverty and for explaining to this Chamber the effects of child poverty in this city are real and happening out there and we need to be addressing them.

THE LORD MAYOR: Debra, can you wind up?

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: That moves to the end of Executive Board Minutes, comments. Councillor Blake to sum up.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I do not think we have ever quite timed it so well actually that the Exec Board Member summing up happens right on the wire, so well done for timing on that.

Just reflecting over the Minutes we have gone through today, I think there have been some really important themes running through and really the main ones, I think, tackling inequality; innovation has come through very clearly and I think that is something that as a Council we are beginning to get real recognition for; and, of course, the theme that runs through all of our Council meetings over the last few months in particular, but clearly as a result of the vote last week and the issue about funding streams and how we are going as a Council to begin to work to sort out the huge inequalities that we have in our city.

I think the debate on the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Strategy covered a lot of the issues that are very familiar to us and Councillor Latty mentioned mental health. I think one of the real successes of the local strategy here in Leeds is that we have prioritised mental health. I was at one of my cluster meetings yesterday in my ward and really talking about the investment that we have been able to put into services directly into the schools, the mental health issues facing young people in this city are

alarming and shocking and we have really all of us got to pull together to see how we can address this.

The difficulty, though, we have, as Councillor Hussain pointed out very well, when we have got £6.7m worth of cuts to public health and all of the prevention work that we are going to have to consider, particularly around services for alcohol, for drugs etc, all of those areas that have such a profound impact on the lives of families in our city and really undermine the resilience of people to cope with the circumstances that are facing us.

I think, Councillor Taylor, your comments about innovation were really relevant. The electronic records, the use of data. In this city we are ahead of the game on how we actually use the information that we have to the best outcomes for people living in the city. It should not be too hard, should it, really, to turn up at A&E and they have got all of the information from your GP that they may need to have to assess the treatment that you need, and we are very fortunate in Leeds that that is the state of play that we have, that is not the case in many, many places around the country.

Then talking about the real challenges around isolation and our elderly, how can we best use technology to help people obviously to stay in their own homes but again going to the elderly projects and seeing older people using iPads to make contact with relatives that they have not seen for years around the world is something that we should be very, very proud of.

I think Councillor Macniven, your comments about the funding for Adult Social Care and mentioning the precept, whilst we recognise our ability to raise more money, the £5m that we get through that which is a tax in any other name from Osborne, is nowhere near the amount of money that we need to go forward. Again, one of the biggest inequalities in the city, fuel poverty, how shocking it is that 38,000 people in this city are suffering from fuel poverty, and I think Councillor Dobson made a very good point about the investment of the resource coming through the RERF into addressing the needs of 10,000 of those people.

Councillor Garthwaite, well done on your maiden speech, I think it is not easy to stand up in here for the first time and, as you say, to take on something that really contributed to the debate as well. I really look forward to the other new Members making contributions very, very soon and I think that point about education, how do we make sure that every young person in this city knows and understands about recycling so that if their parents are still refusing to do the recycling at source, they at least have the information and the knowledge and I think we really do need to be putting much more money in to be able to save more money that we can invest in other services.

Actually, do you know, do not knock our record on recycling. We have made huge steps forward. OK, there are issues that we are addressing now but if you look back over the years we have surpassed our expectations in the amount that we recycle.

I am very taken with Councillor Procter's comments about textiles and actually why don't we listen to that and learn from it and think how we can get more? I know if you go to the household waste site there is a textile recycling point but why don't we do some more promotion on that?

Councillor Sobel, the innovation, absolutely crucial in this area going forward.

Of course, all of the environmental agenda is the one area in particular where we are at risk of losing significant amounts of European funding and we are through the LEP talking to Defra to try and find out where we stand on the bids that we have already got into the system and how they will affect the money coming forward.

I think Councillor Coupar has tackled the issue about Hubs very well. I think there are always conversations to have around innovation such as the Community Hubs and I am sure there will be a very good discussion of all the issues that you have raised today around the particular concerns that you have. All I can say is, please come and visit St George's Hub in Middleton. You will see extraordinary work taking place because of the co-location of social workers with police, with health and the work is innovative and ground breaking and I really do have to say, through this debate, please can we put the focus on people and the needs that people have in our communities and not so much emphasis on the actual buildings. I know buildings are important to people but in a time of very, very limited resource coming in, to get the preventative work that we need to do we need to have that co-location of services. If you do not like the proposals that are in front of you then come up with different ones, but this is the model that we need to replicate going forward. It works, it is groundbreaking and again it is one of those areas of innovation that I believe has put Leeds well and truly on the map in how we deliver our services.

I just want to make – I think you have covered the affordable housing in the rented sector but Councillor Procter raised the issue which I agree is very much a planning issue and I look forward to you becoming the champion for delivering affordable housing in our city, John. (*laughter*) I really do but I have to tell you that, talk to your Government. The Secretary of State has just recently overturned a local planning decision on a Council housing scheme in Ipswich. I mean, this is the sort of thing that we are up against. His reason? It does not create inclusive and mixed communities. This was after his own Inspector recommended approval of the scheme. These are the challenges that we are up against but delighted that you want to engage going forward.

Great stories from Councillor Gruen (Caroline) and from Councillor Heselwood. That brings me to Councillor Catherine Dobson and with perfect synergy don't those comments bring us right back to the beginning about the Health and Wellbeing Board priorities and the real impact of welfare dependency in terms of people just being penalised again and again and again and there is no end to the measures that are coming through, and particularly through the Housing and Planning Bill. These measures are deeply shocking, but to link educational attainments so directly to life expectancy is just shocking.

Let us work on equality, on prevention, early intervention but do everything we can to make sure we get the funding streams into the city to enable us to continue to deliver our agenda. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

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

We will now break for tea and be back here at ten-to five. Thank you.

(Short break)

THE LORD MAYOR: Council, we have got a slight change in the running order. We are going to do Devolved Matters first so that will explain what is happening about the White Papers.

ITEM 11 – REPORT ON DEVOLVED MATTERS

THE LORD MAYOR: Item 11, Report on Devolved Matters. Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. This is an opportunity to give a brief update on matters around potential future devolution but also the devolved matters that we already have.

Just in terms of the devolution deal that we have submitted to the Treasury on behalf of Leeds City Region, there is no update at this moment in time, I am sure you are aware that the conversations on these issues have stalled, really, around the campaign leading up to the referendum. I have to say I think there is a degree of uncertainty about how the deals will progress from now on and clearly a lot of Councils and Combined Authorities around the country are seeking urgent talks with Treasury and/or DCLG to find out where things are going to go. I think the main thing for me is the urgent need to really work with Government to make sure we do get more powers and particularly resources down to a local level. I think if anything that the referendum has taught us it is that there is a huge mistrust now with decisions being made at a Central National Government level and we need to really put the foot on the accelerator in terms of getting more powers devolved to us.

In the report you will see that there are significant areas of concern. In particular still lack of clarity on retention of business rates and this is going to be one of the main funding platforms for us as a Council running up to 2020 when the direct grant will cease. There are a number of pilot schemes round the country but I cannot honestly say that huge progress has been made on those.

We are also obviously seeking assurances around transport investment and I think there has been a very clear statement that HS2 will be pursued. I just need to report to you that the establishment of Transport for the North is really starting to make a difference in terms of bringing different parts of the North together to talk about transport. Another area of funding linking to the conversation we had before about the environment is around future funding for flood alleviation going forward.

There has been significant investment in Leeds through the existing Growth Deal and many of you will have noticed that the College of Building is going through a significant expansion at the moment and also a £7m investment fund to develop a further district heating network. We have also seen the refresh of the Strategic Economic Plan and particularly focusing on the good growth model that we have been promoting in this city.

I can tell Council that we had a meeting with Members of the LEP Board and beyond this morning just to share our experience over the last week and to seek ways

that we can reassure businesses across the whole of the City Region that we will be working together to give them all of the support they need in some difficult times ahead. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor James Lewis.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Judith Elliott.

COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT: Thank you, my Lord Mayor. I speak on pages 68, 2.3.1 with regard to the Combined Authority and issues raised with commitments to develop High Speed 3, upgrade the M62 to a four lane smart motorway and improve Leeds station. We Morley Borough Independents have been informed that discussions have taken place by the Combined Authority of the possibility of purchasing land which lies to the south of the rail track at Morley Low station in order to provide a much needed car park. This land was owned by an oil refinery company which went into receivership. The land is contaminated and the car park would be the ideal use. We are pleased that the station use grows, even though its use causes grave problems with parking along Station Road, for at the present time the car park is virtually non-existent.

We would urge the Leeds City Council Member who sits on the Combined Authority to robustly put the point of view that a new car park is needed at Morley Low station for the benefit of rail users, of Leeds citizens and the workforce of Leeds. We are all aiming at decreasing CO2 emissions and cutting the congestion at peak times in the city. The more we encourage use of all our rail links to the city and beyond can only be for the good of the whole community. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I was very interested to hear Councillor Judith Blake's comments in relation to this particular agenda that some of us hope will still move forward. I would just like to repeat what she said and ask you to reflect on it.

What Councillor Blake said was that people in this country were deeply suspicious about decisions taken nationally. Actually, the whole point of the referendum was that people were deeply concerned about the decisions taken internationally and in particular in Europe, in particular in Brussels. That, I think, is the point and I do not think we should necessarily lose sight of that. I know the media have liked to say that national politicians were out of touch and indeed I am not suggesting that they were not out of touch actually, but we should not lose sight of the specific issue that the referendum was about.

In terms of the devolution agenda, frankly what is it now? What are the thoughts of those who will come into power now? We do not know, do we? We do not know what the infrastructure thoughts will be of those who may come into power at all. What I do know is that should Boris Johnson become the next Prime Minister – someone who I will not be voting for, I might add – but if he were to be, what we do

know about him is that he is deeply sceptical about the whole of the HS2 project, not just an element about it but in its entirety as he is about the expansion of Heathrow as well, so there are potentially significant changes on the horizon.

Where I do agree with Councillor Blake is that it is for this Council and this region to set out its stall in relation to what we expect from Central Government along the devolution route and with the devolution agenda.

I think what we have to face up to is the events of last week for all of us were a game changer, and I am not just referring to Brexit at all. I think the personality changes within the two principal parties in this country, in Westminster actually, are the things that we need to get to grips with collectively to make sure that Leeds does not actually lose out. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Sandy Lay.

COUNCILLOR LAY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can the Leader tell Members if there is any additional funding allocated to the city from the additional £130m allocated to the bridge and highways repair in the Government's 2016 budget? She will know from her attendance at the emergency community meeting that was held in Otley in January that we made promises to our community in Otley and to be fair the Council has delivered on a lot of those despite its continuing budgetary pressures. I would personally like to thank her and officers for their commitment to helping those affected recover, so thank you.

I do not like to criticise the administration – or unduly criticise the administration – but there now seems to be some backtracking as last week's Highways Officers stated in the Exec Board that they would be renegeing on resurfacing the roads and on clearing the ditch and drains at the front to the affected properties.

I am really wanting to know why we only seem to have enough money to mend the bridge at Linton – is it because my residents are not rich footballers or powerful influential businessmen it appears they have to miss out or at the very most suffer a long delay in making good?

Can I ask her that she uses her influence to argue for Highways to make good on their promise and to find savings from the £4.5m being spent down the river at Linton so that the roads in Otley can be resurfaced.

Finally one other plea. It is my understanding that there are two studies to take place in Otley, one by the Council in conjunction with the Environment Agency and one between the Town Council and Oxford University. Can I ask that she ensures that both parties talk to each other to ensure that they do not scope, plan and deliver the same thing but with wildly different outcomes, as this will only muddy the already flooded waters. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Devolution and referendum. One of the things that was particularly notable about the Prime Minister's response when he officially talked about how Brexit negotiations were

going to take place with the European Union, he talked about how he needed to consult really widely and mentioned the devolved institutions that are already there, whether it be Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. There was an absolute vacuum in terms of recognition of the devolution that had happened already within England itself and he needs to address that. I would hope that Councillor Blake, as Leader of Leeds City Region leaders – although I know Councillor Peter Box is officially in charge but we know who has the most influence – that you will talk to your colleagues in the Manchester City Region and the Liverpool City Region and make sure in a joint concerted effort that you are making sure that the Prime Minister and the Chancellor, most importantly, understands that our region and our devolved Authorities need to have the same amount of attention that they used to get from the European Union going forward. Particularly, for instance, the fact that we have such vibrant economies because we have huge learning institutions that benefited greatly. This country was ahead of any other in getting any kind of university research money from the European Union and that is a key area where we need to make sure that that investment comes in; if it is not from them it needs to be from somebody else.

As somebody who is on the Capital of Culture Steering Group I also want to let everyone know that there is all party and all partnership commitment to making that bid go forward, because it is very important to the city that no matter what the context in terms of membership of the European Union is, we as a city need to exemplify openness, outward facing, European friendly profile and one of the things that we can do in particular is try and ensure that for our citizens who have neighbours who are from the European Union who live here, who work here, that those people get a guarantee from this city that they are most welcome and that they have a guaranteed future within our community. I think that is one of the most important things we can do in the context of Brexit.

If it comes to trusting Whitehall or Brussels, I have to say the record of Whitehall in dealing with us as a Council and Europe dealing with us as a Council, Europe wins hands down because at least they are open and transparent about the criteria they set to you when they want to give you money and if there is any example about that, just look at the transport funding when it was Supertram, then it got changed to NGT – the rules get changed all the time and you do not get that from Brussels. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Keith Wakefield.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I want to address Councillor Elliott's comments about the Morley Station because as usual the rumours get around and two and two make five. Occasionally in one's life you see visionaries, you see people with passion and imagination, forward thinking, and it was Councillor Neil Dawson who asked me to go out last year along with my advisor Councillor Mick Lyons to have a look at the potential of that ex oil site. We went out and looked at the potential and on a serious point all the things that you described about the station, about its location, about its difficulty are well recognised and have been articulated by Councillor Dawson on many occasions.

The one thing that I think is shocking, like many other stations in West Yorkshire, as Councillor James Lewis used to say, is actually disabled access and in Morley it is extremely difficult. I think that may be a challenge for whatever happens to that car park.

At the moment, again Councillor Lewis reminded me just, we have 61 stations in demand across there so whether Network Rail support us or not, whether we get that what else is still to be determined, as I say you are a bit late with your barrack, Councillor Elliott, I think Councillor Dawson is right but I am very happy to support your arguments and comments to make sure that Morley does get looked at seriously for a future station. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Judith Blake to sum up.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is very handy to have the Chair of the Transport Committee sitting just behind you to answer those specific questions.

Just following on from Councillor Procter's comments, I think the issue is that in this country we have the most centralised decision making of anywhere in Europe, if not beyond, and I think that is the point. I do not want to link it necessarily to individual politicians or anything but that is the reality and that is what we have got to undermine because time and time again decisions that do not make any sense at all are made on behalf of our residents, our constituents, and it is very difficult for us to understand why they have been made, never mind people on the ground, and I think the vote last week reflected that disconnect. This is an issue that all parties have to take very, very seriously indeed.

Yes, of course, we know there is likely to be a real problem in terms of the different personalities coming in. We rely on you to make sure in terms of the Conservative Party nominations and all the rest of it but the thing is, what has held us back locally, I think we have been working cross party locally in Local Government. The big problem that has been holding us back is the MPs in the region who have gone with ultimatums to the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for DCLG and put ultimatums down that do not reflect the views of any of us on the ground. I think that is what has got to change so that we can get some sense, but let us have a vision of what we want to see, I think you are absolutely right, and we should work together on that.

Sandy, I think there has been a bit of mixed messages here. There has been no suggestion at all that it is Back Bridge Avenue you are talking about in particular, but the issue is that we have got a whole raft of schemes, as you can imagine. We do not know the full cost of all of them and there is a finite amount of money but let us sit down because I really do not want the word to go out that we are backtracking because that could not be further from the truth, but there are clear priorities when communities are cut off from each other because there is not a bridge across and other schemes, and with a limited amount of money and a limited amount of capacity we are happy to work with Councillor Lewis to make sure you have got the full story.

Just while I have got a couple of minutes to finish, I completely agree with Councillor Golton. We asked the question in the Capital of Culture Steering Group as Councillor Cohen and Councillor Golton know, what would be the effect of a vote to leave and we were told other parts of Europe have a slot but this is a unique situation, no-one has ever been in this situation before. We want to carry on and we will find a way of expressing our commitment as an international European city of working

closely with all of our partners and look forward to your support taking that forward. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Right, thank you Council. Can we move to the vote on the Report on Devolved Matters. (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

The bad news and the good news. The White Papers, there is a procedural motion been put forward to extend the first White Paper by 15 minutes so instead of 45, 60 minutes. The second White Paper will stay as is but I think there will be a couple less speakers. The third White Paper will be withdrawn, so we should end up with half an hour less, if it works out.

Councillor Ogilvie, would you like to move the procedural motion.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Thank you. I would like to move that under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 22.1, suspension of CPRs, that CPR 3.5, time limits for business, be suspended to allow up to 60 minutes on the White Paper motion in the name of Councillor J Procter and all subsequent amendments at the conclusion of which voting will commence.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE LORD MAYOR: Is that agreed? AGREED

WHITE PAPERS

ITEM 12 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – LEEDS TRANSPORT STRATEGY

THE LORD MAYOR: The White Paper, then, in the name of Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In moving the White Paper motion that is now name – it was in the name of Councillor Andrew Carter originally, who is not able to be here today – having looked at the amendments that have been tabled to that we find ourselves in a position where we are not able to accept the amendment from the Green Group and not able to accept the amendment from the Liberal Democrat Group, but we are able to accept the amendment from the Labour Group and, indeed, that is what we will be so doing, Lord Mayor. Having said that, some Members of the Labour Group may not like what I am going to say but hopefully they will – hopefully they will.

Colleagues who are experienced in this place know the position that you are in when you are faced with these choices in terms of accepting amendments or not. You read, read and read again the detail of the wording to make sure it is not conflicting with what you are trying to say, you want to say and, having done that, our conclusion is that it does not but we may come from a slightly different place than the Labour Group, Lord Mayor.

We were pleased to see that the Labour Group recognises some of the obvious concerns that we certainly have seen on these Benches in relation to the Cycle Superhighway. These are very real concerns that people have expressed to us and to the Authority and I am pleased that they are going to be looked at and there is a recognition that they need to be looked at moving forward.

Likewise in relation to NGT and its development and formation, again a recognition that they perhaps could have been done in a slightly different way and again those matters are going to go to Scrutiny and Councillor Truswell's Board is going to examine those matters, so you certainly gain our support in terms of that direction of travel that those matters will have a good airing and I know full well that my colleagues on that Scrutiny Board will ensure that.

Before we move on to the vision, the transport vision, as it were, just a word on NGT and where we found ourselves, effectively. Hindsight is a wonderful thing, Lord Mayor. You cannot help wondering if it was such a good idea to allow the Chief Executive of the organisation that had championed that scheme for the best part of how many years – 20 years – was it such a good idea for that Chief Executive to be allowed to take retirement at that point in time? Maybe not because what happened in effect was we had officers presenting themselves at a public inquiry who knew what they knew and had done their very best to assimilate all of the information; however, that is very different from an officer who has lived and breathed a project for 20 years and knows every detail of it. It is not surprising, and I do not often name officers in this arena but I will do - Martin Farrington I thought got a pretty raw deal from that inquiry and it is no surprise that when asked a direct question about his expertise in relation to the matter had to say well, it was not his area of expertise because plainly it was not, Lord Mayor.

Time is going, Lord Mayor. In terms of the vision we say that you need to expand vision for transport in this city, be bold, be ambitious, do not limit yourselves to £173m. That is what is on offer now, that is what is there are the moment. Councillor Blake talked about a deal with Central Government and devolution. This should be at the cornerstone of any deal. How much would it cost to put a Supertram in existence now? A billion? How much would it cost to put an underground in this city? Five billion? Who knows. I do not know what those numbers are, none of us do.

What I do know is if we are to have some ambition we need to move these matters forward, we need to commission some studies to see what those numbers are and we need to be bold in our approach to Central Government, Lord Mayor. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Barry Anderson.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I first of all welcome the Government decision both to refuse NGT, which I was never in favour of from the very beginning, and also the £173m allocation as well. I think it says a lot for the Government that they listened to people contacting them to try and keep that money, because that was always one of the fears when I argued against it was this fear that we were going to lose the money so it is good to see that the Government listened to the views that were being expressed and allowed the Council to keep that money.

There is a lot of agreement in terms of what we are talking about today because it is vitally important, but we do need more funding. We need to, in my view – and I have said this before – work with other Local Authorities as well. We need to bring Bradford and Wakefield, to name but two areas, into our transport plans so that whatever system we bring forward goes to these areas as well because then we have got more people helping us to win the battle against Central Government. It does not matter whether it is a Labour Government or a Conservative Government, the more we can work together I think the better it is for all of us.

Now, we are unfortunately, without repeating it *ad nauseum*, the largest European city without a mass transit system, and I think that is not good and in my view Governments of all persuasions have not in any way helped us meet those objectives.

We do have issues that we have to sort out. We do have congestion, we do have how we get better to Leeds Bradford airport and again we have got to look maybe beyond the road that is proposed and planned, we have got to start thinking big and thinking how we can get all of these people around.

We also, it would not be a debate in Council without me mentioning it, we have got 70,000 new houses and we need to get these people to and from work as well so we need a transport system to meet what they need as well.

On the lessons we have got to learn from NGT we need to listen to residents more and when they come up with coherent, sensible points do not just dismiss them just because they did not come from an officer or they did not come from an elected Member. We also need to listen to all Members of Council. There are some Members of Council who expressed concern about NGT but were not allowed to express that concern publicly because they had been whipped into going in a particular direction. That did stifle debate and that was one thing that at the inquiry the Inspector did ask further questions about as to how much open and honest debate there had actually been.

We also need to look at the environmental impact and, probably more important, where are these schemes starting from and where they are going because again that was another lesson we have got to learn from NGT.

Leeds is number one and it needs the best there is, not second best and to try and nail some myths because of what we have said about the cycling lane, we are not anti cycling on this side of the Chamber. We are concerned that some of the cyclists are in real danger because of the layout of what is happening across that side of the city and that is why we feel there should be a further look into it. Cyclists are contacting us and are making the complaints and it is them that we are looking after at this stage.

Finally what I would like to say is we hope we will not see anti car measures being introduced that are actually going to stifle the economic development of this city. Sometimes car owners are seen by some people as a cash cow and a way of funding things. Lord Mayor, please support the White Paper. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor David Blackburn to move an amendment.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thanks, Lord Mayor. When I first saw what was coming on today's agenda I thought, oh great, we have got something and I was thinking of the original Labour motion, I thought great, we have got something here that probably we can all agree on. We have all had our differences and certainly with NGT and Supertram before it I have always had doubts about the route it was and whether it delivered. If you remember some years ago I put an amendment when things were just about starting with the NGT and I put an amendment calling for the transport system, a 21st Century transport system for all the city, and that is what we want, all of our people, not just part of it and not just where it goes up past the university so it looks good.

I thought that was great and then along came the Conservative one. I have got to disagree with Barry, that is anti cycling. That is using – I have got to admit the Superhighway, it has not been done in the very best way, there are problems with it I know but the issue is, and if you had been with me the other night after unfortunately Britain took its exit from Europe twice when we got beat by Iceland (England got beat by Iceland) when we were a bit fed up of talking about football and I had about four or five people in Pudsey who happened to be Conservatives, young people, and what they were saying, it is great that this is happening but they have made a mess doing it (*interruption*) and the fact is that is the only reason for that amendment, right.

We need to make sure that cycling is part of the solution. I am going to stop arguing now and get on with the general thing. The fact is that with this we have got to take the people with us and we have got to remember that there are people all over this city who have got an appalling transport system. First Bus, our main operator, and Arriva in other areas are absolutely hopeless. They could not deliver a transport system if they tried and the fact is we have been through Metro, we have been mucking about since the days I was on Metro – I was on for about two years after Tom came off – and the thing was we were talking about a quality bus contract then. We are still talking about it. It is about time we had it. We have got to have this and we have got to start doing something about our public transport. As somebody who uses public transport all the time, it is absolutely appalling in this city.

Whatever we do today when we have stopped disagreeing about bikes and what have you, I think we have got to come together and say we need a proper transport system in this city. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Ann Blackburn to second.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: I am speaking to second the amendment and about cycling, yes, there are lots of people out there that cycle, we want to get more cyclists on the road. I do not cycle myself, I must admit, I walk a lot, I do not cycle but of course I know a lot of people that do and again we know there has been problems with this.

All this amendment says is that we should talk to people so that we understand what those problems are and that we get them sorted out. We work with people, that is all it is saying, which I think we do need to talk to people on these things.

THE LORD MAYOR: Could Council be quiet and listen.

COUNCILLOR A BLACKBURN: Sorry, Lord Mayor. We do need to talk to people more. It is all very well talking to one another as Councillors and that but we need to hear what people are saying so if there are problems, let us sort it out, let us take the views of the local people into account, that is all this amendment is saying so I hope you support it. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Colin Campbell to move a second amendment.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am slightly bemused in that we seem to be having, or some people over here seem to be having a bad attack of hindsight because I remember those discussions when a previous Government pulled the plug on the tram system and the comments were more or less the same, quite frankly. We really have not progressed very much but I am trying to be positive and when Judith put forward her White Paper I think we could support it because it is fairly bland, it is fairly innocuous and it fairly, I think, reflects our view that we would like a transport system.

Unfortunately I do not really follow, I am sorry Barry I just really did not follow what you were trying to say because apart from using the “E” word, we are not the largest city in Europe that does not have a public transport system – we are the largest city in Britain that does not. I really could not understand what you are trying to say.

If we are going to move forwards, let’s face it over the years we have made hundreds of mistakes in relation to a public transport system. We have not been helped by anybody, I do not think – we have not been helped by Central Government, we have not been helped by our colleagues in the whole of the West Yorkshire area but we are where we are, we do not have a transport system. The amount of money that we are saying the Government has generously allowed us to keep will not get us a transport system, quite frankly. There is such a small amount of money there it is really hardly worth bothering about, but I suppose we will continue to persevere.

When Andrew’s original White Paper came along I looked again at the first paragraph and you look at that and you think to yourself well, that is fairly bland and fairly innocuous, we can all sign up to that and go home tired but happy. Then we have the second paragraph and I have to say to you, this is not the first time you have effectively had a go at cyclists. That is what you are doing, let us be honest about that, we are having a go at cyclists. Yes you are, because the Cycling Superhighway is the biggest and most positive piece of infrastructure work this Council has ever put in to support cycling. It is actually, compared with what you see in continental Europe this is a drop in the ocean because this is accepted technology, it is an accepted way of dealing with cycling issues, yet what we are saying is yet again the odd motorist complains because they cannot park on the pavement any more so what happens, you have to come forward and say what a terrible thing this is and how terrible it might be.

The bottom line is it was the same with the cyclists on the towpath – the world was going to end because cyclists were allowed to use the towpath for the canal. Oh my goodness me.

Look, if you want to deal with the transport issues of this city you have to have a holistic approach. There has to be a public transport system, there has to be a system that deals with motorists because we cannot get them all out of their cars, there has to be a system that deals with pedestrians but we do not want to exclude cyclists and we do not want to attack cyclists in the way that you are doing. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Sandy Lay.

COUNCILLOR LAY: Second and reserve my position.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Keith Wakefield to move a further amendment.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am not sure whether Councillor Andrew Carter is down in London putting his nomination in *(laughter)*, but it is a shame that he is not in this Chamber because I would have said I regretted that kind of third paragraph because it took away the spirit and the messages of the Transport Summit on 10th June. For me and for many there were two clear messages: one, this has to be all party over a long period of time and I thought there was huge consensus at that conference for being all party and I will pay tribute to people who supported the NGT during difficult times. I remember Andrew Carter when he was Leader pushing for NGT in 2009 and Councillor Ryk Downes also holding the line in the interests of the city, so I do think that is important to say because sometimes one or two Liberals like to wiggle out of their history and change it slightly to give a different impression.

The second message for me was that there was no silver bullet, there was no one mode of transport that is going to solve our problems. There was huge consensus that if we are using all the modes of transport, then they have to be integrated and connected, not only just in journeys but by card as well.

I think as Councillor Lewis will probably dwell on, we have made a lot of progress. If you look at our rail station we have 30 million passengers a year go there, you will see cycle racks, you will see people cycling in, catching a train and coming out. If you look at the way that we have just developed a very successful park and ride at Elland Road, it is going to double and I think Richard will talk about where else we are going, Temple Green, because that is catching on, it is a big city and we have been successful with it.

I think buses is an interesting challenge. I heard the groans when people make buses but we have got an opportunity, David, not the quality contract, the Bus Bill that is going through Parliament now and I think we can make a difference to the way that is held accountable, the way that it runs or should be on behalf of people instead of profits.

I do want to spend some time on the Superhighway connect because Leeds is the first city outside of London to have a Superhighway on our streets. We have to applaud that because we have some severe health problems. If you look at the air quality debate we have 700 people die a year because of our air quality. Cycling contributes to getting rid of cars on roads because it is often easier to cycle in than it is

to drive in, particularly in congested areas. We have 361 accidents a year, two fatalities so I would say that we should embrace the cycling.

If you are going to encourage and embrace cycling as an integrated transport system you have to make it as safe and secure as possible for people who use it and that is where I agree with some of the concerns that we have about whether it is safe and secure, but I think we should celebrate Leeds being a European city, go to Munich, go to Zurich, go to any great European city, you will see cycling as an integrated part of their transport system.

I am pleased that commonsense has prevailed over this and I hope we carry on on an all party consensus actually developing a transport system that will support the economy and support our environmental and social ambitions for our great city of Leeds. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I second, Lord Mayor, reserving the right to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Tom Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: My Lord Mayor, in supporting this amended White Paper I welcome the end of NGT which, in my opinion, was never much more than an attempt to save face for the promoters of Supertram. I first objected to Supertram in 1992 at the first round of consultation on the UDP on the grounds that it would bring planning blight by dragging on for years and getting nowhere. After urging for at least twelve years at Metro that the City Council should learn the art of horse trading and bargaining to get the Supertram or NGT money to use it for something else, even city centre flood defences, I welcome the negotiated retention of £173m of Central Government money for transport infrastructure, or £173.5m, as Councillor Blake more precisely said.

I am not sure that a modern fit for purpose transport system is appropriate. That sounds a bit like another vanity project. We should be looking at a shopping list of smaller projects, the most promising of which should be set up easily and cheaply to give a quick return. The Cycle Superhighway does need looking at again. Leeds is not York or Oxford or Cambridge, it is a lot hillier, much bigger and crossed unavoidably by trunk roads meeting at awful gyratories and it is a fact that cyclists have concerns about the cycle way works done so far.

There was no harm in looking at trolley buses which were promoted at first by the late Councillor Stanley King of Bradford when he was Chairman of Metro. He was a great character with one of those warm and deep voices so typical of the old Bradford business community – in effect a J B Priestley voice – but he did have a weakness for trolley buses on which he was a world authority. My Lord Mayor, I am sure you will agree that it is a mercy that he was not a leading authority on pogo sticks of penny farthing bicycles (*laughter*) or at least you would have done if you had had to make the inaugural journey as part of your civic duties.

We need an open debate this time with none of the party whipping, arm twisting and briefing against dissenting voices which have marked discussions of

public transport in West Yorkshire for many years. With any luck the day of the cash guzzling vanity project will have ended. People should be invited to come forward with lists of what needs to be done so that many projects can be weighed against each other. Obvious candidates in Morley and new railway stations at White Rose and East Ardsley and the new car park at Morley station mentioned earlier by Councillor Judith Elliott, and actually that is something that has been under discussion for many years, not just the last couple of years.

Officers should find ways of paying for a large number of useful projects from the money at hand which would obviously be added to the £173m that we seem to have already rather than trying to find ways of making one or two projects swallow up all that money, and assuming that anyone will be able to afford anything at all during and after the chaos of Brexit the White Paper, which will have been put in before last Thursday, shows a willingness to move forward in a sensible manner and is to be welcomed. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Neil Buckley.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I made a few notes before this and now that we are all in agreement I am going to have to just temper my language slightly! *(laughter)*

We all know, at least I thought I knew until Councillor Campbell, that Leeds is the biggest city in Europe – I think it is the biggest city in Europe – without a fast transit scheme. Some have said previously that this city has been held back by a lack of ambition on transport and not enough vision on the matter.

Following the collapse of the NGT scheme, which was widely derided in the end, it is now more than ever important, I think we all agree with this, that the administration carries the population with it and when something else is actually devised, provides something that the people actually wholeheartedly want, and not just for one section of the city but for east, west, north and south.

To this end I welcome the £173m which has been made available to Leeds for a transport plan, but can we be told how much this is planned to be increased by levering in private sector investment? What plans exist already to bring this about? I will come back to that in a minute or two but this scheme of transport in Leeds, however it turns out, surely needs to be part of the bigger picture of the regional situation, HS2, HS3 and so on.

As we all know, HS2 is scheduled to start next year and finish in Leeds by 2033, and as many have said, digging should start here. What actual steps have already been taken by the administration to ensure that this happens?

This is important because with the political uncertainty abroad at the moment in whatever way we want to look at it, that particular scheme needs to be cancellation proof and just finishing off on that HS3 link between Leeds and Manchester, for example, the National Infrastructure Commission recommended that this be brought forward as soon as the Trans Pennine electrification is finished, and that would cut down the journey between Leeds and Manchester to 40 minutes. It takes me more than 40 minutes to get down here from Alwoodley by car in rush hour. It takes even longer by diesel bus and I end up a mile away from where I want to be.

All the plans, all the regional plans must be co-ordinated with a Leeds plan for the city itself. When we see these illustrations on a board or on a plan about the north, transport in the north, all these fantastic improvements look great, they are very impressive and I hope they all come off, and then you actually get it to Leeds and there is a sort of big ring there but there is nothing in it, so that really does need to be addressed, and what will link up with HS2 and HS3.

Let us not talk about little schemes like increased bus lay-bys and so on, but in terms of cycling, I think cycling is great, I have got a bike, I occasionally use it. I would cycle down here – I would not go home because it is all uphill. We need some better cycle lanes that are actually safer for the cyclist and for pedestrians, but it all does need a vision and a plan, a big plan to turn the £173m into £350m. What is the plan?

Let us get the city's act together and do this as a matter of urgency. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Stewart Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thanks, Lord Mayor. Our City Region has already set the weather on this – I am sorry to use that expression again – but we did ask for a billion pound transport fund and negotiated it and got permission to raise it and that is something we should all be proud of as a City Region.

Actually that billion pounds is already spent in terms of these schemes associated with it and a lot of the schemes that are associated with it are schemes that have been around for a very long time, so the £173m that we have got that has been so munificently given to us by the Government is not going to go very far, but if it can be the stimulus and the catalyst to get us to actually think bigger as a city about what we do need to incorporate within our transport plan and then look at that as something that we can spend on particularly strategic aspects that we want to build ambition for and perhaps attract more investment for – pity we can't go to Europe now for it but there you go – then I think that will be a really valuable use of our time.

We do need to listen to not just us being cross party and talking to each other and agreeing and getting a consensus, but very much importantly talking to people outside in terms of our citizens and the people who run their businesses in the city. I think the Transport Summit was an excellent first step in making that engagement.

I am going to go back to cycling. I am glad that this debate is actually turning into a bit of a cycling debate. I once tried to cycle into town and I never tried it again because I nearly died twice. *(laughter)* You would have loved a bye election, wouldn't you! Councillor Wakefield hit it on the head, you need to make it safe and secure.

Cycling is the most progressive transport option that we have as a city besides walking, which we can all do, but in terms of investing capital in, if we can make people feel safer on the roads with a cycle then we will have achieved quite a lot because not only does it help us with our Health and Wellbeing Strategy because people will be fitter, it also helps with that reduction in inequalities as well because cycling is a really affordable way of getting about.

You should go for it as well. Norman Tebbit was the first one to say “Get on your bike and go looking for work”. If that hub and spoke model in the city of our bus network does not get you to where you want to go to for your job interview you need an alternative and if we can make our bike system work for the city and make it safer then we will have achieved something else.

I think also we need to make sure that we are very savvy about showing that we know how to get best value out of the investment that we have got and we do need to listen to our business community as well in terms of what their priorities are and what they think can get the biggest bang for our buck. I think one of the priorities that we do need to look into in more detail is that rail link to Leeds Bradford airport because that has such a huge possibility for raising our profile as a city, for our ambitions as a European city but also in terms of being an effective conduit for people to come and see us.

Those will be the two priorities that I would set us to actually really do some proper work on – cycling and Leeds Bradford airport. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Ryk Downes.

COUNCILLOR DOWNES: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I will start by saying that what Councillor Anderson was saying about not having an open view inside the parties, our party did. We actually many times voted in separate ways in our Group and we were allowed a free vote on NGT. As Councillor Wakefield touched on, I was a very big supporter of it. In fact it came to light when I was the Chairman of Metro, it was what we looked at when we lost Supertram and I went to Europe and I saw how modern trolley buses worked and I genuinely believed the right scheme could work for Leeds.

We need a rapid transport scheme, we need to get something in place, we need a holistic picture of what will work for Leeds and how it integrates within West Yorkshire but we need to get on and we need to get something done because other cities have then been able to build on it and we were losing money each time because it is so much easier to extend the route because you do not have to put all the things like your depot and buy extra units, you have actually got something down there and then you can expand, so we were constantly losing out at Westminster to bids to extend other cities’ networks, so we have got to start somewhere.

£173m ain’t a lot of money. It is not going to deliver a rapid transport system but what it needs to be is a catalyst for starting the first route, to actually getting something down but showing the whole city how we can expand around it. Obviously Leeds Bradford airport is in my ward, we have the potential of a new road which is not going down well within the community. We feel that a direct link to the airport is necessary and can be delivered within that price range because you have actually got the existing rail line coming up just short of the Bramhope Tunnel, you can put a spur off there up there. We need to get something for the connectivity to get the growth in the airport which will bring more and more commerce, business, into our region.

When we look at the existing bus network, when I was Chairman First came up with loads of offers how they could deliver better than a rapid transport system.

They said, “Give us corridors, we will deliver a better bus service.” Well, they have not done yet. I travel on the buses a lot and the number of times buses knock or the other day I went to catch one at Golden Acre Park and it arrived four minutes early and there was me running up the road and I just missed it. Then it had to stop in Bramhope to make up the time. How ridiculous.

The system is not working with the bus companies at the moment. We need something better, we deserve something better. If that is all we have got at the moment, that has got to be improved.

As far as cycling goes, Otley is building up a great heritage of cycling and I have seen a lot of people, I have seen Lizzie Armistead cycling around Otley, I have seen the Brownlee brothers cycling around Otley, I have seen Keith Wakefield cycle through Otley on several occasions and, of course, our own beloved Lord Mayor. The point is, Otley has got a cycling heritage so we really must build on that because Otley has got so many – we are trying to set an example there and I think that we can do something more.

Just very briefly, I recently went to Kirkstall Forge. It is Otley Walking Festival Week and tomorrow I am leading a walk to Kirkstall Forge and we are actually getting a glimpse of the actual forge. I went to the station just prior to it opening – it is fantastic and that is something that we have delivered between us through the Transport Authority etc and that is something I was looking at again as Chair but it has now come to fruition, it is brilliant.

Just to end on a lovely little note, while I was there by the River Aire I saw a kingfisher flying along towards the station – absolutely wonderful that we have got biodiversity that close to the centre of Leeds and let us try and work together, all of us, to try and get a 21st Century transport solution. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Debra Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am grateful for the opportunity to speak on the amendment in the name of Councillor Keith Wakefield and I want to particularly concentrate on the importance of transport links and the communities.

What we have under way in this city is the biggest ever consultation about the future of public transport in Leeds. It is all about ensuring that our communities’ voices are heard right at the start of the process of developing our transport strategy for the future.

The event that was held in the Banqueting Suite early in June was the first of a series of dedicated meetings to be held in communities across the city. As part of that meeting people across Leeds sent in their ideas for how to improve our transport services and this will continue to be the focus ensuring that people’s voices are heard.

We want the conversations which took place at that event to be taken out into communities and there are a series of dedicated community meetings scheduled for the rest of the year where we will do this, and as the Executive Member with responsibility for Community Committees, I know the vital role they can play in

making sure that local communities have real ownership of discussions which affect them.

There are some things that need to be considered when contemplating how to spend £173.5m on transport in Leeds. How do we ensure that the outcomes that we have talked about in the Banqueting Suite – faster journeys, more capacity, economic growth and better air quality – are met in Leeds? How do we improve links to isolated communities in Leeds? We need to make sure that those communities which are geographically isolated or where there are high levels of deprivation are better connected to the rest of Leeds. Making sure that people across Leeds have a good transport link to hospitals would be of great value. It would also be beneficial to have improved links into transport hubs, such as the Leeds train station and the Leeds bus station, further opening up opportunities for all people.

How do we improve access to transport for young people? I know that when I am out and about speaking to young people across the city, the first thing they raise is the issue of transport. Many young people do not have their own transport and this affects their access to education, to training and jobs and can lead to social isolation.

We need to think about older people and how their world is restricted if they do not have good transport links. In Leeds two-thirds of pensioner households and 20% of pensioner couple households do not have access to transport. We also need to think about people with disabilities and other vulnerable people for whom transport is equally essential.

We need to think about our bus services, and I know in London there is a public body, Transport for London, which regulates transport and we see an abundance of range of options for them. In Leeds the provision of bus services is largely left to two private companies, Arriva and First Bus, running routes mainly to and from the city centre and I am passionate about the need to improve the bus system in Leeds. It is issues such as these that we need to think about at a community level.

The issue of transport goes to the heart of being a strong economy and a compassionate city and improving transport links can improve the economic outlook of isolated communities and can open up access to work and leisure. At the same time, transport can open up horizons for vulnerable people without their own transportation and high quality public transport can ensure that our communities go from strength to strength. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Judith Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Just putting together the White Paper in our name, the focus we really wanted to achieve was around the future of transport in our city and clearly there is a lot of reflection to be done through the Scrutiny Committee about what has happened but I think the most important thing is that we look forward, and particularly coming up with the vision of what the transport needs for the city are over the next 20, 30 years. This is the consideration that we need, particularly matching our ambition going forward.

We called the Summit with very short notice and it was really standing room only, it was absolutely packed from the widest range of participants from representatives of our community groups, our disability groups, people who have got

a huge interest in being able to get around the city and, as Councillor Coupar said, the consultation has to be ongoing and I think if every Community Committee could organise their own consultation event that would be a real step forward.

We have achieved a great breakthrough in keeping the £173.5m just for Leeds and all of us in here know that before, if we had walked away from NGT the Government had made it very clear that that was it, they were not going to give us any of the funding, so that was a huge step forward and I think reflects the confidence of the city going forward.

The case has been so well made about the economic benefit to the city of investment. This is all about building on successes that we have already achieved: the Elland Road Park and Ride, Thorpe Green coming on stream, Kirkstall Forge just opened last week, and amazing consensus around the HS2 station and praise from Sir David Higgins and Lord Adonis about how as a city we managed to achieve consensus.

I hear what people are saying about the rapid transport scheme but if you think that places like Manchester or Sheffield or other places with extensive rapid transport schemes have cracked the issue of congestion I would ask you to think again. They have not and actually in many ways it is easier for buses to get around Leeds than it is for some of those cities with schemes, not that obviously we are ruling that out but it is that issue about connectivity and making sure that people can get round the city and we are not just focusing on the direct routes into the city. It is very, very tricky to go and visit relatives who live around and I think the point has been very well made about the social isolation if you do not have good transport, the health impacts from emissions from having too many cars going down the end of your street and the real issue about affordability. As Councillor Wakefield said, integrated ticketing, when you go to London you can just use your contactless card instead of an Oyster card even to get through many modes of transport.

I actually asked Andrew Carter if he would second this White Paper. I cannot tell you how disappointed I was when he decided not to and to put his own in. The way forward with this is to work cross party and I hope we do not lose the last part of our White Paper which is asking for a cross party working group coming together, working with all of our partners in the city, linking into our communities and getting the very best possible way forward working within Leeds but also, as we have said, within the wider city region. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: If I could just pick up from something that Judith mentioned, the contactless card. There is a little item in the Evening Post this week about the number 36 service where you can now use contactless card on it. If one bus company can do it they can all do it, and if they can all do it, they can all do it together and they can make buses grow as an industry in this country. The problem is that they do not want to work together and one of our jobs is to make them work together.

For too long we have been talking about quality bus contracts, about whatever. We really need to crack this nut. We can talk about the prestige schemes. The bread and butter thing for us is to get the bus industry working properly in this city. In my

ward I am just seeing residents of one part of it up near Fulneck where their bus service is being elongated from a semi-express service to a stopping service that visits most parts of West Leeds. That is intolerable. That is going to drive people off buses not on to them and that is why we need to have control of where buses go and what the fare levels are.

The Evening Post when it announced the NGT was being cancelled said Leeds no longer has a transport strategy. They are absolutely wrong. There is a lot that has been going on in this city and I think we should be proud of the things that we have done. I will give a couple of examples. I thank Colin for his words on the Cycle Superhighway. We were bold there. This was difficult stuff. It would be very easy of us as a Local Authority to say this is too difficult, we will turn down this Government money, we will not bid for it and we will just get on, we will do a small cycle way somewhere, spend a couple of million and that will be it. No, we went for the big one and we knew that the timescales were difficult and we had that opposition. I will tell you where that opposition has come from.

Firstly, we had the businesses, there were some private landlords that did not like the fact that they would not be able to park on the pavement as they have for many years. I am sorry, as a city we cannot be driven by the obsessions of a few private landlords about preserving their ability to keep cars on the pavement.

The next lot of opposition came from some cyclists. I will tell you why those cyclists were really upset and I have had a lot of correspondence from them, because we do not give enough priority to cyclists. They think at the Armley crossroads they should have priority over every other mode of transport. I think personally to give a small percentage of road users absolute priority over everybody else is not going to get people in love with cycling. It is going to turn cyclists into a persecuted minority. (*interruption*) You are always persecuted, what are you on about!

The other group were again probably some disgruntled motorists, and I will be honest with you, they have had to have disruption as a result of all the work that has been going on. We have not got that right and we have to learn from that, but overall the scheme is a good one. It is cutting edge, it is stuff that is not being done anywhere else in the country and we should all actually say, look, you have got to give things a chance and having stuff in the Evening Post which says that this is a disaster before it has started is a nonsense. It opens on Thursday; then let people criticise.

There are just a couple of other little things. We have been fantastically successful with the Park and Ride at Elland Road. There again there was an issue, there was a lot of local opposition to that from people in Beeston. David, you jumped on the bandwagon, didn't you, you said it wouldn't work. Paul, now you have come back and said the opposite. What we have to do is be bigger than just that kind of petty opposition and that kind of petty taking advantage. As Judith says, we have to be cross party, we have to actually think that on an issue like transport that is so vital to us, that we cannot play these political games because all it will mean is that in 10, 20 years' time we will be sitting having the same debate in this Chamber as we are having today. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor John Procter to sum up.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have to say that having listened to that debate it was pretty depressing, really, because what I was hoping I was going to hear was a vision but what I have heard instead is a defence and the White Paper that was put down was not meant for anyone to be defensive. What it actually says, if people read it, is that actually there were some issues that were thrown up in terms of how the Cycle Superhighway was brought about and that has been recognised in some quarters, and it is welcomed that they are going to be reviewed. That is all we have said.

That is not to say that it is anti cycling, as the Lib Dems are trying to make out. It does not say that. They have not read it.

Similarly with NGT, there were clearly a string of issues with NGT and Members, I would think every Executive Member either past or present in our administration, yours or yours before ours actually, would have had representations from business owners along varying legs of that route, because there were issues that were there along the way and there are always going to be issues that are created by any form of major rapid transit system. All we are saying is that they need to be reflected upon and looked at how we approach people and their concerns, that is all we are saying, nothing more than that. We are not condemning the Cycle Superhighway, we are asking for a recognition that things perhaps could be done better.

The central issue that is here and what we would urge you to do, as I said earlier on, is to think about what some people will think is a lot of money, £173m – it is a lot of money but in transport terms it is nothing. It is absolutely nothing at all, frankly, and that is where we really differ from what Councillor Leadley was saying in terms of his approach.

He says no vanity projects, lots of little measures. What we would say is the little measures do not work and if you are going to make the seismic shift which this city needs to do, frankly, to get people out of cars and in and out of this vibrant city that we have and will continue to have, and this city that will continue to grow, we need something different. We need a step change that is going to make people do that.

When Councillor Richard Lewis and others then come on to talk about buses as being almost the way forward, they are not because you are not going to achieve the step change. We all understand the reliance that people have on buses for the round movements and all the rest of it, but nevertheless you keep coming back to the fact that, as Councillor Buckley said, we are the largest European city without a rapid transit system and this group believes that that is what we need. We welcome an all party approach but what we need to be clear about is that having partner organisations along with us are great but you do not want a group being so large that the partner organisations drown out the absolute crying need in this city for some form of a rapid transit system and you can listen to partners all day long and get nowhere.

I would submit that we need to get some urgent plans, submitted to Government before any future Government takes away the promissory note of £173m. We need to show that we can step up to the mark, that we have got some dynamic, eye-catching, innovative ideas to solve the transport problems of this city. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: I call for the vote then. First of all the amendment in the name of Councillor David Blackburn. *(A vote was taken)* The amendment is LOST.

The second amendment in the name of Councillor Colin Campbell. *(A vote was taken)* That is LOST.

The third amendment in the name of Councillor Keith Wakefield. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

The substantive motion, then, in the name of Councillor Procter, as amended. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 13 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – PLANNING POLICY

THE LORD MAYOR: White Paper 13, Planning Policy. Tom Leadley.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. The purpose of this White Paper is to fill a gap in City Council Planning policy. When the LDF Core Strategy was being put together Councillor Campbell, supported by others, asked that Leeds should develop and adopt a formal planning policy to control the number and siting of hot food takeaways along the lines already laid down by several other planning authorities. Officers were reluctant to do this and Members were assured that it was unnecessary as part of the emerging LDF policies and Saved UDP policies would survive.

After the matter had been revived in discussion at Development Plans Panel following the publication of the Core Strategy Inspector's Report, a written report was presented to Development Plans Panel on 16th December 2014 and again to Joint Plans Panel on 26th February 2015 which confirmed the officer view that the newly adopted LDF Core Strategy and Saved UDP policies could be used to control numbers and siting of hot food takeaways and with reference to the risk of unhealthy eating. Several Members expressed scepticism but that was how the matter was left.

Then Plans Panel South and West on 10th December 2015 dealt with an example of a large and contentious hot food takeaway, a McDonald's drive thru at Tingley White Bear to be placed close to Woodkirk Academy in Morley, which has about 1,870 pupils. When questioned by Members, Planning Officers had to admit that the City Council had no worthwhile planning policy on hot food takeaways, particularly with regard to their effect on public health and their location near schools, therefore a reason for refusal based on those concerns could not be supported.

During a public inquiry held in March 2016 into one of McDonald's five successive applications for the White Bear, though not the one which had gone to Panel in December, it had to be agreed that there was no adopted local planning policy on hot food takeaways. Two objectors, a Deputy Principal of Woodkirk Academy and a Town Councillor, tried to make cases based on generalised statements about public health set out at national level, so about one day out of the four hearing days was spent discussing concerns about public health and closeness to the Academy. Without a local policy the Inspector thought so little of these arguments

that he did not mention them at all in an otherwise lengthy and thorough report, even to discount them.

The appeal was dismissed but only on grounds of inadequate parking and consequent nuisance to neighbours caused by overspill on to nearby roads which had been raised by Morley Town Council.

There is a Leeds City Council policy gap here which needs to be filled and I would be grateful for everyone's support. We are not trying to abolish chips or drive every curry house in the land out of business, but there does need to be a formally adopted and properly developed planning policy to deal with problems such as heavy concentrations of smaller takeaways in some neighbourhoods and the placing of large all day outlets at the gates of schools.

Around 50 out of about 350 planning authorities have these policies already: Waltham Forest in London is said to have been the first; Bradford was an early one; and Newcastle upon Tyne has recently adopted one. Leeds need not start from scratch, the work of others could be looked at and even used as templates. Leeds City Council's existing Hot Food Takeaway Cumulative Impact Policy is to do with licensing, not planning, and refers to premises in a few small designated areas which are open after eleven o'clock at night.

There is a longstanding problem now brought to a head. Last December Plans Panel South and West Members were most annoyed to be told that they had no direct means of stopping a large hot food takeaway being placed next to a high school and contributors to the public inquiry in March were disappointed that their carefully researched arguments carried no weight because of the absence of an appropriate local policy on which to hang their case. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Second and reserve the right to speak.

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor David Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: I have got to say I welcome this motion from Councillor Leadley. It is long overdue that we did something regarding hot food takeaways. I have been on Council 18 years and we have had problems with people doing that and before that probably you had that, and you go down our street and there are far too many of them and up to now we have not had a policy. This is aiming to give us a policy which is long overdue. I support, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I have got a feeling it is going to be a fairly short debate, is it? I am happy to support. This is very unusual, isn't it! I am very happy to support Tom Leadley's White Paper and we will accept the idea of a Hot Food Takeaway Supplementary Planning document. It is not going to be the whole answer to the problems of hot food takeaways and unhealthy eating by any manner of means but I fully accept that there is a feeling amongst those Members who spend a huge amount of time on Planning that it is a gap in our armoury, so I am happy that we fill it.

I think that we would need a very thorough piece of work looking at what is being done elsewhere because it has been patchy. I think there is an LGA document not that long back which I had a look at which said that it had worked in part and I think we need to learn from how others have implemented it, perhaps take a template, perhaps learn lessons. There are some cases knocking around, particularly one in Newcastle upon Tyne, that are going to influence what we put in ours.

I am more than pleased that we do this but let us not think that this is going to answer all the problems of obesity across the city. We do need a joined up approach that takes into account health, enforcement, a range of activities where we have to be proactive as well.

By all means let us get on with this but it will not be, because of the complexity it, will not be next week. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Neil Dawson.

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am still recovering a bit from Councillor Wakefield calling me a visionary in Morley! (*laughter*)

Actually to build on that what I would like to comment on first of all is something that Councillor John Procter said and the Leader said, Councillor Blake, in terms of visionary. They mentioned about textiles and recycling textiles and improving that. Morley was built on a trade of recycling cloth called shoddy and mungo and if there is an avenue to open a recycling centre for textiles then can I put forward Morley as the venue to do that and the place would be very appropriate to do that.

Also as Councillor Blake said earlier in the meeting, we live in interesting times. Over the last few weeks we have seen some very unlikely political alliances. We have seen the Prime Minister, David Cameron, shadowed in the referendum campaign by the former Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, Harriet Harman; we have seen Boris Johnson, a grandson of a Turkish immigrant, has been sharing platforms with a German born Labour MP, Gisela Stuart. My Lord Mayor, even more extraordinary than all this I, as a Morley Labour Councillor, spent years crossing swords with the MBI colleagues and am now speaking in favour of a White Paper motion put forward by Councillor Leadley related to the LDF. It feels a bit like a Christmas Day truce on the Western Front in 1914! (*laughter*) Perhaps I can work with the MBI Remain wing in the future; perhaps hostilities may well begin again soon.

Turning to the White Paper, I agree that we need a Planning Policy in the LDF regarding hot food takeaways. An integral part of the Core Strategy is to improve public health and wellbeing. We also have to recognise, as was said by Councillor Leadley, that all businesses, hot food takeaways, should be allowed to operate and trade in a similar manner to any other business. However, I do agree there is a growing problem around public health – bad diet, obesity, particularly amongst younger children and teenagers and it is right that we should look at any measures that can be used to combat this.

Already the Government is proposing a sugar tax which the current Chancellor proposed in his budget, which I would support. There needs to be a great focus on food regulation and maybe even more promotion of eating fresh fruit and vegetables – we may even move to something like eight a day from five a day, who knows.

We need a Planning policy that gives us leeway to stop hot food takeaways from setting up in areas that could be harmful to sections of our community - for example, as Tom quoted, near schools or health centres or other locations where young people gather.

Again, as Councillor Leadley said, we had an example recently in Morley where the location of a hot food takeaway could be seen as potentially harmful to local school children. The suggestion that the White Bear at Tingley should have McDonald's has been quite rightly thrown out by this Council and by the Planning Inspectorate, and I must congratulate Tom Leadley on his role in the public inquiry and the sterling performance that he gave back in March.

However, one of the weaknesses in the argument against the proposal to have a McDonald's located near to two schools was that Leeds City Council did not have a specific Hot Food Takeaway Policy as part of our Planning framework.

Where there are proposals to have hot food takeaways near to a school, or where there is an over-concentration in one area, then we should allow our officers and Plans Panels to be able to challenge the siting of hot food takeaways on public health grounds. I support the White Paper in the name of Councillor Leadley.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Rebecca Charlwood.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you, Lord Mayor. In supporting this White Paper I want to talk about the public health and wellbeing work associated with the agenda.

We all know that obesity is a huge local and national challenge. We also know it is on the rise in Leeds due to poor diet, low levels of physical activity and environments which encourage unhealthy weight. Crucially what is important to remember is that it is preventable.

Some of you may have seen over the past few weeks various health surveys and studies related to obesity which present a worrying picture nationally. One study published earlier this month from the Obesity Health Alliance, which is perhaps worth noting, warned around 40 million adults will be obese by 2035 if current trends continue. Furthermore, the study also predicted that there will be more than 7.6 million new cases of disease linked to obesity that could be diagnosed over the next 20 years. Such stark warnings have led key organisations like Cancer Research UK to warn about the impact on public health and urge bold action in order to prevent the next generation from facing the potential reality of more disease and living shorter lives. Similarly a survey carried out by various health campaigners, including the Royal Society for Public Health, cited figures which show nearly one in five 10 to 11 year olds nationally are obese. Interestingly, a quarter of the 13 to 18 years olds surveyed admitted they had ordered a takeaway to be delivered to their school where more than half said they had ordered through their smart phone. This perhaps

indicates other elements to the debate which suggest this is an area more complex than some might think.

Lord Mayor, I think it would also be useful to speak a bit more specifically about Leeds and the type of work we are currently doing to tackle obesity in the city. Take childhood obesity – Leeds City Council has a statutory duty to ensure the annual measurement of the height and weight of children in reception years and in Year 6, age 11 to 12, with the School Nursing Service commissioned to deliver the National Child Measurement Programme.

The key findings from the analysis from the data obtained from schoolchildren in the academic year 2013/14 highlighted some crucial information, such as one in eleven children in reception are obese, with around one in five children either overweight or obese. The obesity rate in reception has increased slightly compared to last year, which mirrors the national trend. Rates of obesity among children attending school in the most deprived area are approximately double as compared to children attending schools in the least deprived area.

There are, however, encouraging signs of some improvement too, where over the last six years the data shows a small decrease in obesity levels in reception and in Year 6 with Leeds rates now mirroring the national levels. The data also shows some obesity rates to be falling for both age groups among those children living in the most deprived areas and the gap in obesity rates between those children living in deprived Leeds and non-deprived Leeds is narrowing.

Similarly, tackling adult obesity is also a priority for the Council, where over 62% of adults are classed as overweight or obese - that is in Leeds – not significantly different from the England average but we do have key public health programmes in place such as the Investment into Work we commissioned such as the Ministry of Food cooking skills programme which aim to, in their different ways, increase physical activity, improve diet and to promote healthy weight.

Clearly there is a lot more work to be done and we as a Council are committed to tackling issues such as obesity which can be prevented, and it is important nationally that we take this seriously just as we are at a local city level. The health of everyone in this city across all ages is something we must work together to improve and if we can find ways our departments can work together to tackle the issue directly, we must do everything we can to make this happen. I am supporting the White Paper. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Caroline Anderson.

COUNCILLOR C ANDERSON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am speaking for my Group in supporting the White Paper submitted in the name of Councillor Leadley. It would appear to me from what I have seen and from what has been said that it is vital that we get a policy in place. This will help us to plan things better. We cannot have every empty shop on a parade turned into a takeaway. It is a blight on the street scene. There is litter, noise from cars coming and going and this needs to be contained. If we want to be the best city for children, this is not going to be fair on our children.

When I read that a quarter of schoolchildren have had takeaway meals delivered to them whilst at school, we need to reverse any trend that might be building here. Our children will not thank us for this in the future. It also must be adding to child poverty and we have heard quite a lot this afternoon in various debates about the child poverty. Where is the money coming from?

Dr Ian Cameron's Public Health Report 2014/15 states, and I quote:

“Local Councils can have their most important long term effect on health through the decisions they take about special planning”

and on page 12 of this document one of the aspirations is increasing access to healthy food.

Let me be clear, I am not against takeaways or fast food. I eat takeaways myself. I would not even call it junk food, it is not all junk food if eaten moderately. We need a range of choices. On a positive way forward, if we can get a planning policy on the siting and concentration of hot food takeaways that can be agreed and worked up by our officers with ward Member input, this would be very welcome and would help us fend off unwelcome and unwanted applications in unsuitable areas. I support the White Paper. *(Applause)*

THE LORD MAYOR: Councillor Tom Leadley to sum up.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: I thought Colin might have been about to use his right to speak but he is not.

I would like to thank colleagues for their support. The context of the White paper is quite stark. As recently as 1980 only 5% of British people were clinically obese and that was often because of underlying problems such as under-active thyroid or lack of exercise due to physical disability. The report released a couple of weeks ago revealed clinical obesity levels of 29% with a projected increase to 39% within a few years. It is not killjoy nanny state-ism to want to do something about this. Twenty years ago who would have thought that we would have had such widespread and generally well observed smoking bans as we have now. Benefits are being seen already in reduced rates of respiratory and cardiovascular disease, giving people longer lives of better quality and reducing burdens on the National Health Service.

Central Government's recent support for a sugar tax with particular regard to soft drinks shows that official attention is being turned towards the perils of unhealthy diets. Leeds City Council must play its part.

We could not introduce a local tax on burgers or soft drinks but by having appropriate planning policy of the kind that is already in place in many parts of the country we could control the numbers of hot food takeaways where they are becoming excessive and stop the stationing of large outlets by major operators at the gates of schools.

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

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Right, I call for the vote on the motion in favour of Councillor Leadley's White Paper. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

The final White Paper, procedural motion to withdraw White Paper.
Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I would like to move under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 14.10 that the leave of Council – you might have a problem with this – be given to withdraw the motion in my name on Transport.

THE LORD MAYOR: Thank you. Councillor Stewart Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: I second, Lord Mayor.

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

Can I thank you all, I cannot guarantee every meeting is going to finish an hour ahead but we have managed to do it today.

(The meeting closed at 6.35pm)