

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday, 14th September, 2016

At

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
CIVIC HALL, LEEDS

In the Chair:

THE CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL
(Councillor J McKenna)

VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

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VERBATIM REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF LEEDS CITY COUNCIL
MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, 14th SEPTEMBER 2016

THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon Councillors and ladies and gentlemen. As you can see, I am standing in as your Chair today. The Lord Mayor has been taken home; he has not been well but he is OK. I do not think he was up to the trials and tribulations of the Council meeting.

COUNCILLOR HYDE: Neither am I! *(laughter)*

THE CHAIRMAN: OK. I see we have some remarks from Councillor Hyde to help us on the way.

A couple of things I need to say. Made in Leeds are actually filming this – that is the chappie up *there* – so when you speak look at the camera and smile! It is great, actually, that a local television company is coming in and doing this, so you are very welcome.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE CHAIRMAN: I am now going to announcements and there are a lot of them, so please bear with me. I have had the best possible briefing you could have in the last quarter of an hour and for that I must thank Catherine and Tom – they have been very, very helpful.

If I can start. I am sure you will all join with me in congratulating Team GB on their success in the sensational Olympics in Rio, with Yorkshire contributing 14 medals. I think that deserves a clap. *(Applause)* For the record, five golds, five silvers and four bronze out of a total of 67. *(Applause)*

We also continue to enjoy the amazing success in the Paralympics with seven gold and one bronze medal so far. I think it is much more than that, actually. Is that from Yorkshire? I think it is just Yorkshire, isn't it? It is just Yorkshire. If we were a country I think we would be third or fourth in the world, so there you go. A good message for devolution if we ever get round to it!

In addition I have just learned that Leeds had great success in the Yorkshire in Bloom Awards that were held yesterday. We had over 40 winners in different categories with Leeds winning gold in the city category. That must be worth a clap! *(Applause)* It goes without saying we need to congratulate our Parks Department and Countryside Team and all the other communities and establishments who have been involved and worked hard to achieve these magnificent results and make our city a greener and more pleasant place.

As you are also aware, Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services, will be retiring at the end of the month after six years in the role and 34 years working in and around the public sector. Nigel has worked extremely hard during this time to fulfil the Council's ambition to make Leeds a child friendly city. *(Applause)*

I also understand that Peter Marrington, Head of Scrutiny, will be retiring this month. Peter joined the Council in the early 1990s from the Health Service, worked initially in the Project Management Group where he undertook value for money and service reviews across the Council. He then worked to support the Executive Director for Communities and since the early 2000s has worked in Scrutiny, where he has been highly respected across all political groups. In his capacity as Head of Scrutiny Support, Peter has been instrumental in positioning Scrutiny in Leeds amongst the leading Local Authorities in the country. *(Applause)*

I am sure you will join me in wishing both Peter and Nigel a very long and happy retirement. *(Applause)*

On behalf of the Council and the city I would like to mark the recent death of Harry Jepson, who was 96 and the President of Leeds Rhinos. Harry was a rugby legend, being instrumental in the early success of the Leeds Rhinos and the establishment of the Super League and a big supporter of Leeds Children's Day. Before his full-time involvement in the club he held various teaching roles in the city and used his spare time to coach. We send our condolences to his family and the club, with our appreciation of what he did for the city.

I am very pleased to say that I was a friend of Harry, I met him many, many times and I enjoyed a lunch with him in Featherstone just before the Featherstone match some months ago and he was very well. I think although he was 96 he was extremely healthy and active and I think it has come as a shock to all of us. I think in the area of rugby league, I do not think there are many can compare with what Harry has done for rugby league and for the city of Leeds.

There is more!

Finally – are you there, John, have you disappeared? He is over there. John Wilson. I would like to speak on behalf of myself and former Lord Mayors. Where to start? I have to say I did not write this – if I had written it it would be different, but here we go, I will do my best with it. I would have rather spoken off the cuff on John, because I was one of the Lord Mayors in 2010/11 who were very much shepherded all over the place with John and I look around and I see all the Lord Mayors who would feel the same about John - Judith is here, David I have seen you earlier on, Mohammed – anybody who has been Lord Mayor and, in the old days, Deputy Lord Mayor, will realise the value of John Wilson.

John Wilson – where a Lord Mayor only gets to be the highest office in the land for one year, John Wilson has been doing it nearly 30 years. He is the continuation of the office, not the current incumbent. I will get back to my brief.

John has worked for the Council for nearly 40 years (38 I believe, John, isn't it? Yes, he is saying yes) and has been a member of the Lord Mayor's team for over 30 years and Sergeant at Mace for nearly 25 years. In this time he has come into contact with a whole host of celebrities, far too many to mention, and has met Her Majesty the Queen several times as well as heads of state and even Nelson Mandela.

He has also accompanied the Lord Mayors on many visits overseas over the years. In the past ten years alone he has accompanied the Lord Mayor on 23 overseas visits, with visits to China, Germany, the Czech Republic, France, South Africa, Spain,

Ireland, Serbia, Romania, Pakistan (where I understand he even had his own goat! Do you still have it, John?)

THE SERGEANT AT MACE: It is in Romania!

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sure you will agree that John is exceptionally well liked and respected by officers, Members and a wide range of organisations that he comes into contact with. He is an excellent ambassador for the city and treats everyone he meets with courtesy and respect, whether it is to be a member of the public or a member of the Royal Household.

He has always had the ability of making everyone feel relaxed and special and is often remembered long after the event by the people he comes into contact with. John is a calm and steady member of the team and he is always there to offer practical, sound advice to Lord Mayors no matter what. Over the years he has encountered many potential problems and incidents, yet none of it has ever fazed him and he always just takes everything in his stride.

He has always arrived at a solution to suit everybody - not always easy, I am sure you will agree. I have to say, today is an example how he eased me into the Chair and made everything as good as possible as it could be in the circumstances.

Over the years John has always got involved in the Lord Mayor's Charity Appeal and I would describe him as a bit of an Arthur Daly - who wrote that! - who can squeeze money out of most people he meets, all in the name of charity, of course. He has organised bowling nights, afternoon teas, car washes to name but a few and has always been more than happy to roll up his sleeves and muck in when needed. I am sure that other former Lord Mayors have many tales that they could add to this list.

I would like to finish by saying that John is highly regarded by all those who come into contact with him and is thought of with great admiration and respect. He will be a hard act to replace and I am sure you will agree with me that he will be greatly missed by everyone in the Council and in the city of Leeds and beyond. Thank you.

(Standing ovation)

THE CHAIRMAN: Do not slip out, John, we are not finished yet with the tributes! I now call on the Group Leaders. First of all, Councillor Blake to make her comments. Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Chair, and former Lord Mayor, Councillor McKenna. Follow that! I understand, John, you wanted to slip away quietly from the role. I do not think we do quietly in this place, so what a fantastic response and just reflecting, I do not think many of us in this Chamber can actually remember a time when you were not here, and I think that is the extraordinary part. You have just been ever present at so many events and you have contributed hugely to the big city events and the visitors, as Councillor McKenna, has outlined.

I also want to thank you for the huge support you give all of us as members when you accompany the Lord Mayor out into the community. I think the role of the Lord Mayor out in the community is hugely important and very well loved and respected as an institution in this city and it has given all of us as members huge

comfort when you have come along with the Lord Mayor and helped us to know what the protocol is, what we can say, what we cannot say and the form.

On behalf of my two colleagues from Middleton Park ward, we were delighted to welcome you into probably the best ever Middleton Park Produce Show on Sunday and the Lord Mayor was having such a good time you spent the whole afternoon with us and we really did appreciate that.

I would love to have been a fly on the wall in some of the situations that you found yourself in, John, and I did actually suggest to you on Sunday that perhaps an autobiography might be forthcoming, but I suspect there might be people around who might pay you handsomely for some things never to come out into the public domain.

What a rock you have been, John, a great friend to all of us and we are very, very sorry to see you go but really do want to wish you a long and very, very happy retirement.

It has just been an immense pleasure and a privilege to work with you and I know again that all members of Council will want to pay tribute to you and thank you again for everything you have done for us. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Blake. Can I now call on Councillor Carter; Andrew, please.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Yes, thank you. I am delighted but also sad to say these few words about John's impending retirement. It is truly the end of an era. I am thinking way back and I cannot remember a time when John Wilson was not here. I was Deputy Lord Mayor in 1995/96 and we do not have Deputy Lord Mayors any longer (nothing to do with me!) but we very rarely had the pleasure of John looking after us because the Lord Mayor has always very cautiously guarded the fact that John looked after the Lord Mayor.

I was Deputy to the formidable late Peggy White and she was not really hugely into sport and so I got to go actually to Leeds Rhinos quite a lot, and as many people know I am Leeds Rhinos supporter. It has always amazed me how John always managed to be in charge that day, and you mentioned the late Harry Jepson, an absolute gentleman, a lovely man. He used to make sure I got invited on occasions to watch the Rhinos, and when I wore the chains they won and they were not having a particularly good season and he would say "Wear the chains!"

We got invited to Wigan and John was in charge and we got there safely. I can get a bit worked up with these matches sometimes and they had a player who had got the OBE – he was a great player, I will not mention any names – very theatrical though, and the match went on and went on and I got quite worked up and there was this particular incident on the pitch and I was wont to comment that he should not have been given the OBE, he should have been given an Oscar. Now the people from Wigan were not too pleased and John just looked at me and pointed at the chains – remember, you are on duty, you are not on the terraces here! (*laughter*) It did not stop him shouting, I can tell you!

The point has been made about Lord Mayors and Deputy Lord Mayors feeling completely at ease, safe and comfortable when John was in charge because I cannot

recall there ever being an issue – I am sure there were and Councillor Blake has mentioned perhaps we do not want him to write his memoirs – I am sure there were loads of incidents but you never knew. You never knew, everything went smoothly because John was the ultimate professional, and is the ultimate professional.

Organisations outside of this place have all been absolutely amazed at the professionalism and the dedication he has shown over all these years. In fact, it was two people from organisations, one in my ward and one in Harewood Ward, who told me John was retiring before anybody in the Council told me, in both cases expressing the wish for a long and happy retirement but also what a pleasure it had been to have John there at their events with the Lord Mayor or the Deputy over all those years.

John, you go with the thanks of the city for a job very, very well done. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for those comments, Councillor Carter. Can I now call on Councillor Golton, please.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, Chairman.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Mr Chairman. It sounds much more democratic! That is the kind of *faux pas* that John Wilson would have made sure I would not commit if I was in your position.

We are going to get repetitive because everybody appreciates the same qualities from John Wilson and they are that he was a prime ambassador for the city of Leeds. Even though he was always two steps behind that person that was officially our ambassador and had been endorsed by us, he has put in the commitment over the years and has made sure, as Councillor Carter said, no-one put a foot wrong.

We do know, though, there have been some very high maintenance characters who have been in the top office in the city (*laughter*) and the level of risk management that John has given the city we need to be very grateful for, because we could have had much worse headlines than we have done!

One thing that you do get from John, though, I do not think many of us actually know very much about his private life because it was never about him. It has always been about the city and you will always put the city first and he never shows any outward personal emotion. You are always there to be the calm presence which means everybody else is able to get their job done in the way that they should.

For all those years that you have done that you deserve to be rewarded and I hope that the thanks and the applause that you have from this Chamber today will be enough for you, so far anyway. I hope you get recognised further but I can assure you it is all heartfelt from whoever is in this Chamber. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Golton. Councillor Leadley, please.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Mr Deputy Chairman, it is at times like this that you find out who really runs Leeds City Council. (*laughter*) We have been asked to say a

few words about the retirement of John Wilson but not about Nigel Richardson or Peter Marrington (*laughter*) or even Alan Gay, though he will not be going until March after the Budget figures are gathered safely in.

Some folk should not be allowed to retire. Life is much easier and simpler if they carry on for ever and John Wilson is one of those. They should be sent every year to Leeds Infirmary for the replacement of any worn parts to make them last a bit longer. (*laughter*)

John has been part of the Lord Mayoral team at least as long as I have been on the City Council. At Civic events he always has a perfect knowledge of protocol and precedence, who should stand where, what the pecking order of the day should be, who should kowtow to whom. When I was Mayor of Morley he always knew the difference between a Mayoral visit to Leeds and a Lord Mayoral visit to Morley.

Once when I was waiting at a bus stop on Dewsbury Road opposite the Woodman Inn near the southern end of the White Rose shopping centre, a large car came to a halt – it was the Lord Mayoral limousine which gave me a lift home, though I had to make do without blaring sirens or a motor cycle escort.

Everyone should wish John a happy and long retirement and we must be sure to replace him properly – firstly by having him teach someone to announce “Lord Mayor” in that resounding tone that he always uses. Many of our citizens like the ceremonial side of the City Council and look forward to what might be the only visit that they or their organisation might ever have from a Lord Mayor. We must not throw all that away in a narrow and mean spirited dash for penny-pinching economy or be driven by sour faced misers whingeing in the local press about every crust and biscuit given away by way of Civic hospitality.

Thank you, my Deputy Chairman, and I am sure we will all wish John a long and happy retirement. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Tom. Can I call on Councillor Blackburn, David, please.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Chair. First of all, John, have a lovely retirement. It is not only helping Lord Mayors, it is helping Group Leaders so that we do not make total fools of ourselves when we are all lined up, what order we go in and that, and without him I do not know what we are going to do.

I can remember a visit by Princess Anne to my ward and it was I think Malcolm Bedford was Lord Mayor at the time. My other ward colleague, who shall remain nameless, was going to stridently walk forward to Princess Anne until he stood in the way, I imagine like MI5 jumping on top of our colleague there! He saved the day there.

John is great. He seems to know everything about what protocol to do and everything and keeps us all in order, no matter how disorganised we might all be. I do not know what we are going to do without him but have a really good retirement, John. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: And there we have it. John Wilson – a legend in his own time! I know everyone of you in this Chamber would dearly love to stand on your feet and speak about their experience with John but, alas, that is not possible. We have, I think, just created a new record for announcements – we are nearly 28 minutes into the Council meeting and we are just finishing them now.

Thank you, John, and I am sure we will see you around the city.

ITEM 1 - MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 29th JUNE 2016

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we go to the agenda than? Can I direct you to Item 1, Minutes of the Meeting held 29th June 2016. Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can I call for a vote on those Minutes? (*A vote was taken*) That is CARRIED.

ITEM 2 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we go to Item 2, Declarations of Interest. Can I invite any Members who have a discloseable pecuniary interest to make it at this juncture. I see no declarations.

ITEM 3 – COMMUNICATIONS

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we go to Item 3, the Chief Executive, Communications.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: None, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Tom!

ITEM 4 – DEPUTATIONS

THE CHAIRMAN: Item 4, we are on to Deputations.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Thank you, Chair. To report there are four Deputations: a group of students regarding student safety in Leeds; a group concerned about the sale of puppies in Leeds; a group wanting to raise awareness of childhood cancer; and a group concerned about the general degradation of the Mabgate area.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Tom. Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we have a vote? (*A vote was taken*) That is clearly CARRIED. Can we receive the first Deputation.

DEPUTATION ONE – STUDENT SAFETY IN LEEDS

THE CHAIRMAN: 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 A COUSENS: Lord Mayor and Members of the Council, my name is Amy Cousens; I am joined by Sarah Gillborn, who is the Postgraduate Representative at Leeds Beckett University; Emma Healy, who is the Equality and Diversity Officer at Leeds University; and Kai De Gennaro, who is the Leeds Beckett Trans and Non-Binary Representative.

We soon approach the time when new students will be entering our city ready for new lives and new adventures. However for many students it is the start of an incredibly dangerous time, a time in which one in seven women students will be raped and two thirds will be sexually harassed throughout their university experience. We come here as a voice for women and feminine identifying students and members of this city who want to enjoy our time at university and nights out in safety without the fear and reality of being groped and grabbed at in clubs, hounded and harassed in bars and exposed to and cat called around university buildings. We, like so many others, have had enough.

A regular night usually involves having your private areas touched or groped, it usually means having to shrug off a man who will not leave you alone, being met with a blank face when telling a bouncer or member of staff that someone keeps touching and verbally harassing you, feeling constantly on guard or uncomfortable. These things are so frequent they are the mundane and something that people have to put up with if we want to go out. We are here because we should not have to put up with these things. We do not ask for or encourage these acts of abuse by our behaviour or what we wear. Our drinking and our dresses are not the problem. The problem, which is so visible on campus, is a culture of laddism, trivialised rape and of sexism.

At our respective universities deputation members have worked hard to try to dispel the idea that women and feminine presenting people need to be more vigilant on nights out, guard our drinks, wear tights under that skirt, do not walk alone at night – advice which puts all of the blame for rape and harassment back on to the victims. Not only does this follow an incredibly sexist line as male rape victims are never seen to be somehow enticing rape, it is also false advice. There is no statistical correlation between length of skirt and chance of getting raped.

The problem of high sexual assault that we are seeing in places embedded with a university culture such as Leeds, and particularly clubs in Leeds, is what many researchers have described as an epidemic of rape and sexual harassment, coming

from a societal wide culture in which the lines between consensual sex and rape are blurred and rape is increasingly trivialised.

As people who lead consent workshops at our universities, which aim to educate all students as to what consent is, we know how far the lines are blurred. It is a widely held belief by students that it is okay to have sex with somebody whilst they are drunk, in fact it is a common practice, often played down by calling it ‘taking advantage of someone’, when it is rape. This coming academic year will see more women getting verbally or physically sexual harassed.

A lot of this culture is down to myths about rape and lack of education. Education on consent is a necessity, not only to educate students as to the correct boundaries of consent and to work to dispel rape culture on campus, but also because many students are not aware of services or reporting procedures. NUS found that three-fifths of the students interviewed in their study did not know their own university’s reporting procedures or where they could go for help.

In a city where we have three universities, many colleges and thousands of students and young people wanting to go out, consent workshops are not enough. We need consent education throughout our city. We believe education is the key to prevention and to increased reporting and getting repeat perpetrators off of our streets. We believe that education enforced through a number of different angles could create a culture in Leeds whereby people know consent and take it seriously but also where people are correctly punished for their crimes to bring the justice to victims that is sorely lacking in the UK as a whole as only six percent of reported rapes end in a criminal conviction.

In order to protect those of us who are suffering disproportionate harassment and assault we need measures in place to attempt to tackle these things. We cannot stand by when we know the numbers of men and women who will come into our city and face assault year on year.

Therefore call for the following things, and that Leeds City Council uses its powers where possible in order that:

There is consent education in main bars and clubs in Leeds City centre by clearly displayed consent posters with consent knowledge and places of support;

Also, we call for members of staff in bars and clubs to be briefed on consent and members of staff to take reports seriously and to act on them.

Generally what we are asking for is non-binary and women’s safety seriously and to act on it so that we can have a safer and more equal Leeds.

Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Can I call Councillor Ogilvie now, please.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: Can I move that the matter be referred to the Director of Environment and Housing for consideration in consultation with the relevant Executive Member.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Councillor Latty.

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

THE CHAIRMAN: Can I call for the vote that this be referred to the relevant committee. *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED.

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

MS A COUSENS: Thank you.

DEPUTATION TWO – SALE OF PUPPIES IN LEEDS

THE CHAIRMAN: 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 yourself and your colleague.

MR A MATHAI: Chairman and Members of Council, my name is Aran Mathai and this is Rachel Mathai and we are here to talk about the sale of puppies in pet shops in Leeds.

A recent Panorama documentary raised concerns about the sale of puppies from cruel puppy farms in Leeds and elsewhere. In addition, Look North has recently brought this issue to the public's attention.

The breeding dogs on puppy farms has been shown to involve keeping dogs in windowless sheds without heating or lighting. These dogs often end up being sold in pet shops and other third-party dealers. Evidence shows that puppies bought from pet shops are often ill and dying.

The problem arises as the end purchaser cannot see the conditions the dogs are bred in or the puppies with their mothers. This is always the case with any pet shop or third party dealer.

The Government and RSPCA state that you should never buy a puppy without seeing the puppy with its mother, yet this is not possible at pet shops and other third-party dealers. More reputable breeders do not need to sell their puppies via third-party dealers; rather they sell directly to the public.

According to the Kennel Club survey, 20% of puppies, which is four times more than the average when bought from pet shops and online dealers suffer from parvovirus, which is often a fatal disease which can cost up to £4,000 to treat. According to research conducted on behalf of the Kennel Club, one in five pups bought online or via pet shops need long-term veterinary care or die within six months of being purchased.

What can be done about this? Neither pet shops nor online dealers should be allowed to sell puppies as this does not allow the end purchaser to see the puppies with their mother, as the Government says they should. We therefore ask Leeds City Council to end the sale of puppies in pet shops and other third party dealers in Leeds.

Whilst this is our aspiration, and we believe a feasible one based on Government guidance, we recognise this may not be the view of the Council. Therefore, in the alternative, we suggest that Leeds City Council adopts a robust licensing regime in line with that already used by Swindon Borough Council – who are an example of Best Practice in this area.

Swindon Borough Council has 16 requirements which are applied specifically to the sale of puppies and kittens in pet shops and other third-party dealers. The most notable of these requirements is that no dog shall be sourced from a breeder whose dogs are kept at a location more than 45 miles distance from the pet shop holding the pet shop licence.

This condition, if imposed by Leeds City Council, would put Leeds' pet shops out of reach of some of the worst UK puppy farms, for example, those based in Wales and Northern Ireland where many puppies sold in Leeds originate.

Therefore we would be grateful if the Council would use all powers at their disposal to ensure the end of the sale of puppies in pet shops in Leeds or, in the alternative, implement vigorous licensing conditions for the sale of puppies in pet shops.

Thank you for your time and consideration. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your speech today. Can I now call on Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I move that the matter be referred to the Director of Environment and Housing for consideration in consultation with the relevant Executive Member.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I now call for the vote from Members. *(A vote was taken)* That is clearly CARRIED unanimously.

Can I thank you for coming to today's meeting. Officers from the relevant department will be in contact with you in due course. Good afternoon and thank you once again for bringing this issue to the Council.

MR A MATHAI: Thank you. *(Applause)*

DEPUTATION THREE – RAISING AWARENESS OF CHILDHOOD CANCER

THE CHAIRMAN: 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 introduce yourself and your companion. Thank you.

MS S BUCKLEY: Dear Chair and Members of the Council, may I introduce Rachel Marshall and myself, Sarah Buckley. We are mums and we are mums of boys who died from cancer, Harry when he was six and Oliver when he was four.

We are here to represent the Glow Gold September: Childhood Cancer Awareness Campaign. I am a part of a national group of parents who have come together with the backing and support of many well known charities nationally and locally including Clic Sargent, CCLG and Candlelighters.

Our aim is to ensure the colour gold becomes associated with childhood cancer, and our awareness month September, our aim being that with increased awareness of childhood cancer comes greater awareness of the early signs and symptoms, earlier diagnosis, increased research, kinder more targeted therapy and ultimately a change in the prognosis for kids diagnosed with childhood cancer.

Be Childhood Cancer Aware is a charity that has produced *these* cards that give the signs and symptoms of childhood cancer. They are outside in the foyer if you want a copy. My aim with your help is to have these cards placed in Leeds City Council-run children's centres, libraries, leisure centres and other community facilities and could I please ask Councillors to ask GP surgeries to have them and spread the word to their constituents. These cards need to be displayed alongside those giving information around the signs and symptoms of meningitis and septicaemia.

So why am I so passionate about this campaign? The simple answer is that cancer has turned our lives upside down. Before September 2011 I had two healthy little boys, Harry age four and Callum age two. When Harry began getting night sweats he became withdrawn and he began to get tired and irritable. Then, on October 10th 2011, he awoke with pain in his leg, there was no rhyme or reason, so I told him he had cramp and he had to go to nursery.

The pain continued though and we went to Minor Injuries and they checked him out but nothing was identified. A week later his pain had become intermittent and switched between each leg and he developed a temperature, so we went to A&E. He was diagnosed with a virus. However, the pain continued in his legs and also developed in his abdomen. Another week passed and we went to the GP and they called an ambulance as they suspected he had an appendicitis.

The hospital did an X-ray on his abdomen but they refused to do an ultrasound. They identified that he had constipation and inflamed lymph nodes that caused the pain. We were sent home with Lactulose and was told the pain would soon go but it did not go and Harry was in acute pain day and night. He could not sleep and he just laid on the sofa, disinterested in his latest Lego set. He was not eating and he lost weight. Nobody would listen. I cried down the phone to the Health Visitor, to the GP receptionist, but I could not get a home visit. I felt helpless, neurotic and a shadow of my former self. I had never been a mother to take her children frequently to the GP. I thought I should have been listened to. My son was a far cry from the boisterous boy I had weeks earlier.

On 11th of the 11th 2011 I carried a lifeless Harry into the doctor's. We were immediately told to take him to A&E. This time we went to LGI. 24 hours later, Harry had had not one but two ultrasounds which identified a massive tumour in his tummy. This is what caused him the pain, it was not a virus at all. Harry was diagnosed with stage 4 high risk Neuroblastoma cancer. He had the worst kind of cancer, the odds of survival were stacked against him. The cancer had travelled to his bones and bone marrow and was the cause of the pain in his legs.

We commenced a journey of treatment which lasted 16 months. Harry had end of treatment tests in March 2013, but these devastatingly identified that the cancer was back, and he had three new hotspots in his bones. Harry became palliative care from that moment until the day he died two-and-a-half years after diagnosis, in April 2014 and he was aged six.

I am telling you all of this because misdiagnosis of childhood cancer is not rare. I have spoken to so many parents who were told their children had a virus, when actually the cancer was being allowed to grow silently. I have listened to so many histories of scans not being undertaken and children sent home with bottles of Lactulose to treat constipation that in reality was a tumour. I will always wonder if Harry had have had an ultrasound when an appendicitis was suspected and not just an X-ray whether this would have changed his prognosis.

4000 young people, teenagers and children get diagnosed with cancer in the UK every year. This means eleven new cases every day. Statistically four of those cases will end in death.

Childhood cancer is a taboo subject; few want to know it exists. We must break the taboo and put childhood cancer on the map and make paediatricians aware of this.

Together we can make a difference. Let us get the colour gold up there and as synonymous as pink is with breast cancer. Let us get childhood cancer on the map. Please take a ribbon which are out on the foyer and with your help we can ensure these cards too can be distributed to the relevant places within Leeds City Council and ensure our community becomes aware of the signs and symptoms of childhood cancer. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you and Rachel, a very brave speech. Thank you for bringing that before the Council. Can I call on Councillor Ogilvie now, please.

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

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Latty.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can I call for a vote from Members to support that. *(A vote was taken)* That is unanimous. 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 and thank you once again for sharing that with us. I know it will not have been easy for you. Thank you.

MS S BUCKLEY: Thank you. *(Applause)*

DEPUTATION FOUR – DEGRADATION OF THE MABGATE AREA

THE CHAIRMAN: 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 A BRESLIN: Chair and Members of Council, my name is Andrew Breslin. I have an apartment in Mabgate and I am part of a deputation of residents representing the Mabgate district of Leeds. I have with me Jenny Wan, Anya Shante and Mikhail Dezeski.

For the past two years we have been complaining about a lack of policing, antisocial behaviour, out of control traffic, litter, fly tipping, pollution and a general neglect that has made Mabgate an unsafe neighbourhood.

The Police told us that, while sympathetic to our plight, they were too underfunded to do anything and that, "Mabgate is just not a priority area."

Entertainment Licensing reported that all the premises that we identified as turning out noisy gangs at between three and five o'clock in the morning were "very quiet indeed." It conducted its survey at 10.32pm.

Traffic Management conducted a survey at the Regent Street traffic lights that concluded there were no traffic problems in the Mabgate area. During a typical night we residents are awakened several times during the night, usually between the early hours of 3.00 and 5.00am by shouting, fighting, the sound of breaking glass, the screech of tyres from cars driven at high speed, the roar of HGVs using Skinner Lane as a rat run. In the past year alone we have witnessed three serious traffic accidents outside the Twenty Twenty apartment block on Skinner Lane as well as a hate crime on our doorstep last month.

Mabgate has a serious problem that Leeds is ignoring. Could this be because Mabgate District does not have its own Parish Council? We are not anti-Council. Indeed, we have worked with our City Councillor, Elizabeth Nash. She has been helpful to us but we realise that there is a limit to what she can do alone. What is needed is the full commitment of the Council.

In the Mabgate Development Framework of 2007 it is stated:

"The City Council wants to ensure that the uniqueness of the Mabgate area is retained by encouraging positive development"

All good, aspirational stuff, so why has nothing been done in the last decade?

There is a house on Mabgate with a plaque declaring that it won an award for architectural design in 2007. This house is now empty, deteriorating and daubed with graffiti. Mabgate can boast that it has four listed buildings and several others worthy of listing, yet all but two are in a state of disrepair. Litter and weeds grow on the streets of Mabgate. Its roads are in need of repair and its pavements are broken.

That Mabgate is a forgotten and neglected district of Leeds can be illustrated best by the Council resurfacing Skinner Lane - the resurfacing stopped at the boundary of Mabgate.

The Government's austerity policy dictates that Local Authorities make cuts, but there are only so many cuts you can make before you end up with nothing, and nothing comes of nothing. Positive outcomes are rarely achieved by doing nothing. Success

usually follows an investment in a unique asset or opportunity. Mabgate represents both.

Mabgate is the arts endeavour hub of Leeds. At least eight art organisations operate in the area. Mabgate is not dissimilar to Chelsea in post war London or Greenwich Village in 1960s New York. Money follows art. Leeds City Council must see that, if invested in, it has a resource that could become a more valuable asset than, say, The Calls – once also a run-down and neglected area of Leeds.

Immediately, what we need are actions to stop the rot.

We residents ask Leeds City Council to recognise the Mabgate area; close down late night unlicensed drinking dens; approve funding for policing of the area between the hours of 3.00 and 5.00 in the morning; implement traffic calming measures, a roundabout at the junction of Skinner Lane and Mabgate is needed urgently; provide some green space for kids to play; and improve the general environment of the area. We also ask the Council to honour its commitments as set out in the 2007 Mabgate Development Framework...

THE CHAIRMAN: Could you finish in a sentence, please.

MR A BRESLIN: ...not least because, if Leeds is aspiring to be the European City of Culture, the environment of Mabgate, an important and historic part of the city centre, needs to be addressed. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your speech today. I now call on Councillor Adam Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I move that the matter be referred to the Director of City Developments and the Director of Environment and Housing for consideration in consultation with the relevant Executive Member.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Ogilvie. Councillor Latty, please.

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: I second that, Lord Mayor.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Can I call for the vote for that course of action, please? *(A vote was taken)* **CARRIED.**

Thank you for coming in to today's meeting. Officers from the relevant department will be in contact with you in due course. Thank you once again and we are grateful that you bring these issues before the Council.

MR A BRESLIN: Thank you Chair and Members of Council. *(Applause)*

ITEM 5 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD – LDF AIRE VALLEY LEEDS AREA ACTION PLAN SUBMISSION

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we move on to Item 5, Recommendations of the Executive Board. Councillor Richard Lewis, please.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Chair. In moving the Draft Aire Valley Action Plan and Sustainability Report for approval before it is submitted to the Secretary of State, I would first off like to thank all the officers who have been involved in a very lengthy process in the preparation of this document and, indeed, to all those Members who have played a part in its preparation, particularly Development Plan Panel Members.

This is a very important document that has implications for all of us across the city. This is a strategic growth area that brings benefits to the whole city. It includes the HS2 site, it includes Hunslet Riverside, South Bank, so you can see the kind of areas that it includes.

It offers us the possibility of potential for considerable contribution to our housing supply. That in itself is a major benefit. The other main contributions I would have to say are in terms of the Enterprise Zone, which offers us the potential for massive job growth and prosperity for the city. Its proximity to deprived communities, and I think one concern that has been expressed by Members over the years has been how some of our deprived areas in the south and east of the city have not had a focus in terms of jobs for the population. It offers the potential for housing regeneration in neighbouring areas and overall huge benefits to the city.

In doing so, it is in many ways, I will not call it a blank piece of paper because obviously if there is an area that has been developed over many years and the previous uses have come to an end and we are currently, whenever we build anything there, having to go back and remediate it to create a potential site. What it does offer is the opportunity for new green spaces, for connective green spaces. In many ways it offers a blueprint for the rest of the city.

I would make just one comment on NGT. NGT is often seen through the prism of North Leeds. Actually to me the big benefits for NGT could have been in this area and I think that is where we have the real loss and we do have to look for alternative public transport options for the area. I think none of them, I fear, will prove as good as NGT would have been, so that is a missed opportunity.

Can I finally just again say to everybody who had contributed thanks for your contributions; please, if you have not give this document full consideration in your own time and I heartily recommend it to the Council. Thank you, Chair. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Lewis. Councillor Ogilvie, please.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Can I call on Councillor Leadley to comment, please.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Mr Deputy Chairman, Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan is perhaps the Cinderella of the Local Development Framework. Except for the city end around the Armouries it covers some of the least glamorous parts of the Leeds Metropolitan District, for the most part being a low-lying sweep of flat and bleak land with a recent history of open cast coal mining, land fill, redundant industries, incurable permanent flooding and sewage treatment, though in outline it

looks like a giant sea turtle swimming majestically south-eastwards with the intention of devouring Castleford.

There has been some jockeying for position by rival landowners but not much interest from the chattering classes in the leafier suburbs. Officers have ploughed lonely and largely peaceful furrows here for ten or twelve years and Development Plans Panel has played a useful part. In the early days I remember arguing against having housing allocations in Zone 2 and Zone 3 flood risk areas and being supported in that in particular by Councillor Graham Latty. I think later events have shown that such a policy was needed.

A lot of infrastructure will have to be paid for by someone to make the plan work. Large projects will have to move forward quite quickly, otherwise we shall end up with small enclaves and outliers of new development more or less cut off from everything else.

The main criticism of the action plan is that it is a plan within a plan, like Cold War Berlin, a separate piece surrounded by what is supposed to be the unified whole of the Leeds Local Development Framework. If the plan does work it will take a lot of pressure off urban green spaces and green belt elsewhere so it is in the interests of all to take note of the action plan, support it and hope that its tremendous promise will be fulfilled. Thank you, Mr Deputy Chairman. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Councillor Golton, please.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Chair. Yes, this is a very integral part of Leeds's future, the Aire Valley, and as Councillor Lewis pointed out, it is a crucible within which the city can create, as he has just said, a blueprint for the rest of the city.

It is an ambitious project, it was a long time coming, it did involve quite a lot of negotiation with Central Government if nothing else to get the East Leeds Link Road in and then to negotiate the special powers, but we might be in danger of losing some of the opportunities that Councillor Lewis was alluding to.

Some of the successes that we have got so far, the incinerator has been built down there. That is now saving the Council £7m a year. If we do not actually transfer some of that money into investing in further recycling we would have a real lost opportunity and there will not be that benefit for the rest of the city who might then be able to benefit from enhanced recycling services.

I note that in the newspaper today it talks about the Knostrop Sewage Works which were also quite integral to that and how they are going to have a £72m anaerobic digestion unit in there. That is also a real opportunity for us as a Council to be talking to Yorkshire Water to ensure that there might be the potential for use some of our food waste in the city to generate power.

What they talk about in the paper today is that they might be able to generate enough power to look after 8,000 homes – I think it was 8,000 homes. Quite a significant number. We could also, through our own waste being recycled through the same facility, perhaps fuel our own vehicles so that they are also more environmentally friendly. There is a lot of joining up that we could do that perhaps at the moment we are not doing in the way that we should be.

Which brings us also to a debate that we are going to have later on today. We do want this to be a real focus of job creation in the city but we do need them to be the right jobs and let us hope that the Aire Valley Plan will actually produce more high quality jobs. At the moment I believe we are expecting about 38% of them to be low skilled jobs and we should be trying to up that percentage perhaps and we will debate that later on in the Amazon debate.

Finally, I note that we are committing to significant investment in Park and Ride in this area, which is a good thing – a very good thing – but let us not put all of our eggs in one basket and let us think about the other parts of the city that have also been waiting a very long time for the NGT payback, and I think about the Stourton Park and Ride site and I think about the Park and Ride site that was proposed for the north-west of the city as well. Can we please not just go for the easy wins like we can in the Aire Valley but also try and make sure that that Park and Ride is a network that the entire city can benefit from. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Golton. Can I call on Councillor Richard Lewis to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thanks, Chair. I thought there would be a few more after that! I think the lack of comment is actually indicative of the general feeling about this plan and I think Tom's comments were - I never expected any of the Morley-ites to say something nice to me, so it was quite a pleasure to hear your words and thanks for reminding us that it has been going on for so long. We go back to 2005 for the gestation of this.

In terms of what Stewart was talking about we are certainly looking towards new technology in terms of compressed natural gas stations, the District Heating Schemes, the place where they will start will be in the Aire Valley and they will bring benefits to all of us. There will be huge technological advances that we see in the city that actually two or three years ago we could not have dreamed of and they will happen here.

I do not want to go through the debate that we will have later on about Amazon but I think one of the problems we face in the development of the Aire Valley has actually been the economic cycle and where we have huge ambitions I think for what we would all describe as better jobs and better quality jobs. The recession actually meant that we had to downgrade our ambitions at a certain point but I think our real ambition still remains for this to be an area where there are a large number of people in very highly skilled jobs that offer real opportunities for people and not just jobs alone.

Thank you all for your comments and again I commend to Council.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Lewis. Can I call for the vote, please? *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

ITEM 6 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE –
LICENSING ACT 2003 STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we now move to Item 6 and may I call on Councillor Selby to move the recommendations of the Licensing Committee.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: Chair, I formally move the recommendations in Item 6 and look forward to hearing such comments as Members wish to make.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can I call on Councillor Ogilvie, please, to second.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Councillor Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Chair, actually I am going to speak about something in your ward, in Armley Town Street, the licensing arrangements there.

Lots and lots of people in my ward go shopping in Armley Town Street – unfortunately not as many as once did and it is something we have tried to do to get them back into Town Street over the years, but I think this is welcome. As I say, it is an Armley matter and I will let Armley Members talk on it but certainly from a neighbouring ward we welcome it. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, David, and I am sure Armley Members will do that. Can I call on Councillor Alice Smart, please.

COUNCILLOR SMART: My Lord Mayor, since being elected to represent Armley, the most common complaints I receive relate to Armley Town Street. For those of you who do not know the area, Armley Town Street is the main shopping area in Armley. It is the heart and soul of the community and features a number of thriving independent businesses, one of the best libraries and community hubs in the city and was home to last month's successful Armley Festival.

It also has a number of very serious social problems including street drinking, antisocial behaviour and tensions between different cultural communities. Twelve months ago a community action group called All Together Armley was set up following a consultation seeking residents' views on Armley Town Street, which was conducted by the three ward Members and the local MP. We received almost a thousand responses to this consultation and street drinking and the antisocial behaviour that goes alongside it were identified as being the top priority. All Together Armley then took on the difficult task of trying to reduce street drinking on Armley Town Street.

In the survey residents complained about large groups of street drinkers; residents felt intimidated and the area was becoming a no-go zone. The number of off licences opening in Armley has increased in recent years and the police have identified several off licences in the area that sell strong, cheap alcohol, as particularly contributing to the problem. This is leading to an increase in antisocial behaviour, making the lives of nearby residents a misery and putting people off shopping in the area.

It is also worth noting the wider problem of alcoholism in Armley. Armley has one of the highest levels of alcoholism in the city and also has some of the highest reported incidents of domestic violence and suicide – two social problems which are closely related to alcoholism.

We desperately need a Cumulative Impact Policy to ensure that no new off licences open in Armley. We know that local people support this initiative because of the results of a questionnaire which was distributed to local residents and businesses at the beginning of this year. This clearly backed the need for a Cumulative Impact Policy and demonstrated that the proposed area of Armley Town Street and Branch Road was the right one.

In addition to the campaign for a Cumulative Impact Policy, there is more work going on to tackle street drinking and alcoholism. There is no silver bullet to tackle the issue of street drinking. Of course we also need to tackle the root causes of drinking and help people get their lives back on track through treatment and support. Measures like taking offenders to court or preventing further off licences through the Cumulative Impact Policy will not fix the problem overnight but they will certainly help reduce this very serious problem.

It is for all those reasons that I am urging every Member of Council to approve this recommendation and help us continue changing Armley Town Street for the better. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Alice. Can I call on Councillor Lowe, Alison, please.

COUNCILLOR LOWE: Thank you, Chair. I am not going to repeat anything that Alice has said. Town Street is a fabulous part of Leeds, it has contributed for hundreds and hundreds of years to the success of our fabulous city and I think that the impact of Ermelai, as it was called in medieval times, cannot be under-estimated.

Armley is really all of us in this room because it is part of our history and we should be really proud of it, and I think that the introduction of this Cumulative Impact Policy is a massive vote of thanks to Armley for all that it is has contributed to this city over hundreds of years and it is a long time coming because I have been to Licensing Committee after Licensing Committee after Licensing Committee begging, begging, begging for no more licenses for Town Street and finally we now have the Cumulative Impact Policy which will mean that people will not automatically have the right to open more off licences on Armley and the people of Armley thank you because they are fed up of the easy access of alcohol which has really blighted Town Street and blighted many people's lives.

Thank you on behalf of the people of Armley for listening, for acting and for showing them that you care about Armley and about the contribution it has made and continues to make every day to the success of our great city.

I think it is also important to mention today the terrible racist incident that happened on Armley Town Street last weekend. As Councillors we want to apologise to the Polish community and also to comment on the fact that we recognise that Polish people have been a massive contribution to the success of the whole of the UK for hundreds of years. *(hear, hear) (Applause)* We know that Polish people fought and died alongside British and other Commonwealth countries and we thank them for their contribution. We thank them that they choose to come and live and work and pay taxes in this country. No-one wants Polish people to feel that Armley or the city of Leeds is not a welcoming place. This is your home if you choose to make it so.

We welcome you, we will protect you and we will not condone violence, racism or discrimination of any kind. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Alison. Councillor Selby, please, to sum up.

COUNCILLOR SELBY: Thank you Deputy Chairman, I think is the correct term. To me it is always Lord Mayor.

Can I first of all take this opportunity of drawing to Members' attention the criteria that is set out in the papers for Community (*sic*) Impact Policies because it is a very high task that we as the Licensing Committee have to face to introduce such a policy in particular areas of the city. It has to be evidence based. We cannot just slap a policy on in a particular area merely because one or two people are concerned.

What I would like to do is to take this opportunity of congratulating the Armley Councillors and Member of Parliament, Rachel Reeves, for the excellent work that they have done both in terms of organising the survey into working with the community to produce the evidence that has enabled the Licensing Committee to say yes, there was a strong case for a CIP area to be introduced into Armley. If Members have any concerns about problems in their own area, problems with drinking, again it has to be on evidence base but, as I say, the excellent work of the three Armley Councillors justifies this recommendation.

In the course of the work on this policy there was also noticed a minor problem so far as the City Centre CIP is concerned and so far as that is concerned that problem has hopefully been resolved.

I commend this report to all Members of Council. Yet again I can congratulate their Member of Parliament and the three Councillors working together, working for the community, and I urge every Member to support this report. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Selby. I now call for the vote. (*A vote was taken*) That is clearly CARRIED. Thank you.

ITEM 7 – REPORT ON AMENDMENTS TO THE EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we go to Item 7, Report on Amendments to the Executive Arrangements. Councillor Ogilvie.

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

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Catherine Dobson.

COUNCILLOR C DOBSON: I second, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Catherine. Can I call for the vote? (*A vote was taken*) That is clearly CARRIED. Thank you.

ITEM 8 – REPORT – COMMUNITY COMMITTEES ANNUAL REPORT

THE CHAIRMAN: Moving on, Item 8, Report – Community Committees Annual Report. Can I call on Councillor Coupar, please.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Yes, thank you, Chair. I am really pleased to be able to move the Leeds Community Committee Annual Report this afternoon. Community Committees have been making a real difference to the lives of people in Leeds over the last two years. Especially at a time when Local Authority budgets are stretched further than ever, finding local solutions to serious issues in our communities is becoming more and more important. The committees bring together a range of local voices meaning that those who are best placed to do so are providing the solutions to local concerns.

Through the Community Committees 423 projects were supported across the city over the last year. The projects that we all support are those where the work would not have otherwise taken place, meaning that we are providing real added value for all our communities. In supporting these projects we are able to make our money stretch further. Each committee has a dedicated budget for Wellbeing and Youth Activities Funds. Committees have also used their local knowledge to find funding streams and to secure matched funding.

Over the last year the total amount of money put forward through our funds has almost doubled when matched funding is added to the equation. Each Community Committee has their own set of local priorities, allowing each group to support projects that best meet the needs of their local communities.

Looking over the projects that have been supported and are detailed in the report, it is clear that we are helping to tackle serious issues that affect residents across this city. Projects supported have helped to tackle problems including antisocial behaviour, social isolation, domestic violence and financial hardship.

The work of our Community Committees is being supported by the Breakthrough Project, strong communities benefiting from a strong city, which will help Leeds to maintain and nourish our cohesive and diverse communities.

The projects supported are ones which develop community capacity and pride, helping to generate a sense of belonging which encourages local residents to volunteer and themselves become involved. The work carried out by the Chairs, the Champions, the Area Leaders and their teams is much appreciated and I am sure that we are all grateful for their contributions.

It is also worth noting the important role that Community Committee Champions are playing in the running of our committees. Each Community Committee has a Champion for Children's Services, for Environment and Community Safety, for Employment, for Skills and Welfare and for Health and Wellbeing and Adult Social Care.

I am extremely proud of the work we are doing across Leeds and I am delighted to move this report. Thank you, Chair. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Coupar. I call on Councillor Ogilvie to second.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Can I call on Councillor Asghar Khan to comment, please.

COUNCILLOR KHAN: Chairman, fellow Councillors, it is impossible to do full justice to the work of our Community Committees in the short time available, so I am going to concentrate on just one example that sums up what we are about.

The project is called Community Action to Change Harehills, also known as CACH. The Harehills community faces many challenges. These include high rates of crime and antisocial behaviour and high levels of unemployment. Despite these challenges there are really strong community spirit and our Community Committee works hard to support had develop the great work of passionate local groups such as CACH.

CACH has been operating since 2011. Its goal is to improve Harehills and to help young people to have improved life chances. In 2012 CACH became a registered charity. It has developed a partnership with Hovingham Primary School, West Yorkshire Police and Leeds City Council. That partnership has provided to provide community, educational and sporting opportunities to hundreds of young people across Harehills. Over the last year the Inner East Community Committee has worked with CACH to find it a home in the heart of Harehills. We helped CACH to find a building in Hovingham Park which was donated by West Yorkshire Police on the land leased by the Council. We have also assisted with funds to revitalise the building and in June 2016 the Hovingham Hub was opened to the community.

Since then, CACH has used the new hub to continue its great work in the providing of opportunities to young people from diverse backgrounds. The local community also accesses the hub for a wide range of services. The Hovingham Hub is a fantastic example of the local organisations working together to provide a real benefit for their community. It is just one of many projects that our Inner East Community Committee has been able to support this year.

Chairman, I hope colleagues will agree that CACH is a brilliant practice example of working with local communities to achieve our ambition of making Leeds the best city to live in, to work in and to grow up in. Thank you, Chairman. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Khan. Can I call on Councillor Karen Bruce, please.

COUNCILLOR BRUCE: Thank you. I would just like to mention I am delighted that some familiar faces from Outer South Community Committee, some of our local Community Heroes, are on the front of the Annual Report which they will be pleased about.

I am really pleased to be able to take this opportunity to talk about everything the Outer South Community Committee has been doing over the last year. We work to improve our communities both by initiating and supporting local projects but also by ensuring city-wide projects can be delivered successfully in our local towns and villages.

One example is the support our committee has given the volunteer project Money Buddies, a group of committed residents who offer free, impartial, confidential and independent advice to the public about their finances. Work such as this is vitally important in the challenging financial context of the last few years. Wage growth has been persistently low since the financial crisis. Punishing welfare cuts have hit hardworking people and many of our most vulnerable citizens have also felt the pinch.

When some households turn to pay day loan companies they find that their debt problems are only exacerbated. This is when our Committee were really keen to support Leeds Money Buddies and they offer residents free one-to-one services. Support is given on everything from saving money to applying for grants to reporting illegal loan sharks, to negotiating with creditors.

They have also supported people in applying for accounts with our own Leeds Credit Union, a financial co-operative with 37,000 members that provides straightforward, affordable financial services. The total financial gains for residents in Outer South from using this service has added up to over £98,000. That is why our Community Committee approved nearly £2,000-worth of Wellbeing funding – well worth it to help support the delivery of the Money Buddies project across the local area. These are the kind of community led projects that our Committee loves to support.

Our aim is to create a strong economy and a compassionate city and local groups such as this are right on the front line of this work. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Bruce. I call on Councillor Javid Akhtar.

COUNCILLOR AKHTAR: Thank you, Deputy Chair and the Members of the Council. It gives me great pleasure to talk about the North West Inner Committee and I am proud to speak about many projects but, as colleagues have mentioned, within the three minutes' time period it only allows us to talk about certain projects. One of the particular projects I would like to talk about is the noise nuisance within the Headingley and Hyde Park area.

Members of the Council, you can understand when you have young families living in an area and you have students or any other individuals causing such mayhem with the loud music and banging noise and drinking and having street parties. What we decided in the North West Inner is that we will support a project from the Wellbeing funding and to have a single point contact officer working with the Antisocial Behaviour team and the other agencies. That has worked really well and has been welcomed by the many members of our communities in Hyde Park and Headingley. We are proud to have a record where people now can sleep in peace and in their own security and the children can go into school without a deprivation of sleep.

I really welcome the local democracy working from the grass roots, working from the bottom top and sending the message to people like us in this Chamber. Thank you very much to the Executive Member and the Council for providing us X amount of money so we can make life easier for our communities. Thank you very much and I hope that over the months and the years that we will continue to work extremely hard for our local people here in North West Inner. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Javid. Can I now call on Councillor Ritchie, please.

COUNCILLOR RITCHIE: Thank you, Chair. I am speaking on the Community Committee Annual Report as Chair of the Inner West Community Committee and I will start by thanking officers involved for all the hard work they put in to deliver the committees, as well as the hours spent behind the scenes with the associated bureaucracy and, most importantly, keeping this Chair in check.

Community Committee would not be successful without the political direction set by Councillor Blake and Exec Member Councillor Coupar alongside the commitment of all the elected members, particularly with their Champion roles.

The largely unseen work of the associated sub-groups and partnership meetings which members regularly attend, all contribute to our aims of delivering a strong economy and compassionate city. Alongside this important work the crucial aspect is how we actually engage with the community, harnessing that behind the scenes work to ensure our local residents participate, shape and support those aims.

The co-optees are a vital part of that, both directly involved in committee work and supplying community intelligence and feedback to assist in the delivery of positive community outcomes. One such example is the All Together Armley group, which Councillor Smart touched on, set up by the Armley ward members, residents and MP Rachel Reeves. The group was set up to improve the fortunes of Armley Town Street, which has been blighted by antisocial behaviour and problems including the fly tipping and graffiti.

The usual partnership routes were not solving the problem, therefore a community solution was needed. A ten point plan was set, having listened to residents' views, which brought partners to engage directly with residents to facilitate both short term and longer term improvements and, as we have heard, the CIP is just one of those.

The group was instrumental in the success of the revival of the Armley Festival which took place on a wonderful sunny August day – probably *the* wonderful sunny August day! People of all ages, backgrounds and nationalities mixed together enjoying the wide variety of stalls, music and inter-active displays from police, fire brigade and our armed forces. It also received the approval of Armley born playwright and author Alan Bennett, who wrote a supportive letter including his own memories of previous Armley Festivals.

The Festival, supported by the Community Committee and local businesses, in addition to the countless hours put in by the committed team of volunteers, really showcased the Armley community and much of what it has to offer. It was great to see the many local groups and organisations that exist and the encouragement for everyone to join in and be part of those groups.

All Together Armley now works in partnership with the Council and other agencies and with the support of local people will improve community cohesion and tackle antisocial behaviour on Armley Town Street. It demonstrates the real added value the Community Committees bring to our residents in Leeds. Thank you, Chair.
(Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Kevin. Can I call on Councillor Wadsworth, please. Paul.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Chair. I would like to comment on the work of the Outer North West Committee in the year 2015/16 and particularly the workshops that have taken place during that year.

One of the most popular ones – in fact the most popular one amongst the young people who come and members – is the Children’s and Young People’s Workshop, which this year was held at Horsforth School. Over 100 children attended from 22 schools and I think almost every Member attended as well. Members love to come to this because they love to engage. In previous years that it has been held there have been pictures of Members sitting on the floor with the children spending the money, which the children also enjoy. I think they enjoy the engagement with Members because they feel it is useful, but they also enjoy the fact that they can get the money of the Youth Activity Fund together and they can decide how much things are going to cost and how much they want – if they want a Breeze and it costs so much they can distribute it and then it is the job of the Children and Young People’s sub-group to actually deliver that, which is sometimes not as easy, as what young people want and what we can actually deliver can sometimes be some distance apart, but it does give young people an insight as to what we can afford as a Council as well. I think everybody enjoys the day and we all enjoy the lunch as well!

We also, hurriedly rearranged, I have to say, held a Transport Workshop on the Airport Masterplan because the consultation period for the airport was not in the best for the Community Committee cycle, but we had a presentation from the airport and then we had questions and a discussion afterwards and a meeting afterwards where we pulled together our comments and they were fed into the plan, which are hopefully there and we will take on board but you can never tell with these things – we may find out tomorrow at the Consultative Committee.

The other thing that has been ongoing for a while and is progressing is the Health and Wellbeing sub-group has identified an app – thanks to Councillor Latty who is very knowledgeable in these things because he is very into IT – and that is being developed and the app is so that Council employees and people like postmen, binmen, that sort of thing can go around and have this app on their phone and if they see what looks like a house with ivy growing over the windows and there might be an old or vulnerable person in there they can report that, and then other services can come in and act. That is progressing and currently being trialled. However, it will need some funding to take it further.

I just also would like to thank the staff of the Outer North West because they do do a wonderful job on our behalf. Thank you very much, Chair. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Paul. Can I call on Councillor Wilkinson now, please.

COUNCILLOR WILKINSON: Thank you, Chair. First of all I would like to thank my colleagues and officers or our management team for their work and involvement in the workings of the Outer North East Community Committee. Thanks also to the Champions and those members who volunteered to sit on the outside boards.

I am confident that we have made the best use of our limited Wellbeing funding helping worthwhile organisations such as Wetherby in Support of the Elderly, Maccare and Northcall. Examples of some of the other grant funding are Scarcroft

village playground, Shadwell Independent Library, Wetherby Christmas lights and the scheme designed to prevent illegal encampment of travellers.

The Youth Activity Fund has been wisely allocated to provide a series of activities for young people such as junior coaching and training, EPOS holiday activity programme, TEMPO FM Radio Academy, Olympic and Paralympic legacy archery programme and an autism support group.

However, there is one area of serious concern and this is the lack of meaningful involvement in the developing Neighbourhood Plans where non-elected members of steering groups are putting forward their proposals for consideration by Planning Officers without any elected Member input. This cannot be right and we would ask that steps be taken without delay to rectify this. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Can I call on Councillor David Blackburn, please.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Chair. I speak to the report on the Community Committees in relation to Outer West. I am Vice Chair, Councillor Coulson over there is the Chair but I have got to say it is probably one of the best committees I have ever sat on in that while we may be made up of three different parties you would not often think so because we tend to work together.

Councillor Coulson and myself and Councillor Wood are the Environmental sub-group and a few Sundays ago we were seen together in Pudsey Park launching a dog fouling strategy. As I said at a meeting the other day with Councillor Coulson, I do not know if it was us that was being used to scare the dogs not to foul but a fairly motley crew!

Also we are working within my ward to a major improvement on the Heights and Bawns and we are doing that with full Community Committee support and the Chair is fully involved.

I have got to say I think when we had the Area Committees things, I felt, were slightly better and I certainly say to the administration, give us some space, give us support and give us more to do because we can do a lot at local levels. The city is too big to be run centrally; it needs that local involvement. I feel we can go a lot further. That is not a criticism, that is just a piece of encouragement, really.

As I say, Outer West I have got to say whether they were Area Committee or Community Committee is about the best thing I have ever sat on because politics does not come into it. Common sense and commitment by all the nine Councillors is what it is about. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, David. Can I call on Councillor Golton now, please.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I am not quite so rosy in my estimation of Community Committees. There is a lot of good work happens on them but I am afraid there are some weaknesses within it which people do not seem to be willing to address.

Councillor Bruce, for instance, she has mentioned something called Money Buddies. This is an example – I am sure that you get it in other Community Committees –

where an organisation which is city-wide comes to a Community Committee and says “Can you give us a certain amount of money?” and they expect a certain amount of money from every part of the city so that they can carry on doing what they have always done. However, it is very hard to evaluate the work that they actually do in the area that they have taken money from. Money Buddies is an example where personally as a Councillor I have been quite frustrated to understand how many of my people have been helped so that perhaps I can endorse the service and make sure they get more money in the future. It is very hard to get that information out of there and the teams who are there in the Area Management staffing are not actually set up to do that, unfortunately.

Community Hubs. There are so many different departments that cover how a community works and how it is affected. The setting up of Community Hubs is not actually looked after by the same department, I do not think, or the primary purpose behind it is not always in that department so, for instance, there is Change in the Workplace which is looking at pulling out of certain offices which are in the outskirts of the city and concentrating staffing in other areas. I think it is called Joint Location and we are supposed to be doing it with our partners as well to make sure that we are cutting down the number of establishments that we have and that we are working together in smaller places.

Unfortunately for communities like mine in Rothwell it means that we are actually losing a major community asset and the money, if that asset is sold, will end up going elsewhere in the city to fund further Community Hubs elsewhere. That is not really good public engagement.

We have heard about Neighbourhood Planning, a really key part of our city’s future. We do not have any proper policy or process within Area Management to actually engage properly with Neighbourhood Planning and it means that things get made up as they go along. If Councillor Wilkinson is frustrated from one end of the spectrum, I am frustrated from the other. I think that Area Management should be doing far more to encourage and enable these neighbourhood fora to take off and to take on more responsibility, but also when they are actually doing this hard work on behalf of the community, when it comes down to developments being built they should not have the Community Infrastructure Levy which they have fought to enable to happen then taken over by a much larger organisation which has not got any strict accountability to them as a neighbourhood forum. That is the solution which has been brought forward by the Council.

I just plead, please can we develop our Community Committees and the teams behind them to give them some real encouragement and training to actually take on some of that community capacity building work which is needed to take all these programmes forward. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Stewart. Can I now call on Councillor Coupar to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Yes, thank you, Chair, and I would like Council to indulge me a little further in thanking again all the officers and the Area Leaders and all their community teams that do some excellent work out there in our communities. Unfortunately for Councillor Golton they cannot answer every single issue that he has within Rothwell all at the same time, but trust Councillor Golton to shoehorn a

different issue into an annual report that is praising the work of all our committees and all the elected Members who sit on those committees. Thank you, certainly on my own behalf and I would think on most of the Members of Council to all those who work hard in our community teams.

I have really enjoyed hearing about some of the work that has been carried out over the last twelve months by our Community Committees. The variety of work undertaken reflects the richness and diversity of Leeds. Hearing about the different projects it really hits home the range of challenges we face as a city and reinforces the need for focused community work dealing with the serious issues.

I would like to thank Councillor Khan for his work chairing the Inner East Committee. This year he has highlighted the work of CACH in Harehills and the opening of the new Hovingham Hub – what a triumph. This is really inspiring partnership work, bringing together different expertise to increase our ability to tackle antisocial behaviour and support the excellent work of CACH.

Councillor Bruce has also highlighted the support that the Outer South Community Committee, which she chairs, have been able to give to Money Buddies programme. It was great to hear about the proactive work and tackling noise nuisance, particular in student areas, that the Inner North West Community Committee has been carrying out. As the Executive Member with responsibility for Safer Leeds I understand the importance of tackling this kind of low level antisocial behaviour, and by tackling strong enforcement action we are providing a valuable service for communities in Leeds, so thank you for Councillor Akhtar for his role in chairing the committee and doing that work.

Thanks also to Councillor Ritchie for talking about his work as Chair of the Inner West Community Committee. I know that the All Together Armley group were instrumental in the success of the Armley Festival, and thank you for highlighting the importance again of community engagement and community action. It just shows to other Members of Council that might not realise it just what work can be done in the communities.

I would also like to thank those Chairs who have not actually spoken this afternoon, and I know what worthwhile work you all carry out and I would also like to thank again everyone who has worked hard throughout the year to make the communities a success across Leeds.

Thanks to Councillor Wadsworth for sharing the important work being done in workshops and also for your information about the app – the telephone app. We will all have to contact Councillor Latty about that! *(laughter)* Councillor Wilkinson, can I thank you for all the work that you do on behalf of your committee and for sharing the importance of how important it is that we fund things at a local level and use your priorities to do so.

Councillor Blackburn, thanks for actually sharing with us where cross-party working works well at a community level.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could you finish, Councillor Coupar?

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Yes. Thanks for that, so thank you, Chair, to everybody who had contributed this afternoon. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Coupar. I know call for the vote. *(A vote was taken)* CARRIED.

ITEM 9 – QUESTIONS

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we now move on to Item 9, Questions. As you know, we will continue for not more than the next 30 minutes.

The first question, Councillor Matthew Robinson, please.

COUNCILLOR M ROBINSON: Thanks, Deputy Chair. Will the Leader of Council take this opportunity to rule out a Leeds “congestion charge”?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Chair. Councillor Robinson, I think the answer is in two areas to consider here. Clearly all Members know that we are out engaging in consultation, conversation, with the whole of the city, involving as many people as we possibly can across the city including through Community Committees, as we have just had highlighted, asking for everyone to contribute towards the future direction of the Transport Strategy for the city and clearly it is a big moment for us and we have the opportunity of the £173m from the NGT scheme which we will obviously be looking at particularly local issues but also we need to be looking at how we can use this to pump prime some major additional investment that needs to come into the city to tackle the problems that we face and we will be working closely with Government on that.

Congestion is a very important part of those discussions, not only on our roads but on our railways as well and I think one of the most important things we need to consider in our response is connectivity for everyone trying to move around our city. I want to say that the development of the strategy does not include any plans or proposals for congestion charging. I might be wrong but I do not think there has been an enormous request from people who are responding to the consultation for us to introduce congestion charging.

The second part, and I think you might be alluding to this, is quite separately the Government along with the EU directive has identified Leeds as being at risk of breaching national air quality standards and we have to work along with four other cities in the country and London looking towards establishing clean air zones and how we actually deal with the problem of emissions in those areas. Fines for non-compliant commercial vehicles against the latest Euro 6 diesel standard could well form part of the response that we have to put in place.

We do not know yet the exact area of the clean air zone, we are waiting for guidance to come from Government and we will be bringing a report to Executive Board in February next year when we have got more clarification as to what we have to put in place.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Blake. Is there a supplementary, Matthew?

COUNCILLOR M ROBINSON: There is indeed, thank you, Deputy Chair. I echo the comments of the Leader of Council in seeking to find a transport solution that connects all the city and looks to reduce congestion on our roads and looks to reduce congestion on our rail network as well. My big concern is that taxing vehicles is immediately turned to as the solution and that that actually could be damaging to taxi companies in Leeds, it could be damaging to lorries, it could be damaging to those that drive in Leeds, it might be also damaging to people who cannot afford to change a vehicle – they have a vehicle and cannot change it.

My supplementary question to the Leader of Council is, before any proposal around a Clean Air Zone charge comes into place or a congestion charge, will the Leader of Council commit to a referendum that the people of Leeds can vote in, as Manchester was able to vote in. Thank you, Lord Mayor.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Blake, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you for the supplementary and I very much welcome what I take to be an offer from Councillor Robinson of lobbying his Government to make sure that we can get the best solution for the people of Leeds. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Cleasby.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Thank you, former Lord Mayor. Could the Executive Member for Transport please advise Council of the level of usage of the new Apperley Bridge and Kirkstall Forge stations?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Richard Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Chair. The new station at Apperley Bridge was opened in December 2015 and a passenger survey two months after opening indicated an average 851 departing passengers each weekday. The car park has space for 297 cars. During the monitoring period usage peaked at 255 cars. It is noted that 74% of train users arrive by car either as the driver or passenger.

Kirkstall Forge opened in June 2016. A passenger monitoring and parking survey has yet to take place but interim figures from ticket sales two months after opening indicate an average of approximately 150 departing passengers per weekday. Clearly Kirkstall Forge station is situated within the major development sites, currently in the very early stages of development, and therefore these figures cannot be indicative of the ultimate long term use anticipated at this site.

As Members of Council may be aware, car leasing company Zenith has chosen Kirkstall Forge for their new UK Headquarters; they are moving from Calverley. Andrew will know it well, I expect. This development is currently being constructed, due to complete next year.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Richard. Councillor Cleasby, supplementary?

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: Mr Chairman, yes. Thank you, Chair. By way of supplementary and bearing in mind Richard's response, may I ask of him, was he consulted on the closure of the Kirkstall Forge Station car park on 9th September so that the developers could hold a junket and, as a consequence, disrupt the usage of the station for the commuters that now rely on it?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: No, I was not consulted by anybody on said junket but it would have been helpful, Brian, if you had asked that question in the first place instead of asking a silly question about numbers. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Ritchie, please.

COUNCILLOR RITCHIE: Thank you, Chair. Can the Leader of the Council update members on proposals for the Olympic Homecoming event?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Blake.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Councillor Ritchie, for the opportunity to bring Council up to date with the plans we have got for the homecoming event of the Olympics and, of course, the Paralympics that are taking place in Rio as we speak.

Could I take this opportunity to put on record my sincere congratulations and appreciation for all of the effort that has gone into achieving so much success for athletes from Leeds and Yorkshire – not just the athletes themselves but also their families who have given them huge support and enabled them to participate, but also the coaches and the fabulous work that we have seen at the universities in Leeds to enable us to go forward.

I am very pleased to say that Leeds has consulted with the other Local Authorities around Yorkshire and there has been overwhelming support that we put on a homecoming parade for all of the athletes who have taken part in both the games over the summer. This is due to take place on Wednesday 28th September and we are going to hold it late afternoon/early evening, hoping that as many people as possible can come and take part. We have had particular requests, for example, from schools who are very keen that as many of their pupils can come because part of this is about inspiring young people and making sure that they can participate in sport and have the activity.

The confirmed athletes that we have so far coming along are the rowers Andy Triggs Hodge and Paul Bennett, Paralympic champion Hannah Cockcroft, who is in action again this afternoon and might have more success to report, the diver Jack Laugher, triathletes Alistair and Jonny Brownlee are both able to come, Vicky Holland, the gymnast Niall Wilson, rower Zoe Lee, Paralympian swimmer Jonathan Booth and the cycling Paralympian gold medallist Adam Duggleby.

All of the athletes have huge commitments and as soon as they have finished competing they are on to a different phase, but I have been very impressed and very heartened by how many of them are trying to make alternative arrangements so that they can come and join in the celebrations in Leeds.

There is going to be a parade, the route is going to be announced shortly and we will make sure that we publicise this as far as we possibly can. We are very grateful for partners in the city who are making this possible and also for the partnership with Welcome to Yorkshire. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Judith; good news for the city. Councillor Ritchie, supplementary? There is no supplementary. Councillor Blackburn.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Chair. Could the Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability tell me what procedures, if any, are in place for dealing with side waste that is left by refuse collection crews?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you very much. I know we had some discussion about this last week at a very positive meeting with Community Committee Champions and Group spokespeople on Environment, so hopefully you have got a bit of clarity from that.

As set out within the report to the Executive Board in July of this year, the Council aims firstly to educate local residents to understand their role with regards to responsible waste management and is currently delivering a programme of communications and engagement to support this. From 2013 side waste was not accepted from any household that is on an alternate weekly collection route and is served by a wheeled bin. This policy was introduced in support of the Council's recycling strategy since to collect side waste would remove the incentive for residents to use their green bins. Any side waste left is put into the bin by the crew once the bin has been emptied and a sticker or tag is left to say that we do not accept side waste. This applies equally to communal collection points where larger bins are provided.

If side waste is persistently left the crew will take details of the address and report it to their manager. Recent improvements to our management information systems and in-cab technology have enabled crews to report issues more readily on the day. The manager will then assess the situation and investigate the appropriate course of action and this may include writing to residents, arranging a visit from a waste adviser or referring them to other relevant teams within the Council.

If there is excessive or uncontrolled side waste which cannot be reasonably collected by the Refuse Collection Service, the relevant locality team will make arrangements to reduce this waste. However, in situations where residents choose to disregard Council policy and persist to act unreasonably resulting in detrimental impact on the environment and community, enforcement action may be appropriate and the Executive Board agreed in July to the targeted use of enforcement powers for persistent and unreasonable waste behaviours. This will include a programme of engagement with Members via the Community Committees and the Environmental sub-groups.

However, we do acknowledge that the policy on side waste has not been universally understood and has not been consistently implemented across the city and one of the main reasons for bringing the report to July Exec Board was to clarify the policies and to initiate a policy via the Community Committee Chairs and Champions on their practical roll out.

Alongside this we will continue to work with crews to reinforce our policies and to ensure that they record and report any issues identified in order that an alternative response can be provided by the Council if it is appropriate. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Lucinda. Councillor Blackburn, supplementary?

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Can I thank you for your answer. As the Exec Member knows from our discussions last week, I fully support what she is trying to do but can we make sure that where lots of side waste is left, obviously you are going to send Waste Doctors out to sort them but can we make sure that somebody within the Council knows it is there and does something about it, because that is not happening at the moment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Yeadon.

COUNCILLOR YEADON: Thank you very much. Absolutely. I think the intention of the Executive Board report was certainly to improve that, to ensure that there was a greater understanding of our policy within Members, the public and our own staff and we will be working extremely hard to ensure that happens. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Councillor Maqsood, please.

COUNCILLOR MAQSOOD: Thank you, Chair. Would the Executive Member care to comment on the Government's vision for school improvement and standards?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Mulherin to reply.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, and thank you for the question, Councillor Maqsood. Can I just take this opportunity to thank our Children's Services team for all their hard work in promoting and implementing the Leeds Vision for Children and Young People and in particular our Director of Children's Services, as he approaches his retirement, for his commitment to ensuring that Leeds is the best city for children to grow up in.

To turn to the question at hand, it seems to me that the Government is intent on the continued fragmentation of our education system, not just with the highly controversial plans to reinstate grammar schools but with the continued push for academisation. If this is what the new Prime Minister meant when she spoke about tackling burning injustice and taking on the privileged few, I would suggest that she and her Government are sadly misguided.

The new Government's plans announced this last week seem to be pursuing a narrow ideological agenda rather than being informed in response to what children and young people, parents, educators and schools actually need. We know that schools in Leeds support the work done by this Local Authority to support school improvements and raise standards. Indeed, Leeds Primary School Headteachers wrote to the previous Education Secretary highlighting the fantastic and improving performance of Leeds schools and stating how proud they are of the heritage and partnership with the Local Authority that has continued to go from strength to strength.

Our schools recognise the value of the Leeds family and we are determined to keep that family together. The Government's push to further fragment our education this last week are set out in proposals to allow grammar schools to expand and for other schools to select by ability. This has proved to be one of the most controversial education policy changes in recent history and it is one that has emotions running high on all sides.

One of the things I struggle with most when it comes to the Government's new concept of ability is that at the age of eleven we would divide and segregate children based on their performance in a narrow test. Each and every child has ability, regardless of their race, religion, their social background, any health challenges they face, their family make-up or family income – every child matters. In Leeds we recognise that in the work that we do with partners across the city from the public, private and Third Sector who share with us our ambition to be a child friendly city. The problem we face as a society is that children's life chances are unequal. We have huge inequalities in the UK that are mirrored in our city. We should be putting measures in place to tackle that inequality, not introducing selective education policies that will further divide. We all know that children in those families where parents are well educated already have an advantage over those whose parents did not do so well at school. That advantage is further exacerbated in areas where the grammar school system is still operating in this country by well-off parents paying for private tuition for their children to get through the 11-Plus exam. This is not a level playing field and it is simply untrue to say that selection aids social mobility.

Theresa May, as a former grammar school pupil herself, obviously has fond memories, and some may say a blinkered vision, as to the impact that these schools have. For most people grammar schools hark back to the days of social division and marking children out as failures at the age of eleven.

Government proposals will further widen the gap between the have and have nots and those delivering education in this country do not like the Government plans either. Today's Yorkshire Post quotes a recent survey which has found that four out of five school leaders and teachers oppose the new plans for the expansion of grammar schools and that 85% did not believe the selection process could be designed in such a way to prevent parental engagement and income playing a major part.

It is not just a divide along party lines either, the Prime Minister is facing a revolt from her own party with former Education Secretary Nicky Morgan and former Education Minister David Willets amongst those who have politically and publicly opposed the plans. I find it hard to believe that with all of the challenges facing the education system in this country that the Government thinks this is the place to start.

Research has shown that the attainment gap starts pre school. The evidence is that by the time children start nursery aged three, the education gap between those who have and those who have not already exists and that without early education and support pre school it is extremely hard to close it. We have seen six long years of vicious Government cuts leading to the closure of children's centres up and down the country taking away some of the most vital early intervention that can help to narrow that gap. The Government's policy, the new proposals, ignore the need for every child to get the best start in life and will widen the gap through a policy based on social division.

So what has the Government done in the last six years to help children fulfil their potential? It has held them back through the closure of children's centres, the increasing fragmentation of the school system and cuts to Local Authority funding so that Councils have found it difficult to maintain a School Improvement Programme, meaning that we are one of the few remaining Local Authorities who continue to invest in this area, improving education for all children regardless of their background.

It is these areas of policy the Government should be focusing on and rethinking, not turning the clock back 40 years to widen social division. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Lisa. There are no supplementaries. Can I call on Councillor Ryan Stephenson, please.

COUNCILLOR STEPHENSON: Thank you, Chair. Will the Executive Board Member for Communities inform Council how many older people are currently on a waiting list for sheltered or independent living accommodation in Leeds?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Coupar, please.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Thank you Chair, and thank you Councillor Stephenson for your question.

Can I firstly say that the wording that we actually use is a Leeds Homes Register, it is not known as a waiting list. It is a register of applicants we have who might want accommodation within the city.

We have 24,232 applicants on that register, of which 4,432 applicants are aged over 60. This is 18% of the Leeds Homes Register. Of those applicants aged 60 and over, 85% have been assessed as in Band C, which is no housing need or their priority award has expired, been removed or the applicant cannot demonstrate a local connection to Leeds.

Housing Leeds manages 4,000 units of Category 2 sheltered housing with visits from Sheltered Support Officer across Leeds. During 2015 and 2016, 463 sheltered properties were let and the turnover is approximately 11.5% a year.

The Council is now investing heavily in its sheltered housing to improve the quality of housing provided. A programme is under way to carry out major remodelling and refurbishment to two schemes which contain bedsits and a programme of £850,000 is under way to deliver accessibility improvements to 51 schemes.

In order to encourage growth in specialist housing provision for older people, in January 2016 the Council published the Housing with Care prospectus. The purpose of the prospectus was to encourage delivery of new supply housing and care schemes across a range of tenures in line with projected current and future demand in Leeds. The figures in the prospectus outline that there is a current under-supply of 600 units of extra care rising to 1,000 units by 2028.

To underline the Council's commitment to support the delivery of Housing with Care, five Council owned sites were put on the market with a preference to deliver this type of housing provision. The sites were in locations where there is evidence need for the

provision of extra care or nursing care. A report is currently scheduled to be submitted to the Executive Board in November on the outcome of this marketing exercise.

Alongside this, through the Council's Housing Growth Programme, the Council has been successful in obtaining grant funding from the Department of Health to support its own development programme for the provision and new supply of extra care. A 45 unit extra care scheme at Wharfedale View, Yeadon, is due to complete in the autumn and the scheme offers both rented and shared ownership. Councillor Lewis and I visited there earlier this week and it is an excellent scheme that has been progressed.

Plans are also being finalised for a further 60 unit extra care scheme in West Ardsley. Again, this scheme will offer a mix of rented and shared ownership properties. In addition to this, the Council has built 18 apartments for older people on the site of the former Squinting Cat Club in Swarcliffe, now known as The Plantation, and as part of the Council House Growth Programme. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Debra. Ryan.

COUNCILLOR R STEPHENSON: Thank you. Thank you for the response there and I would just like to take the opportunity as well to thank the Exec Member for the welcome she has given me to Council and the various committees and, indeed, for pointing out where I have made the mistake – it is not a waiting list, it is in fact a register.

To that end, given the figures just disclosed there, will she join me in congratulating the Scholes Neighbourhood Planning Group for the sterling effort they have put into their emerging Neighbourhood Plan and does she support, therefore, the inclusion in that document a desire to utilise land adjacent to the Manor House for the building of more sheltered accommodation in the future?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Perhaps, like other Members of Council, you might have actually put the specific question down in the first place, Councillor Stephenson. Perhaps you might learn that the longer you are on Council.

Neighbourhood Planning is part of Councillor Lewis's portfolio and I shall leave him to answer your question at a further day. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Bentley, please.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Chair. I hope this question meets the approval of the Executive Members. Would the Executive Member for Children and Families please confirm to Council her support for the expansion of St Chad's Primary School in my ward on to lands that is currently protected by fields in trust status?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you, Councillor Bentley. As you are aware we do face a significant shortage of school places and officers are continually working

with schools to ensure that we are able to meet our statutory duty to provide sufficient places for all the children and young people in Leeds who need a school place.

I know that you had asked at the last Council meeting about how we were going to be addressing the shortage of places in your own ward and I understand that ward Members have had the opportunity to discuss options over this area over the summer with Council officers and that a number of potential solutions have been considered following on from the stakeholder event that was held earlier this year for your ward.

THE CHAIRMAN: Supplementary, Jon?

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Chair. Can I just ask, then, if one of the options is the expansion of St Chad's Primary School and it goes ahead, can you give us an assurance that the local community does not lose out on any currently publicly accessible land by committing to transfer an equivalent amount of land from the expansion from the former West Park Centre to the fields in trust?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Mulherin.

COUNCILLOR MULHERIN: Thank you for the supplementary. As you will be aware, no decision has been taken in this area. We are in the early stages, considering all possible options. I remain committed to working with ward Members, with the local community, to find a suitable solution to the shortage of school places for the Weetwood ward. Just to say, discussions are, I repeat, ongoing, there is no decision taken and I look forward to working with you. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Lisa. Councillor Harland, please.

COUNCILLOR HARLAND: Thank you, Chair. Can the Executive Member offer her support to the Women Against State Pension Inequalities (WASPI) campaign to bring in transitional arrangements to support women negatively affected by state pension equalisation?

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mary. Councillor Coupar.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Yes, thank you again, Chair, and thank you, Councillor Harland, for the question and the opportunity to raise the issue, a very important issue in Council today.

The WASPI, campaign which is Women Against State Pension Inequality, supports the move to equalisation of the state pension age for men and women but feels that the acceleration of the changes have been unfair.

The changes mean the age at which women qualify for the state pension is due to rise to 65 in November 2018 and 66 by October 2020. A version of the plans was first outlined in 1995 when the then Conservative Government planned to gradually raise women's retirement age to 65 between 2010 and 2020. In 2007 it was announced that both men and women would see their retirement age go up to 66 between 2024 and 2026. However, in 2011 George Osborne brought forward the timing of both changes to 2018 and 2020. This meant that women who had been expecting to start drawing their state pensions between 2016 and 2020 found out that they would face a delay. Many women in Leeds born on or after April 1951 have had significant changes

imposed on them by the Pension Acts in 1995 and 2011, and received little or no notification. Some women had only two years' notice of a six year increase to their state pension age. For women who have had to stop working in their fifties for reasons such as illness or redundancy, this means an even longer wait until they receive the state pension.

WASPI is looking for further transitional arrangements to be put in place, including a non-means tested transitional pension scheme to help deal with their financial hardship. What we want to see is a fair settlement. Many women have had their best laid plans disrupted by the Pension Equalisation Process with little time to make alternative plans. Hopefully the new Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Damian Green MP, will be able to look again at this situation but time is of the essence as many women are already starting to lose out, so we need quick action from the Government. They need to do the right thing here and support these women. *(hear, hear) (Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Coupar. Is there a supplementary? No.

Can I bring to the attention of Council that we have reached the end of the 30 minute slot. Any unanswered question, under Procedure Rule 11.6, will be answered in writing.

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

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we now move on to page 11, please. We are on Item 10, Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing board and the Executive Board. Councillor Blake, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Can I move that the Minutes be received in terms of the Notice.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Ogilvie.

COUNCILLOR OGILVIE: I second, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can I call for a vote on that? Sorry, I do not call for a vote on this, it is at the end, I apologise. *(laughter)* Ring rusty, James, ring rusty!

We move on to the Health and Wellbeing Board. Can I call on Graham Latty, please. Councillor Latty.

Health and Wellbeing Board

COUNCILLOR G LATTY: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Graham Latty, the new IT superstar! *(laughter)* I am not sure the Help Desk would agree with that!

Mr Chairman, I wish to speak to Minutes 9 and 11 in the extra pack of papers which is principally about the emerging Sustainability and Transformation Plan for Leeds.

The report to the Health and Wellbeing Board about the STP on 6th September was really rather good timing, coming as it did after a series of press reports about the so-called secret plans to cut services in the NHS. These press reports mis-characterised the work being done on the STPs. There has been nothing secret, nothing hidden, it has all been above board and open and the Health and Wellbeing Board's discussion on the item was totally open to the public. Every Health and Wellbeing Board has been tasked with creating their own local plan for speeding up the implementation of local health priorities. Sustainability and Transformation Plans will be focused on the local area and built around the needs of local people.

As I have said previously, one of my concerns is to ensure that the STP for Leeds, although it sits in and alongside the West Yorkshire Plan, must remain distinctive to the needs of Leeds' residents and not be subsumed into the West Yorkshire Plan.

Leeds is at the heart of health provision in West Yorkshire and must continue to take the lead in affordable innovation and improvement across our health services. I want to stress again my interest in the growth of social prescribing, which provides a non-medical referral option that can run alongside or instead of existing treatments to improve health and wellbeing. It promotes the importance of building community networks, relationships and friendships, coping strategies and resilience skills. It has the potential to help us save money and resources and encourages people to play a part in maintaining and improving their own health.

This also touches on another key theme of our STP, which is the belief that we should be doing things with people, not to them. It is important that people are involved in their own health and wellbeing and even more important that they are involved in the services that are designed with that in mind. Social prescribing is one way of encouraging this and the STPs are another.

I am pleased to see that there is a website, Inspiring Change in Leeds, which asks people to send their ideas for change to services. We are actively seeking to get more people involved, which is a good thing.

Mr Chairman, as we move forward with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Sustainable and Transformation Plan, we have an opportunity to make a real step change in the quality of care that our residents receive across Leeds and, indeed, across the wider region. This is a long way from being a secret plan. Thank you, Mr Chairman. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Graham. Can I call on Councillor Billy Flynn, please.

COUNCILLOR FLYNN: Thank you, Chair. I will be speaking also to Minutes 9 and 11 regarding the Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Leeds Sustainability and Transformation Plan, which are closely aligned.

The STP was debated in this Chamber in June and is due for submission to NHS England next month, but some recent negative publicity about the outcomes of the STP demonstrates a complete lack of media understanding of its aims. In its Five Year Forward Plan published in 2014, the Chief Executive of the NHS signalled the most far-reaching reforms of the NHS and social care probably since its inception in 1948. Just to repeat what Graham Latty said, it is not just about cuts. He identified

several gaps in service, in health and wellbeing, in care and quality, in finance and efficiency which if not addressed will widen.

Everybody agrees that the NHS needs more resources and it is getting them. The NHS budget will rise to £120bn by the end of this Parliament but that is not enough on its own. The NHS cannot afford to stand still; it must evolve and must take full advantage of advances, in medicine, in science, in technology to improve efficiency.

The STP will be looking at new and integrated models of care across the whole of the NHS and social care in primary and acute systems, in urgent and emergency care, in community provision, in mental health, in social care and in the voluntary sector with the emphasis remaining on a list-based primary care system, but it must be based on a better prevention of illness as Graham emphasised in his speech.

The Plan emphasises that everybody in Leeds has a part to play, residents and services alike. That means the proposed changes must involve the whole city. The Health and Wellbeing Board Minutes indicate that plans are being prepared for discussions with public and local health care professionals to ensure that everybody is involved. That involves almost one million people in the city.

It follows that a Strategic Communications Policy for the STP is absolutely essential. However, given the recent complete breakdown in communications between the Yorkshire Ambulance Service and the CCGs and between them and Leeds Teaching Hospital and, more importantly, patients concerning significant changes in the transport of renal dialysis patients to their treatment centres, can the Lead Member assure residents and Members that such a strategy exists. Thank you, Chair.
(Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Billy. Can I call on Councillor Ghulam Hussain now, please.

COUNCILLOR G HUSSAIN: Chair and fellow Councillors, I am speaking on Minute 9 in the extra pack. Our healthcare system has faced significant challenges in recent years. Local Authorities being tasked with the responsibility for Public Health has not been matched with more resources from Central Government by which to do so.

This year alone the Leeds Public Health budget experienced an over 6% budget cut with cuts of over 2% expected for the following year. With a ringfence on the Public Health grant set to be moved come 2018, increasing public health cuts will impact vital long term and preventative health services. Indeed, a Health Select Committee Report published this month concluded that public health cuts a false economy, not only adding to the future costs of health and social care but risking the widening health inequalities that already exist in our society.

In this climate Local Authorities are increasingly expected to do more with less. Now more than ever we must work together across the city to achieve a better health and care system for the benefit of all of our citizens.

In the Health and Wellbeing Strategy this Council has pledged to be bold with a relentless focus on reducing health inequalities and to become a healthy and caring city for all ages, where people who are the poorest will improve their health the

fastest. I welcome this courageous pledge but we should be under no illusion as to the scale of challenges over the next 25 years. The number of people who live in Leeds is predicted to grow by over 15%. The number of people aged over 65 is estimated to rise by almost a third to almost 150,000 by 2030. There is an extra £700m funding gap between resources and requirement by 2021. It is crucial that we work collectively and ensure the best quality health care and the best quality of life for the citizens.

I eagerly await the outcome of the Sustainability and Transformation Plan that is currently being developed. The Health and Wellbeing Board has already identified many of the goals set out in the NHS Five Year Forward View, including improving the quality of public health and wellbeing, closing the care quality gap and putting healthcare in Leeds on a financially stable footing for the future.

I am sure that the Board will work to achieve these goals by working together on local city wide and region basis. As a ward Councillor I am sure the upcoming plan will put communities as its heart. It is up to the Local Authorities to provide the leadership to meet this challenge. I am sure all of us here at Council will rise to it to create and support a healthcare system that works for everyone and is financially stable for all our children's future. Thank you, Chair. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ghulam. Can I call on Councillor Christine Macniven, please.

COUNCILLOR MACNIVEN: Mr Chair, I speak on Minute 9 in the extra pack. In the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016 to 2021 Leeds City Council outlines its commitment to tackling the public health challenges facing the city. In the strategy Leeds City Council particularly emphasises the need to stop people developing unhealthy lifestyles – obesity in particular. The strategy states that Leeds must focus on reducing child obesity and the differences which exist across the city. Obesity among children in the most deprived areas of Leeds is double that in the least deprived areas. In Leeds, 34% of children aged 11 have an unhealthy weight.

In August 2016 the Government published Childhood Obesity – a Plan for Action. This report has been met with widespread criticism from health experts, campaigners, political opposition and industry leaders. The two measures that Public Health England would have the most impact – banning price cutting promotions of junk food in supermarkets and restricting advertising of unhealthy food to children through family TV programmes – were both abandoned. The proposed sugar levy was given a lot of attention but is not due to be implemented until April 2018.

Professor Graham MacGregor, Chair of the UK Group Action on Sugar, says that the report is missing a key element of obesity – fat. This is meant to be a plan for reducing obesity and all it does is talk about sugar. This is echoed by Mike Coupe, Chief Executive of Sainsbury's saying that the plan was a welcome first step but the Government needed an holistic approach to tackle childhood obesity.

The plan has a simplistic assessment of the causes of obesity, saying that obesity is caused by an energy imbalance. While the plan does promote measures to increase exercise in schools, lack of physical activity is not the root cause in itself. The report identifies that while the majority of schools are subject to school food standards, some academies and free schools are not. Its proposed solution is for the Secretary of State

for Education to lead a campaign encouraging them to do so, not directed action and the numbers of academies and free schools are set to rise, thus weakening future measures to combat child obesity.

The Government has failed to back up any of its proposals with meaningful regulation or mandatory action. Many of the proposals are voluntary. It would be monitored by the PHE and not reviewed until 2020 to see if it is being done. Doctor Sarah Woolaston, Conservative, Totnes, Chairwoman of the Health Select Committee, described the report as really disappointing, showing the hand of big industry lobbyists. Local Government leaders have criticised the new strategy saying their recommendations to give Councils the power to ban junk food, advertising...

THE CHAIRMAN: Could you finish up, Christine, please?

COUNCILLOR MACNIVEN: ... near schools and to require calorie counts on menus in chain restaurants were entirely left out. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Christine. Can I call on Councillor Eileen Taylor, please.

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR: Thank you, Chairman. I am speaking on Minute 10 in the extra pack. At the most recent Health and Wellbeing Board meeting which I attended, I was pleased to see the key issues were being discussed by health and care partners across the city. At this particular meeting we discussed a wealth of areas from the Sustainability and Transformation Plans as the priority of the Board over the next year.

Mr Chairman, today I would like to discuss another area concerned at the meeting, that is the potential of the partnership working, something which is now more important than ever to meet the different healthcare challenges we are facing as a city.

The Refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy rightly emphasised the important collaboration with the partner in helping to achieve the vision highlighted in the plan where people who are the poorest improve their health the fastest. Indeed, it highlights an approach where we seek to tackle health inequality as one city, working as one organisation for Leeds where everyone plays a part.

We have much to be incredibly proud of in Leeds when it comes to the health and care partnership across the city, some of whom make up the Membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board, all seeking to come together to improve the lives of communities in the city. Health Provider Commissioners, the Third Sector, Councillors all form a part of the Board. Looking beyond this the health and care sector assessed locally here such as leading universities, NHS England, St James's University Hospital and Leeds Academy health partnership also mean that we are well placed to influence and drive positive healthcare.

Some of you may know a few of the key challenges we face as a city and why the potential of partnership working has been put to the top of the agenda of the Health and Wellbeing Board. Obesity across all age groups, ageing population, social isolation, deprivation and inequality and estimated £700m financial gap all represented some of the areas. These are the issues which will dominate I am sure many Health and Wellbeing Board meetings to come and equally these are problems

across the country we will also face. However, despite the challenges I am pleased that we have remained ambitious and have collectively together formed a plan which seeks to address some of the challenges mentioned.

What is becoming very clear is the key platform...

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you finish, Eileen, please.

COUNCILLOR TAYLOR: ...such as the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board are becoming increasingly relevant. Chairman, we will continue to provide the best health we can for the city of Leeds. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Eileen. Can I call on Councillor Stewart Golton now, please.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thanks, Mr Chairman. The STPs are really important to us but I think one of the aspects that is missing out of them at this moment in time is a lot of professionals talking to each other and they have all got their own different pressures and they are trying very hard, as professionals do, to find solutions that they can both handle at the same time. I think one of the things that we might be losing out during that process of this talking between professionals is future proofing the solutions that we bring forward.

I notice that Councillor Macniven was talking about big industry lobbyists getting their own way on certain policy areas and I also heard Councillor Taylor talking about the Leeds Academic Health Partnership. There is a tension between what we want to get out of our local outcomes and what the national Government wants and actually one of the sustainable things that we could do to satisfy both by saving costs but at the same time making sure that we are assured of the care which is given out, whether it is through health or social care, is by actually managing our own health and care market. We need to make sure that the Leeds pound is actually not just spent in the city but also that it is invested in the city.

We heard earlier how Aire Valley Leeds as one of our investment hot spots will actually produce 38% of its jobs as being low paid, low skilled jobs. We do not just want the jobs in Leeds in our health and care sector to be low paid, low skilled care opportunities. We want to make sure that people are able to be entrepreneurs in that area, we should be encouraging social enterprise to open up in that area because as costs get tighter you do not want to be sending off some of the money that you are gathering in from people who need care to send off to dividends to shareholders that do not live in our community. If we have more social enterprises in the city we should be able to reinvest that money back into even better services. At the same time social enterprises in the city are locally owned and therefore the accountability and therefore the quality of what is offered is more assured.

I think we need to spend more time as those professionals to look at actually trying to encourage those start ups of social enterprise in the city because that sector is not growing, it is diminishing at the very time when it is needed more than ever and I think that in the STP and through the leadership of the Health and Wellbeing Board we should be encouraging more success stories like we have in our Neighbourhood Networks to ensure that we are actually encouraging further social enterprises to

deliver the future of our healthcare and actually encourage our economy as well as the quality of our care in the city. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Stewart. Can I ask Councillor Charlwood now to sum up.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you, Chair and thank you for everyone's comments on the Health and Wellbeing Board Minutes. Thanks to colleagues because it was a very productive meeting of my first Health and Wellbeing Board as Chair and we have referred to some of the really complex and varied challenges that we are facing as a city over the next few years, which is enormous and very complicated and we all need to work together to achieve it.

What is clear is the current landscape of health and care at a national and a local level is facing significant pressures which require really bold action from both Government and local health and care partners.

I will just touch on Councillor Latty and Councillor Flynn's points at this point. Councillor Latty talks about the secret plans that were discussed in the media. I think we need to be really clear to the Chamber that there is the Leeds STP which has been co-designed by Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board Members before my time and continues to be, and that can be governed locally by the Health and Wellbeing Board, but there is the West Yorkshire STP that, although Council officers in and local health partners are involved in, does have an element of surprise for all of us because we do not actually know what is going to come through at the end, and that could be potentially difficult and so therefore we have to balance that.

Thanks for your comments on the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, changing the conversation and people doing more for themselves. I think that is really welcome and that is what we are trying to do as partners in the Council as well.

Councillor Flynn, talking about the misunderstanding of the reforms of the NHS, again I think I will just come back to that point about we still do not know what the West Yorkshire STP will look like and therefore we do not fully understand what it means, but what we can do is push ahead with our Leeds STP on our plans that we have come to together. We cannot get away from the fact, however, that these are in response to budget cuts and the NHS, which was said to be protected from budget cuts, are actually being cut and locally we need to work together to alleviate the worst of those effects on our communities and we will do that, but there are significant budget pressures ahead which this Government has imposed. It needs a better funding formula at the end of the day.

Councillor Hussain spoke about the specific challenges we are facing which is an ageing population and a £700m funding gap that the city is facing. There is a billion pounds at West Yorkshire level that needs to be found over the next five years. As he suggested, it is critical we really work together to address these issues and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy will play a really key role to tackle health inequalities at the same time and make sure it does not get any worse – indeed, it gets better – in the most deprived areas of our city.

I think it is worth noting again the recent Health Select Committee report which welcomed the move of Public Health to Local Authorities. Councillor Hussain

highlighted the point about the impact of the recent cuts on the wider health and care system and I think it is worth saying that Members in this Chamber have been highlighting this point for some time. The Committee in Parliament was unequivocal in its assessment of the impact of the Government cuts to Public Health, warning that these will, quote, “not only add to the future costs of health and social care but they risk widening health inequalities”, which is what we are trying to avoid at this time.

Councillor Macniven helpfully raised the childhood obesity issue the Government has recently rowed back on. With the cuts to Public Health funding we are left in serious doubt now as to Theresa May’s new direction on public health and health generally.

Of course, with these challenges it is now more important than ever that we work together as one city to improve health and care outcomes and I fully agree with the comments made by Councillor Taylor on the potential of local partnerships working with providers, commissioners, the Third Sector and beyond.

We clearly have the infrastructure and the assets in place in the city which means we are really well placed to achieve the health and care outcomes highlighted in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy yet, as Councillor Taylor rightly stresses, people in their communities must be right at the centre of everything we do and I am really pleased the strategy has recognised the importance of this.

Councillor Golton talks about professionals talking to each other at the moment, the need to future proof the system – of course, much of that will depend on the national Government’s decision and funding arrangements. I would just say I agree with his view about the health of the market in the voluntary sector but also social enterprise and I think we can build that in and weave that through the discussions that we are going to continue to have. I think it will come down the line about how we provide much of the new landscape of services together across the sectors that we have currently, so thank you for that.

Clearly there are also prospects for more regional working too and the STP process does provide the opportunity to address closing the Health and Wellbeing Care Quality and Financial and Efficiency gaps. There were very productive discussions at the Board meeting last week focusing on the progress of specifically the Leeds STP, which is the thing we can control, as well as the complexities linking the local STPs to the wider West Yorkshire Plan. I am mindful of the need to engage staff, service users too, and I am really pleased the Board agreed we should take that forward in developing the Leeds STP.

The Leeds STP will be built on taking our asset based approach, our recovery approach to the next level to help deliver the health and care elements of the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy and as the West Yorkshire STP and the links between the six local STPs are still in development, it is really important that we ensure a coherent plan at the regional level is in place which effectively addresses the gaps identified and over the next few months we will continue to prioritise ambitions and outcomes through the development of the Leeds Plan as a vehicle for delivering key aspects of our Health and Wellbeing Strategy. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Rebecca.

Executive Board

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we move on to the Executive Board Minutes. Consideration of the Executive Board Minutes will be heard until 4.10.

(i) Regeneration, Transport and Planning

THE CHAIRMAN: Before I call on the next speaker can I remind Members that this is a maiden speech. Councillor Stephenson, please.

COUNCILLOR STEPHENSON: Thank you, Chair. I will add that it is a pleasure to make my maiden speech under your stewardship of the Chamber as well. My predecessor, Ann Castle, served this Council intermittently for a period of over 20 years and I would like to put on record my thanks and, indeed, all our thanks for her service to this city, to the Council and more importantly the citizens and residents of the Harewood ward.

I speak to Minute 51 and comment on the South Bank Regeneration Scheme. With the fastest growing economy and the largest financial sector outside of London it is right that we seek to make the most of the opportunities here in Leeds and to that end the South Bank provides an opportunity for growth and regeneration.

The HS2 Growth Strategy and the South Bank Regeneration Framework both talk of an ambitious vision for growth, so it is important that we make sure that the framework does not simply become just another conversation in Leeds but a proactive project to deliver those real opportunities for commerce in the city. It is after all, Chair, businesses that drive growth in employment and whilst I welcome the report outlines provision for new employment opportunities in the area, there is little detail on how it is actually to be achieved. Who are the companies that we are expecting to occupy the new buildings? Are we planning to build large skyscrapers on top of the new HS2 station, attractive to multinationals? What are we doing at this early stage to engage with those firms before construction begins?

I know that Leeds City Council's initial response to the result of the EU Referendum resolved as its first priority, and I quote, "That the Chief Officer Economy and Regeneration be requested to identify the impact of economic uncertainty." It is not my intention to re-run old arguments, nor to make a political point in my maiden speech, but three months on manufacturers report a rise in exports to the highest level in two years, retailers report a rise in sales, highest in 12 weeks to August, and economists have revised their previously pessimistic forecast following a run of figures showing a rise in activity. Is it not, therefore, time that when considering the opportunities for Leeds in the South Bank Regeneration Scheme to also consider the opportunities that exist for Leeds as we leave the European Union?

As the Government is committed to making a success of Brexit, so should Leeds. Rarely do the opportunities arise in an integrated nature, Chair, but at this time we have. Is it not time that we seized both opportunities now, perhaps with an international trade envoy for Leeds, committing the city to support the endeavours of a new Department for International Trade and cementing the South Bank and the broader scheme as a showpiece for international trade within the Northern Powerhouse. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ryan. Can I call on Councillor Lamb, please.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Thank you, Chair. I am rising to speak to Minute 51 on page 87, also, about the South Bank Regeneration, particularly around the impact of Leeds Station and HS2.

The key thing for us to get the maximum benefits for the city of all of these things is surely how we link up the transport infrastructure of the rest of the city to be able to get into Leeds, and a lot of us have got grave concerns about the response of the city to the £173.5m which is now available from NGT. We have all had these little postcards on our desks in front of us today and I think the concern is that despite the fact we are in theory starting a big conversation, the administration seems to have made its mind up about its approach, which is to have a lot of small schemes that they can control themselves and they seem to have framed the conversation in such a way that it will give them answers to support that. It is very difficult to engage and actually put any alternative suggestions down.

It seems to me, Chair, that we need to be much more ambitious in the city and there is still a great deal of opportunity for that. We should be looking at every possible technology that is available and using the £173m as the start of our ambitions. The fact that the Strategy, so-called, is for 20 years is nowhere near good enough. We should be thinking about the next 100 years. We have wasted 30 years from all parties in this Chamber in terms of getting the right transport infrastructure and I would hate us to be here in 50 years' time and find that our children and grandchildren still do not have the kind of transport infrastructure that can connect them up to what should then be Leeds Station and a fully regenerated South Bank.

It is, of course, the case there is not enough money for the kind of scheme that we want. If we are going to look at undergrounds, overgrounds...

COUNCILLOR: Wombling free! *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR LAMB: It is going to cost – they find it very funny that we talk about these things but surely do we still want to be the biggest city in Europe without a mass transit system? Of course it will cost hundreds of millions and billions of pounds to deliver the kind of system that we need but I would point out there is not a city in the world with a mass transit system, even those that have been in place for 100 years, that have finished their system yet but they have all started somewhere, even whether it is a single line or a single connection. We have to show some ambition for the future of this city. If we want to be the best city for children, the best city for business, the best city for older people, people have got to be able to get around and we have got to be able to be linked up to our neighbours.

I am sorry they find it funny that some of us have that ambition but I really hope that when we all get together and start to work cross party on this there is a spirit to actually raise our aspirations, show some ambition and do something that this city has long needed and thoroughly deserves. Thank you, Chair. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Alan. Councillor Golton. Quickly!

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Sorry, Chair, I was expecting Councillor Latty. South Bank Regeneration, I believe I was talking about. Yes, a really exciting chapter for the city. We can already see some of the dividends coming through. I assume – I

know it is North Bank but Sovereign Square is still, I think, south of the train line and it is the train line that was traditionally the point at which the city got divided up between that bit of the city centre which was economically viable and that bit which was allowed to degenerate and become derelict. I think it is great to see that that area has finally revived and the park that is in there is a real example of how if you set your ambition high you can achieve something which is particularly high quality so that I think the Council needs to be congratulated on that.

However, there are risks, of course, with the South Bank Regeneration where the Council is involving itself in some very big property deals and some of them, of course, are going to be good news for the Council because you should be creating your own weather so, of course, the investment the Council has made in the office building in Sovereign Square is something which will pay dividends in the future and hopefully because of that financing it would help secure some of our public services in the future as well.

However, sometimes we might be in danger of putting all our eggs in one basket, a little bit like depending on HS2 to deliver that golden egg for the city and then you find that you are actually at the mercy of civil servants and, indeed, politicians in Whitehall that might just change their mind at some point in the future. I am no fan of HS2 because it comes too near my house and those of my constituents, but I do appreciate its strategic value for the city in terms of we need real investment in transport to actually make a difference to our economy.

That is where I come in; we are going to talk about Amazon later on in terms of who we talk to about investing in the city. Let us make sure that the Burberry investment on the South Bank, which is the one that we have made big headlines about and we have put a big store into, that we do put a lot of effort in to make sure that we get the most benefit possible out of that. I would not want to think that we would have another potential headline in terms of what the workforce looks like in the Burberry HQ and I am assuming that we are having some really good conversations with them in terms of the high value jobs that we might be able to get out of that development and also in assuring us and them, of course, that we are both in the right place post Brexit for that level of investment in our economy, because it is something that we are all looking forward to. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Stewart. Can I call on Councillor Iqbal, please.

COUNCILLOR IQBAL: Thank you, former Lord Mayor, Vice Chair, Mr Chairman or whatever! So many titles!

I am speaking on Minute 51 page 87, the South Bank Regeneration Framework. Council has discussed this topic many times but because it is such an important area for Leeds. As Members we have to get our heads around that, an opportunity that South Bank will be and also what a challenge we have to get it right. Let us be clear about one thing – development of the South Bank will probably happen whatever we do. It is simply too good an opportunity for developers to miss. What we have to do as a Council is make sure the South Bank works for the people who live, work and visit there.

Externally we need to ensure that there are green spaces, casual play and sports facilities, ways to get around, connections to public transport and attractive buildings

that put Leeds on the map, but we also have to think about the insides of the homes. Is living in the South Bank meant to be just for young professionals, one or two bedroom flats squeezed into a small floor plan as developers want to make quick bucks, or should we be thinking big, making homes that families can enjoy and redefine what city centre living means?

We also should not simply concentrate on the South Bank as if it is an island. The people already living in South Leeds will have a vibrant new area on their doorstep but we have to make sure that they can still cross this area to get to other parts of the city and that they are not looking at a series of back entrances and service yards. Getting everything connected up is the key and that has to include the people who already live in the south of the city.

The framework that is now out for consultation is a good start on this road. We must listen to what people have to say, especially people already living in the area, in order to help us shape what this area will look like.

As I mentioned before, we have to get this right as without a framework we can see unrestrained and disjointed developments. Through our Plans Panel we look to assess each case on its own merits but getting the master plan right now will allow us to make clear and sensible decisions. This power will allow us to create a South Bank we can be proud of and that will develop and last for a long time to come. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mohammed. Can I call on Councillor Groves, please.

COUNCILLOR GROVES: Thank you, Chair, and speaking on the same page and the same Minute, the long awaited regeneration of the South Bank. Having lived in the south of the city for all of my life, and Councillor Lewis alluded to it, we have felt left out so this would be a massive welcome transformation. It is one of the most innovative and exciting projects underway in our ever-expanding city that continues to attract inward investment. When I think of the transformation over the last ten years, we are moving towards being a real serious player on the world stage.

What is more, we have our priorities right. Future generations and education are at the heart of this development. Once everything is up and running we will see over 10,000 students every day using the new campuses for Leeds City College, Leeds City College of Building as well as our first University Technical College, which just happens to be the largest secondary free school in the country.

The University Technical College will specialise in advanced manufacturing and engineering. I think we will have our challenges that we do need to continue attracting inward investment for a strong economy and make sure that all students get the grades to be able to take advantage of these fantastic facilities. We would hope that they will go on to more jobs and better jobs in terms of employment.

The proposed consultation includes schools to ensure young people are given the opportunity to shape what needs to be a young person and indeed family friendly development. The draw of good education provision alongside the proposed invited spaces, playgrounds and cafés means there is something for everyone. I have no doubt that the mix of education, retail, business and homes will turn this area into a truly vibrant sought-after place to be and live.

Lord Mayor, I have genuine pleasure in welcoming this report and look forward to watching the progress of this development. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Kim. Can I call on Councillor Stuart McKenna now, please.

COUNCILLOR S McKENNA: Chair, fellow colleagues and Councillors. I am speaking on page 87, Minute 51, on the South Bank Regeneration Framework. The proposed South Bank Regeneration Programme will be the landmark infrastructure for Leeds in the 21st Century. With over £500m worth of investment in the last year alone it will be one of the largest city centre regeneration schemes in the whole of Europe. Combined with the proposed High Speed 2 and 3 rail lines, the city centre is set to radically change and connect Leeds to the rest of the UK more than ever before.

Those of us who are included in Planning have a huge task but one that we hope will draw big dividends for the city. After the considerable work of Leeds City Council, Sir David Higgins has proposed to the Government that the new HS2 rail link approach from the south, the new platforms will reach directly into Leeds Station, creating a common concourse and promoting connectivity between the two services. With this, HS3 and the South Bank Project in mind, Leeds is on the precipice of becoming a world class transport hub in the heart of Yorkshire.

It is not just about the station. It is also about the area around it. While this should certainly be supported we must also seek to represent those who elected us. This project should not just be right for rail but also right for residents. This is why I welcome the extensive consultation process started last month. The key question is, what vision do citizens of Leeds have for the city? A vision for a new public transport network for Leeds for pedestrians, cyclists and buses connect the whole city network as never before. A vision for public spaces supporting leisure, culture and community feeling in the city centre that is safe and open to everyone who comes to this city, as well as living in the city. A vision for a sustainable city centre making the most of our natural resources and promoting a green environment, renewable energy and flood alleviation, which is well needed.

All these considerations and more will influence the kind of development decisions that will shape how Leeds looks for years to come. This is why this consultation process is so important, to make sure the views of citizens are central to creating a new city centre and transport hub that the people of Leeds feel part of.

If our goal is to make Leeds the best city in the UK (which it already is) by 2030, then this project and consultation is a singular opportunity to make that happen in a way that is supported by all residents of this city. Thank you for listening, colleagues. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Stuart. Can I call upon Councillor Venner now, please.

COUNCILLOR VENNER: Thank you, Chair. I am speaking on Minute 52, page 87, the Aire Valley Leeds Area Action Plan.

This report is the culmination of a significant amount of work for Members and officers. Members, of course, agree on the importance of the Aire Valley, particularly for employment, housing and education. The Aire Valley is far wider than just the employment zone and is certainly more than just employment land, getting the allocations right now allows high quality land for all uses, including green space.

The Development Plans Panel worked to ensure that housing land is provided here, where it is mostly green field. Significantly exceeding the target of housing in this area meets a significant proportion of the need for new houses in this city.

The formal Aire Valley Report will have been voted upon by full Council in advance of the discussion on the Executive Board Minutes. Following this it will be ready to submit to the Secretary of State for inspection, first by the Government's appointed Inspector and then by the Secretary of State. This represents a huge amount of work by different iterations of the Development Plans Panel, including when it was chaired by Councillor Congreve immediately before me, Councillor Wilshaw and formerly Councillor Taggart, and those DPP Chairs that came before. I would like to thank all the Members of DPP for their contributions and all the officers who support us.

Around 13,000 people already live in the area covered in the plan so it is important to get the details right for them. The DPP has looked to seek the right balance between development, green space and new housing. This is so important when thinking about how people will live and work in the area.

It is pleasing to see commitment to green in the environment, especially in the employment zone where 2,000 new trees and 50,000 bulbs have already been planted. This is the kind of commitment the Council wants to see from all developers, thinking not just about buildings but all of the surrounding areas and how people will use them from outside.

The high level of political consensus about the plans does not mean that the Panel were not thorough, considerate and understood the challenge of this process. You only need to look at the hundreds of documents in the pack to understand how forensic the work has been – another reason it is a good thing so many trees are being planted. It is up to the Inspector to formally decide on the soundness of the plan after a period of public examination. However, the Development Plans Panel has tried hard to deliver a document that is clear, fair, ambitious and focused on creating a strong economy and a compassionate city. Thank you, Chair. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Fiona. Can I call upon Councillor Dawson now, please.

COUNCILLOR DAWSON: Thank you, Chair. Chair, I am speaking again on Minute 52 on page 88 in support of the Draft Aire Valley Area Action Plan. The Plan is quite rightly ambitious in what it sets out and what it wants to achieve to create jobs, to build houses, encourage inward investment and to build new infrastructure and, more importantly, to make our city a greener place to live.

The Aire Valley name in some ways is a bit confusing and I prefer to talk about places we know in the city like Hunslet, Richmond Hill, Crossgates, Stourton and Skelton Grange. Hunslet was where I was born and grew up and it was part of the industrial heart of our city. It is famous for its engineering companies, such as John

Fowler, Boddingtons, Tetleys, Hunslet Engine Company. My grandfather worked for a company called Hepworth and Grandage on Hunslet Road. My father worked for Crabtree Vickers on South Accommodation Road in Hunslet and even I, when leaving school, worked at Haythorn Davey and Co, which is now part of the Sulzer Engineering Group.

The last century saw the demise of the historic manufacturing base in Hunslet and the employment that went with it, but this plan will change and create a new pulse for our city. We are planning and we have begun to create a new heart for our city and at that heart is the creation of jobs.

In the Plan 7,000 new jobs will be created by 2025 to build on the 800 businesses that already operate in that area. Already we see employment in many different areas – low carbon, advanced manufacturing and creative and digital technological industries in the area. Hunslet can become the heart of a new digital and internet revolution, not just for Leeds but for the UK and for the North. This has to be our ambition, to deliver high quality jobs.

Not only does the plan envisage new jobs but at least 6,500 new homes in the area and expansion of the retail centres in Hunslet and Richmond Hill. It is brilliant that this investment is predominantly in two of the most deprived wards in the city. We need to ensure that we deliver this plan and it primarily benefits the communities, the two poorest communities in this city.

There are other essentials that we need to deliver on. The infrastructure – we need new roads, railways, bridges, park and rides, better public transport and better connectivity. Secondly, we need investment in skills and training so we can match our people with these new jobs. A growing education hub is already there. Leeds City College Printworks, Ruth Gorse Academy opening on Black Bull Street. In ten years' time I want people to say "I want to live and work in Hunslet and I want my children to grow up in Hunslet." Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Neil. Can I call upon Councillor Jon Bentley, please.

COUNCILLOR N BENTLEY: Thank you, Chair. I am going to change the theme now because I am speaking on Minute 53, page 88, the award of a grant of £4m to Yorkshire County Cricket Club. First I should declare something of an interest – I am a member of Yorkshire County Cricket Club, a keen supporter of cricket generally and Yorkshire cricket in particular but I cannot support the Council's decision to give away £4m to a commercial club. A loan I could possibly understand if this gave the club a better deal than it would get on the money market, but why give away £4m?

Is this money to be used to promote cricket across the city to make the game more accessible to our young people who otherwise might not be able to be involved in the game? It is not, it is to help fund a multi-million pound stand in the hope that it will enable Headingley to retain Test Match cricket in the coming years. That is a hope I share and I know it is shared by many cricket fans in the county, but the investment should be coming from the club who will enjoy most of the rewards that international cricket will bring to the city.

Sure the city benefits as well, but a lot of those benefits are already paid for by Leeds residents, particularly in Headingley and Weetwood, in the form of crowds,

disruption, traffic and parking chaos and there is no benefit coming back to them from this investment.

Do we really think if we did not give £4m to the cricket club international cricket would be lost for ever? If a brand as iconic as Headingley cannot put together a commercial package they do not deserve to be in the business of international sport.

If you have access to £4m, would you rather give it away for the benefit of the few or invest it for real community benefit? When we look at the sort of investment we could have in our communities – I was at a meeting with Councillor Coupar yesterday and we were talking about the roll out of Community Hubs across the city and the vital role they are going to play in the engagement with and the wellbeing of our communities, and she is committed to that programme but she tells me the money is not there to roll it out as quickly as we would like. £4m invested in Community Hubs and community benefit would probably make a huge difference, or how about the doorstep glass collection, which we say we need for recycling? £4m would make a huge start on that as well.

Chair, once more it comes down to this administration having to make the right judgment and the right choices between vested interests and the real public interest and once again it has chosen wrong. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Jon. Can I call upon Councillor Robinson, please.

COUNCILLOR M ROBINSON: Thank you, Deputy Chair. I speak also to Minute 53 and Minute 54 in the Minute Book.

Turning firstly to the Yorkshire County Cricket Club, the grant for £4m. I am not going to comment, as I cannot, on ongoing planning applications that are perhaps linked to this and were mentioned within the Executive Board Report. However, what I would say is that there can be no *quid pro quos*. There can be no backroom deals and things must be accountable and in the public domain for everybody to have visibility of it to know just what we are getting into and what the citizens of Leeds are getting into.

What I would say is that when we look to this £4m grant we must ask the question a little like what Councillor Bentley asked. What is being delivered in return to the Council? Is this opening accessibility to cricket for more young people and more communities of Leeds? Cricket is a fantastic sport that brings communities together; we have cricket clubs in just about every single one of our villages actually and look to support them in various different ways, whether it is through Youth Activity funding or through our Wellbeing funding. What are we seeing in return for the £4m? Is it something where we are saying Yorkshire County Cricket, you must go out and work with more communities, you have got to go out and find those kids and engage with them, you are making an offer to the people of Leeds. I have yet to see any of that sort of detail.

I would ask what are the implications on parking as well. Councillor Bentley mentioned this. There are many residents around the Headingley area who, as much as I am sure they love having Headingley Stadium nearby, are blighted by some of the effects of Headingley Stadium. Just what will happen and what is the plan from the proprietors of Headingley for their stadium and any extension that comes forward?

Conversation is the big word of the day – I think if we were to do a word cloud of things that are used in Council documents “conversation” appears to be one of those that is rapidly appearing in all documents. I would ask what is the conversation with the people of Headingley and just what are they going to see if a private concern is receiving £4m?

I am sure they would be looking for some reassurance and maybe less than impressed in times of difficult financial blight. I wait to see more detail.

On Minute 54 on page 89, very briefly, I welcome some of the £2.6m that is going into Whitehall Road. As somebody who works down on Whitehall Road and I am down there regularly every day I know just how difficult that junction can be and how much of a safety risk it is to the city, but I would raise some of the concerns that Councillor Carter raised in Executive Board, which is the implication on road capacity and the highway network. That site is very, very close to the train station, it is a very, very tight junction. Introducing any sort of traffic island as it stands would risk further accidents potentially, and £2.6m is a vast sum of money. It puts into scale and into perspective just how far £173m might go in this city. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Matthew. That concludes this part of the agenda, it has now reached ten-past four. Can I ask Councillor Blake, please, to sum up.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Chair. Before I come on to the Minutes I would like to take this opportunity, if I may, to pay tribute to the two officers that the Chair referred to at the start of the meeting. I have worked very closely with Peter Marrington, I am former Chair of Scrutiny and really recognise what he has brought to the city in terms of transforming the governance of this city. I would also like to pay tribute to Nigel Richardson. It is really fascinating to me. Nigel has been with us for six years, the first five years of that were really turning round an inadequate Children’s Services to a service with good and outstanding features that has national and international recognition, but for me one of the most heartening things that I am finding now is we are going out to consult with our communities about, for example, Capital of Culture, and the overwhelming message coming back from the communities in Leeds is that Leeds is a caring city and a child friendly city. The other part is that older people want it to be an age friendly city too, building on the success that you have managed to communicate about the importance of putting children and young people and older people, vulnerable people, at the heart of everything that we do. I think those themes have been very well reflected today. I do want to say a sincere thank you, Nigel, for your commitment and we are all very sorry that you have decided to retire but we wish you well. I think the really, really important thing is the confidence that is now in the department which will enable all of us to go forward from strength to strength to keep delivering on behalf of children and young people in this city.

Linking into today’s agenda, one of the mantras that Nigel and I together established was every time we went into any health arena we used to always have to say “and children, and children, and children” but actually the Health and Wellbeing Board now does recognise just how important investment in child health is. I think the Minutes today were really – the conversation that came out of it was really excellent. I hope Councillor Latty that you are going to go and see a doctor yourself, you do not sound too well, actually, you have got rather a cough coming through there!

Can I sincerely thank all Members of Council who have been and are involved in the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board. It is vitally important work and the work of the STP is incredibly complex and challenging. I think the other theme that has come through today, whilst we need to get our services, commissioning and all of those other things in place, we must make sure that we get the right investment coming into this city and how short-sighted is it that the Government has cut public health funding by up to £8m over the end of this period.

All of those things that we have touched on – obesity, drug and alcohol – the cost to society of not investing in these important areas of health is immense. Mental health, for example, which is now a priority of the Health and Wellbeing Board, following on from Councillor Mulherin's work there – go to Armley Prison and see how many people in jail are suffering from mental health issues. Shame on us that we cannot get the funding in place to tackle these issues.

While I think Government will again be lobbied about the winter pressures and the numbers of people inappropriately in beds in the hospital, we should be all from Local Government shouting out about needing investment into adult social care so that we can provide the spaces that we need out in the community that are appropriate for the people who need that support.

We started the afternoon talking about Community Committees. We should not under-estimate how special we are in Leeds for the work that we do in our Community Committees. We had our Inner South Committee last week and I think it was the best attended meeting we have had – real problems right from the front line coming to us as Members to tackle with officers in the room and a fantastic session on community safety. I am very pleased that our visitors from Birmingham who had come up to see how we do it were actually in the room and they were absolutely blown away by the work that we are doing there.

It is that issue about community and valuing people that is so important to us. I think all of the discussion about the South Bank, for example, is absolutely crucial. What is the point of having and attracting thousands of new jobs to this city if the people who live here, who grew up here, are growing up here, do not have the opportunity to benefit from those opportunities? Councillor Groves is absolutely right. Ten thousand students, already many of them in the South Bank already looking at really innovative ways that we can get all young people, the success rate still way off where they want to be but attracting girls to study engineering in the UTC, for example. Let us see far more of that.

I have to say, you know, Alan, Councillor Lamb, all through the transport conversation we have talked about the importance of this city talking with one voice. All of us, all parties, have been either in power or in opposition when we have had massive disappointments in the past. Surely we need to put that time behind us and come together, work together lobbying for what the city needs.

At this stage, this early stage, to be talking down the ambition that we have for this city I think is irresponsible in the extreme. There is a cross party Panel of Members has been put together, so input into that. There is a Panel of experts put together from across the country and beyond using the best research that this country has that goes on at Leeds University to talk to us about the innovation that we need to bring in –

how do we actually turn the fact that we have not got miles of track all over the city into an advantage given the technological advances that we know are coming forward?

Let us not talk down our ambition. We were not laughing at what you were saying, Councillor Lamb. I am afraid we were laughing because you mentioned underground, overground and for those of us of a certain age the whole thing of Wombling free (*laughter*) did, I am afraid, spring to mind. I will restrain my group from calling you Councillor Womble from now on! (*laughter*)

Let us be serious about our ambition for this city and let us all talk together. If we get it wrong then please I am sure you will speak out but not at this stage when we are trying to engage as many people as we possibly can.

The debate about cricket is a difficult one and we have these difficult decisions to make about investment in certain projects in the city. If you look at the whole agenda of culture, why are we still investing in culture and then you look at the fact over the last two years visitor numbers have really gone up significantly. With Headingley I have to say the economic benefit analysis that has been done is that it will bring £5.75m into Leeds and £5.3m additional visitor spend per year into Yorkshire. It is about keeping Leeds on the international map and making sure that we are an attractive place for people to come to invest from all over the world. Difficult decisions, I acknowledge and accept that, but this is the advice that we have been given.

I will end on the fact that I think all of the discussions we have had today have been about what we are actually here to do and that is to improve the lives of people in this city. I think we can all be very pleased that Arcadia has, on a very detailed analysis, announced that Leeds is the best city for quality of life and its attitude to people in the United Kingdom. Thank you, Chair. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Blake. We are now moving towards the scheduled tea break. We need a vote – a little minor thing like a vote, folks!

All those in favour of the Executive Board Minutes please show. (*A vote was taken*)
CARRIED.

Now, we are in the schedule meal break and may I invite our visitors in the gallery to join us for tea, should they wish – just follow the Councillors and you will know where we are. Can I ask you to be back at 4.45 – I am sure you will not be but I am going to ask you to be back at 4.45! Thank you.

(Short break)

ITEM 11 – REPORT ON DEVOLVED MATTERS

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we go on to Item 11, Report on Devolved Matters. Councillor Blake, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Lord Mayor. It is an interesting time discussing matters of devolution and particularly thinking back to the very recent vote

on the decision to leave the EU and the consequent complete change of Government right from the top, running right through, and I think really some announcements over the summer that suggest a change of attitude from the current Prime Minister to her predecessor in Cameron but in particular her Chancellor who, thinking back to George Osborne's very particular views on devolution and I think it is fair to say his very particular views on devolution based around Greater Manchester.

Obviously the impact of Brexit has been a topic of conversation at just about every single meeting we have been to at the Leeds City Region, at the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. I just want to reassure Councillor Stephenson, opportunity is always on the agenda at those discussions and it was a very difficult vote for many people but there are conversations already happening with different parts of the world, for example, and I think the roots that Leeds City Region has and the strong relationships across the globe will stand it in good stead to go out and realise the opportunities.

We are still waiting for guidance on devolution from the Prime Minister. There is a very strong suggestion that she is going to be much more relaxed about the requirement to have a directly elected Mayor alongside devolution deals but I want to tell Council that we have been lobbying on behalf of Yorkshire and the Leeds City Region in particular at every possible opportunity. We have written to the new Secretary of State, the new Ministers in the relevant positions, to the Prime Minister herself and with the good offices of the Yorkshire Post and the Yorkshire Evening Post we wrote an open letter from all leaders and actually received a very positive response in regard to her attitude to the whole of Yorkshire going forward.

We need to make sure that warm words translate into action. I think we have all of us seen warm words before but we are very clear that we need to articulate and keep articulating our vision that we believe that more devolution is the key to unlocking some of the worst problems that we have got in the Leeds City Region whilst we actually talk up the successes of the Leeds City Region. I do not think we get that message out nearly enough to people in our communities and beyond and we need to be singing a lot stronger about the success we have got. The most important thing we have to do is to make sure we get the investment we need coming into the North. We cannot continue with the skewed investment, the eye-watering amounts that are going into other parts of the country apart from Leeds City Region and apart from the North as a whole.

We have to remember, we have the largest number of manufacturing jobs in the country. We have got the fastest year on year private sector job growth of any region and we, despite not having a signed deal in George Osborne's iteration, have already got the biggest growth deal in the country.

Transport is a case in point. We are continuing to work towards HS2 being delivered and WYCA and Councillor Wakefield are working on their own transport consultation for the period 2016 to 2016. Thank you, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Blake. Councillor Lewis to second.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I second, Vice Chair, and reserve the right to speak.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, James. Councillor Carter, please.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, Chair. We have got a second chance at devolution. You all know my views about the speed with which we moved under the previous Government and we saw Manchester march ahead. They have got actually just what they want. I think in Manchester they are very relaxed about the Mayoral model anyway, they have got what they want, they have got substantially more devolution than we have. As Judith says, our City Deal was a very good one, so we do have an opportunity, and Councillor Stephenson was right in what he said previously. This opportunity must not be missed.

On 23rd November we will have the Autumn Statement – I think that is the date, it is going to be slightly earlier than it was last year – and I think it is an Autumn Statement already surrounded by great expectations.

When you talk about warm words from the Government, we need to be sure that we have not just been listening to warm words in here because I think an opportunity will present itself which will allow Local Authorities in Yorkshire to come together with a devolved model – not necessarily with a Mayor and I agree again, I think, that the new Government is much more relaxed about the model of devolution providing the governance structures are a great deal stronger than the one we currently have in the Combined Authority. A lot of us are making all sorts of comments elsewhere about what we would like to see happen. I know some very positive meetings have taken place between Council Leaders representing certainly two political parties and certainly my colleagues and I, I think we are meeting up very shortly to discuss a deal that may be on the table and how acceptable it will be to us. It is true to say there is progress but I do believe there is a significant opportunity coming our way and we need to be ready to take it, and I hope that we will and we will make sure that we are not overshadowed by Manchester.

More particularly, because I see the orange light is on, with Brexit we have to ensure that the money that came into our region from Europe is replicated by the British Government when Brexit comes about. It is most important, certainly in the short to medium term until we get proper devolution where we can begin to generate more money of our own and I hope that is what is going to happen. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Andrew. Councillor Leadley, please.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Mr Deputy Chairman, one of the most dismal sayings of the 20th Century is, we are where we are, which is self-evidently circular. Perhaps it means something like we are stuck in a bog, we do not know how we got here and we do not know how to get out so we will just have to put up with it. “Brexit means Brexit” now almost daily seems to be a saying of a similar kind.

The Report on Devolved Matters mentions a referendum. There is no doubt that it has had an effect like a civil war – it has divided every group in the land from families to political parties along lines which were not foreseen a few months ago. Although they had a lot more gunfire, the 17th Century English, the 20th Century Spanish and Yugoslav civil wars do spring to mind.

One remarkable thing is that except for the first few days after the vote when the figures were reported directly, readers of the Yorkshire Evening Post who follow its letters pages or even read the rest of the paper thoroughly would not know that Leeds,

together with York and Harrogate, actually voted Remain. I was not surprised by the Leave vote and said as much in a letter published in the Morley Observer on 15th June. The Remain campaign was disorganised, if it had any organisation at all, and did not really get going until the last ten days before polling.

Quite famously Nigel Farage said on referendum night that he thought Remain had edged it and many went to their beds comforted by that thought. In a way Farage was probably right, based on the atmosphere that he had soaked up on polling day. Reality differed because so many people nowadays have postal votes which they cast long before David Cameron's last ditch cavalry gallop to the polling stations. Following his instant resignation from the post of Prime Minister, Mr Cameron has now decided to exit the House of Commons altogether, leaving others to sort out the fine mess he has left behind. As for Jeremy Corbyn, for all his protestations he is like a Shakespearean character who is dying to Brexit, stage left. *(laughter)*

Theresa May is criticised daily because she has not Brexited already, which is hardly fair. It is clear that if Brexit goes the distance it will be a long process, like separating Siamese twins. Since the late 1970s we have never had fewer than a million out of work in this country so it is remarkable that millions come from Eastern Europe after 2004 and find work with little apparent difficulty. Those who are too idle to pick strawberries should not find fault with those who come from Portugal, Bulgaria, Poland or Lithuania to do exactly that.

East Europeans were denied freedom of movement from 1939 until nearly the end of the 20th Century and Germany, whose current Chancellor was an East German, was cut in two for 40 years, so it is hard to see how any of them would agree to a single market trade deal which put up bureaucratic barriers instead of barbed wire.

Chinese scholars when asked to sum up the effects and outcome of the French Revolution always insist that it is too early to say yet and Brexit seems to be a similar conundrum. Thank you, my Deputy Chairman. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Tom. There are a few who have asked me to comment. When I am in the Chair, I am the Chair. My title is quite right, I am the Vice Chair of the Council but I really do not mind actually. Just for the benefit of one or two people I am pointing that out. We will not waste any more time on that, anyway. Councillor Blackburn, please. No? Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Yes, we are going to be concentrating on Brexit, aren't we? It is interesting, though, that devolution was something that was really felt to be something fresh and positive and for a little while during the Coalition Government it sort of felt like there was a new dawn happening, and then Osborne got his own way for a little over twelve months and it really started to be really quite negative as people dithered and set bizarre obstacles. Let us hope that the elected Mayor episode is something that we can put behind us. I know that Councillor Blake and the other people on the Combined Authority are serious about taking it forward.

I think I will say, though, we have always in the past suffered from being far too reasonable and while all these civil servants are being drafted into Liam Fox's and David Davis's new departments and whatever, they are going to be preoccupied talking to their European colleagues and I think now is the time for us to be actually pushing much harder and much more vocally for our version of devolution, because it

will be harder to refute when they have not got as much time to argue against it, so I would like to see a little bit more of that.

In terms of the effect of Brexit on our devolution, it is ever more needed. As Councillor Carter was pointing out, we need to make sure that our profile is higher. I think one of the things that we need to demonstrate sooner rather than later is that our European Capital of Culture bid is something that we are very serious about keeping on board about, and actually Brexit makes it even more important that we need to achieve it.

Councillor Lowe's defence of our Polish neighbours that are already here with us in the city, we need to demonstrate that very emphatically as well, not just as individual Councillors like Councillor Lowe but also as a Council ourselves to go to Government and say actually our economy now and in the immediate future, and in the medium term future, relies on these people feeling secure and accepted and wanted within our communities and if we are to keep our care services going and in places like Rothwell where I am our agriculture going, we need to make sure that our friends who are non-UK European citizens are guaranteed their status in this country and the greater clarification the sooner the better on that one.

More importantly, of course, we are meaning to be a future city and future cities have certain characteristics and one of them is that you have lots of young people wanting to come to your place because you are seen as forward thinking. We cannot be seen as part of a country that is potentially slipping backwards and we need to make the best of Brexit and point out that it is a new future and we can set our own local new future in Leeds. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Stewart. I now call on Councillor Blake to sum up, please.

COUNCILLOR BLAKE: Thank you, Chair. Some really interesting things to pick up on. Just in terms of Brexit and the vote, whereas Leeds itself was 0.4% above just to Remain, I think what is really important is that as England in particular is the most centralised country in Europe apart from Albania – and I think we are in competition now with Albania for the bottom spot – you can actually directly relate the disaffection of people who live in our communities from the Government elections. Local Government turn out is woefully low because people do not have enough say over what happens to them. We need to bring devolution in so we reinvigorate the debate and make sure that it is relevant to people's lives.

I think one of the things we have to do with the debate going forward is make it relevant to people's lives, and I think just talking fast, shiny trains, while they might be important, is not enough. We have to talk about the things that really matter to people – the fact that their kids cannot get jobs, the fact that so many women are at risk of losing their jobs, the fact that skills are not relating through the education system to the jobs that we have on offer here. If we had more say on the education system going right through from primary school into secondary school and then into the different routes, I think we would have a lot more engagement.

The Capital of Culture bid, we are persisting with it. We have not been told that we cannot. Norway and Iceland have both been Capital of Culture although they are not part of the EU and we will continue to move that forward, but the really important

thing as Local Government, we have to have a seat at the Brexit table. If money – and we do not know how much we are talking about because of all the figures that are put around – comes back to Central Government and then is sent out to the country through the most unfair funding formula that we have ever seen in this country, then we are in for big trouble. We need to get the principles of European funding targeting need and deprivation into the National Funding Formula to make sure that we can deliver.

Just picking up on the situation in Armley, and Councillor Lowe's comments, Leeds prides itself on being a city of sanctuary, a city that has welcomed so many people from so many parts of the world to come and live and work here. We have an enormous job to give them reassurance that they are welcome here and we want them to stay and make sure that we have a zero tolerance approach wherever race hatred or any attacks at all happen in our communities we are out there and in there, working through our Community Committees, right down at the front line. Thank you, Chair. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we move to the vote, please. *(A vote was taken)* That is CARRIED.

WHITE PAPERS

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we move to the final part of the meeting, White Papers. We have three White Papers this evening for debate. Each debate will last for no more than 45 minutes and will conclude with votes on the motion and any amendments.

ITEM 12 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – ELECTIONS

THE CHAIRMAN: First of all can we move to the White Paper in the name of Andrew Carter. Andrew, please.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you. This White Paper actually follows on quite nicely in many ways from what we have just been saying. The Chinese seem to be getting everywhere today! The Chinese saying – I understand it is a curse – may you live in interesting times. We certainly do live in interesting times.

Before I go into the detail of the White Paper, I am personally extremely concerned about what I see as the massive disaffection of people with all the major political parties, with the Civil Service, and I include in the Civil Service the Local Government Civil Service.

What we saw in the Brexit vote was a kick in the seat of the pants by the electorate for all of us on whatever side of the debate you were on, and unless we take that on board and seriously think about what it actually means, then we are going to find ourselves in very interesting times indeed.

This is part of it. What this country cannot afford is to have the electoral system fall into disrepute and increasingly be regarded by people across the board in all sorts of different parts of the country and it is wrong to try and paint the Brexit voters as the disenfranchised giving a kick in the pants to the establishment. It was actually people

all across the country from all sorts of backgrounds, all sorts of ways of life and it is that sort of thing that is spreading in connection with the electoral system if we allow the Tower Hamlets situation to become more widespread.

Just let me point a few things out about Tower Hamlets, which are really concerning. The Electoral Commissioner upheld a number of the allegations that were made about what happened in Tower Hamlets – false statements, voting fraud, ballots double cast and cast from false addresses, bribery, large amounts of money given to organisations who were, and I quote, “totally ineligible or who failed to meet the threshold of eligibility”, treating and various other things.

In March of this year the Met Police investigation found insufficient evidence – another wonderful tick in the box for the Metropolitan Police. What I would suggest to you is that the police have not taken electoral fraud seriously enough because it is an issue they wish far away. I am sure we all do.

When we say “Well, it couldn’t happen here”, I suspect it does happen here on a much smaller scale but I suspect it does, I suspect it happens in a lot of places and you will never completely stamp it out, but you have to make sure that the systems you have are rigorous enough to make sure it is well under control and that the general public do not start to lose confidence in the electoral system.

I would just say to officers, they must have had all the regulatory offices in place in Tower Hamlets that we have here, so how did it happen? How did it happen? That becomes the big fear, doesn’t it, it has happened there, it could happen anywhere. In fact it has happened elsewhere. Since 2004 it has happened in a whole string of places – in Birmingham for one and in others.

What I would just suggest to you – and I am really sorry the Liberal Democrats have chosen to amend this and I note Labour have not and I hope that indicates that they are going to vote with the White Paper because it is a perfectly straightforward White Paper, it asks for what we should all be asking for. My concern is that if we do not as a Government (and the Government is as much responsible as we are in Local Government) and in Local Government and the Civil Service and the local Civil Service take this seriously, then you will see a further erosion in trust of the British people, this time in the electoral system and the way in which there is security about your vote.

We let that happen at our peril, Members of Council, and I would ask you all to support the White Paper exactly as it is worded. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Andrew. Councillor Wadsworth to second.

COUNCILLOR WADSWORTH: Thank you, Chair. I have pleasure in seconding this motion in the name of Councillor Carter. No-one can argue against the need to eliminate all fraud because we all want elections to be fair, choose which party we stand for, and the public want elections to be fair. The public needs to have confidence that they are casting their vote.

One thing that was raised at the referendum was the number of people that had said to the polling staff, “I do not want to use a pencil, I want to use a pen because a pencil can be rubbed out.” It does not show that they have confidence in the pencil but they

do have confidence in the pen and it is confidence in the system. We just need to look at how we look at the system. Postal votes, we need to ensure that any harvesting of postal votes cannot happen and that people are on the register and the correct people are on the register, and also people that have actually filled the postal vote in are the people that have signed the declaration. We need to put those systems in place so that that does happen.

Voting in person, we do need to improve, I think, in the of identification people. We do not even ask them to bring their polling card along so effectively anyone can go along in the morning and so long as they can say they are a certain person and they know that certain address, they will be ruled out with a line and they will vote. If the same person comes along afterwards then that will cause a problem but they will have cast that vote however, and that does need to be stopped.

I am pleased that the administration are not amending it because I think that feels that they are going to implement Mr Pickles's recommendations and do their best to make the system fair. Where I am disappointed is that the Lib Dems have chosen to amend it. I think it is a little bit jumping on the bandwagon, Stewart, it is a bit like the way you wanted to introduce food waste collections in the previous debate that we had. You brought that in and you seem to be looking at this whether you want to change the system of actually how we do it by the way that you put the need to tighten up fraud in our elections. It is not about fraud for you, it seems to be about changing the system to a different political system. Jonathan, you will probably explain further on that later on.

As I say, we hope we can be unanimous in voting for this and all work together to take away fraud. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Paul. I now call on Councillor Jon Bentley to move an amendment. Councillor Bentley.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thanks, Chair. I do not think anything in our amendment and anything I am going to say actually detracts from anything that Councillor Carter and Paul have just said. We are fully behind most of the recommendations in this paper and I think already there is a commitment from the Election Service to produce the report that Councillor Cater has been asking for.

I suppose old habits do dye a bit hard and when we see a missive from Eric Pickles – or Sir Eric now – we do like to unpack it a little bit just to see where the catch is but we certainly welcome those recommendations that make it easier for individuals or parties to challenge election results without having to go through the difficult petition system. Recommendations making it easier to deal with intimidation at or near polling stations, banning intimidating behaviour like taking photographs of people going into vote, all those are welcome. Most of the recommendations are proportionate and common sense and I suppose the only question why has it taken so long for these things to come forward, it probably needs something like a scandal like the Tower Hamlets that puts the spotlight on it.

Having come up with all these good recommendations I think it is strange, therefore, that Eric is not looking for a single stronger regulator to make sure that they work and to oversee the electoral law administration.

Part of the problem in the past has been that the responsibilities have been fragmented but Sir Eric Pickles is looking to fragment those even more by involving new bodies like the Public Service and Local Government Ombudsman. A good example that the difficulties that can be caused with the fragmentation of responsibilities can be seen with the problems that there were when there were investigations into the allegations that the Conservative Party were falsely declaring local party expenditure as national expenditure, the so-called battle bus expenses. The reason that has still not been resolved is because of the confusion over who should be taking charge of the investigation.

If we are actually serious about taking electoral fraud seriously, we should have one strong regulator and the Electoral Commission should be beefed up to perform that role. We would like to see the Electoral Services comments on the Pickles' report address the issue of investigation and enforcement.

It is really coming back to Councillor Carter's issue about the confidence that our people have in voting and whether it is going to make a difference, so it is not only the thought of ballot box fraud that undermines people's confidence in representative democracy; what really undermines confidence is the thought that your vote, however legally cast, does not count. What really undermines democracy is when a departing Prime Minister can simply appoint a bunch of his mates into the alleged assembly, which is already overcrowded; when a party getting 36% of the vote gets over 50% of the seats and a party with 12% of the votes gets no seats at all. No wonder people lose confidence then. What do they do? They ask for a referendum. We all know nothing good comes out of those. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Jon. Can I call upon Councillor Chapman to second, please.

COUNCILLOR CHAPMAN: Thank you, Chair. I am happy to second the amendment and reserve the right to speak.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Judith. Councillor Leadley, please.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Mr Chairman, it is surprising how many people do seem to have read Sir Eric Pickles' report, which is of a type which generally would be studied only by those who had a contractual obligation to do so. *(laughter)*

This underlines the alarm which has been raised by any erosion of the integrity and honesty of our democratic process. So far the fingers have been pointed at politicians and their helpers and supporters, but if nothing is done we will not be a long way from corrupt administration of the electoral system in some places. Sir Eric did find signs of administrative blind eyes being turned even within the Electoral Commission.

The secret ballot was introduced in 1872 for a Parliamentary bye-election in Pontefract to try and deal with longstanding corruption and intimidation of electors, which were old election traditions, particularly in some of the smaller boroughs and more thinly populated counties. Pontefract's other claim to Parliamentary electoral fame is that it once had a temperance candidate who gained no votes at all *(laughter)* which is a record unlikely to be beaten, even if fraud does become endemic.

After the passing of the Corrupt Practices Act of 1883, mainland Britain seemed to enjoy a long spell in which we at least believed that our elections were fair, open and honest.

Sir Eric's report was prompted mostly by the events in the Rotten Borough of Tower Hamlets but it confirmed that for ten years or more there had been evidence across the country that all was not well, especially with postal voting which in some places can account for more than 30% of all electors, and a far higher proportion of votes which are actually cast. There have been examples of statutory old postal voting, as we know in Leeds so the importance of a trustworthy system of postal vote registration recording is self-evident.

International observers have remarked that too much is taken on trust within the British electoral system. It is open to fraud because our checks are insufficient and unsophisticated to the point of naivety and it is especially vulnerable because we do not have national identity cards. We are happy to support Councillor Andrew Carter's motion. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Tom. Can I move to Councillor Blackburn now, please. David.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Chair. Democracy is no good unless people believe in it and the problem is certainly with events in recent years, particularly with postal votes, in some places the believing of the result is not there so we have got to make sure there is not fraud and I fully support the meaning of the resolution.

It is not just about that. One of the reasons people do not vote is because they do not feel involved but if you have a system where one party can get a majority and not have a majority of voters and you get a situation, as happened at the General Election, where the SNP in Scotland due to first past the vote got loads of seats, loads more than other parties who got less seats in Parliament, it is not seen as fair and people think what's the point in voting? It does come down to actually introducing a fair system of voting as well.

We need to look at this, as I say, certainly on the postal votes. I have got to say how we used to do the postal votes was fairly restrictive and I was glad to see it opened up, but we ain't put the safeguards in that is necessary. We are improving but we need to do much, much more. The only way we can make our democracy survive is make it fair. Thanks. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, David. Councillor Buckley, please.

COUNCILLOR BUCKLEY: Thank you, Chairman. I speak in support of Councillor Carter's motion and agree with many of the things which have already been said.

Most or all people in this Chamber will agree that there are very few feelings better than to contest an election and fight an election and win an election. It is a fantastic feeling and we all know all about it and we all know about losing as well. We are all democrats but we all want to beat our opponents, but the common denominator here is that we all respect free and fair elections. All this should be a given but in 2016 where we are today, or where we have very recently been until now, we can look back

on seven acts of Parliament which delivered us to that happy state of affairs and 1872 was mentioned a few minutes ago – if you go back to 1832 and the Reform Act it meant that one in seven men who owned valuable property were only than allowed to vote.

The 1867 Reform Act reformed the situation so that certain men in urban areas with property could vote. 1884, the Representation of the People Act, and that addressed the imbalances between boroughs, Rotten Boroughs, the countryside and brought the voting population up to five million people. 1918 – we are getting a bit closer to something we can relate to – another Representation of the People Act, all men 21 and over could now vote and 40% of women, albeit over 30 years old. The electorate now 21 million, including eight million women. 1928, 1948, 1969 further reforms ending in 1969 with universal suffrage from the age of 18 onwards.

This whole story is a story of progress and it means that all of us here without exception can be full participants in the free electoral process. It has got nothing to do with how you actually arrive at who has won the election. It has got nothing to do with PR or proportional representation or goodness knows what. It is all about free and fair elections.

Just look at the dates, look at four recent dates which Councillor Carter partly referred to. 2004, fraud in local elections in Peterborough; 2005, five men found guilty of a fraud in Birmingham which Councillor Carter referred to involving thousands of postal votes and also in 2005 electoral fraud in Bradford; 2007, fraud in local elections in Slough and, as has already been referred to, we have all had our suspicions in this city in some areas. (*interruption*)

Let us not go back to 1830. We all want our candidate to win, we all want to accentuate the positive and we all strive to convince the unconvinced but people even exaggerate a bit during elections. We have only got to look at the EU referendum to look at the evidence of that. This is all part of the rough and tumble of a free democracy and free politics, but we must do it within the rules. Do not allow fraud anywhere near the process. Let us not go backwards. The Pickles measures are completely sound, they are not controversial, and I urge all Members to support the motion. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Robinson, please.

COUNCILLOR M ROBINSON: Thank you, Deputy Chair. Speaking in favour of the White Paper. A bit like Councillor Buckley, I was led to think of all the elections that I have stood in and that Members in this Chamber had stood in and the elections that we had fought as well. I almost wished some of the Pickles Report had suggested about people who are tearing down posters and people who throw your leaflets straight in the bin when you see them straight on the street because actually all the time that we spend pounding the streets trying to get our message across of what we want to do in our areas and what we want to do to our communities, some people just do not want to listen.

However, this motion is not about changing the voting system, it is not about changing how we interact with the public. It is about changing the sanctity of the ballot itself and it is trying to ensure that the sanctity of the ballot remains.

One of the best things about what I believe is the most free, tolerant and open society in the world in the UK is that we should have confidence in our ballot and where our ballot goes and that it makes a difference. In Leeds ahead of the European referendum we saw 34,000 people, additional people, registered on the electoral register for Leeds and who wanted to cast their ballot in the European referendum, feeling it would make a difference. Significant increases in Headingley of over 3,000 and Hyde Park and City and Hunslet of people who had never before wanted to engage in the democratic process, thought that it did not make a difference where they cast their vote, but they were engaged by the European referendum.

What we need to do now is make sure that now we have got those people engaged, they believe that their ballot will make a difference every time, not just in one referendum. Actually, looking at what is suggested by Sir Eric Pickles, this for some will not go far enough. Some people want it to be photo ID and that actually you should have to show your driving licence, you should have to show your passport if you are going in to cast your ballot. That is not what is suggested. You can still use other means to identify yourself when going into the ballot so it should not mean that it affects people who do not have a passport, people who do not have a driving licence, cannot afford them, do not want to access them. It actually will still entitle them to vote. That is within the report.

What it also does is, it encourages people like our Chief Executive to get more training on just what is in Electoral Law. I am in no way suggesting you do not have enough training, Tom, (*laughter*) but it is encouraging that Local Authorities should be able to access that training, should be encouraged to do so and actually we should have confidence as Members in our officers when they are standing in so when they are standing in as Returning Officers or whether they are in the polling stations we should have confidence in them to make those decisions.

I think that actually what is brought forward is very sensible. I think if we are suggesting, as I read in some of the amendments to the White Paper, that we should look at different electoral systems – whether that is the alternative vote system (I seem to remember we had a referendum on that, everybody had a chance to have their say and that was duly kicked into touch), the single transferable vote system that works in Northern Ireland and that works in Scotland for Local Government, there needs to be far more done on it. That is not what is being suggested in this report and I would be interested to know people's perceptions of the Boundary Review as well when we look at this because we should look to make sure that seats are far more equal.

That is not what this White Paper is about. It is about the sanctity of the ballot, it is about making sure that people's votes count and it is about making sure that people can have their say in Leeds and have confidence in this Council to deliver for them as well. Thank you, Mr Chair. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Matthew. Councillor Grahame, Paulene, please.

COUNCILLOR P GRAHAME: Thank you, Chair. I welcome the opportunity to speak on the report of Sir Eric Pickles' review into electoral fraud. The report has set out 50 recommendations for consideration and we actively await the Government's response to the review, as well as any changes to current legislation or guidance that are made.

In Leeds we take the integrity of electoral practice extremely seriously and it is therefore worth noting that Leeds does not feature in the 16 areas listed as high risk for electoral fraud by the Electoral Commission. This does not, however, allow us to become complacent. We will ensure that our Electoral Services Department works closely with both the Cabinet Office and the Electoral Commission to discuss the recommendations from the review and implement any changes to legislation as a result of the review.

Both sides of the Chamber will agree that it is vital to ensure that all elections both nationally and locally are carried out in a fair, secure and, most importantly, legal manner. Between 2005 and 2015 there have been only two significant convictions for electoral fraud in West Yorkshire - Bradford West UK Parliamentary Constituency in 2005 and Calderdale Council in 2008. Members will of course be aware that both occasions featured candidates from the same party and it was not Labour. *(laughter)* the Council's Electoral Services have worked to introduce individual electoral registration in Leeds following the previous round to changes to electoral procedure. This has seen registration numbers rise to 561,468 at the time of the EU referendum and with a turn out of 71.5%, Leeds had the second highest number of people going to vote out of all the Core Cities.

Council will be aware that postal voters are also required to resubmit their personal identifiers once every five years, which maintains the integrity of the security of postal voting. With almost 113,000 postal voters in Leeds it is pleasing that this Council can raise participation and, importantly, do so without incidence, yet we should not be complacent.

In closing, as Chair of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee, I remind Members that whilst the Pickles' Report only presents recommendations, we as a Council need to be all committed to respond to any changes to law or statutory guidance and maintain the high standards of probity and governance which the people of Leeds rightly demand of us as politicians. Thank you, Chair. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Paulene. Councillor Cleasby asked me to announce that Kadeena Cox broke the world record in winning her second gold, this time in athletics, the 400 meters. *(Applause)* Councillor Smart, please.

COUNCILLOR SMART: Chair and Members of Council, our Electoral Services have a crucial role in running free and fair elections and safeguarding the integrity of the election process, but electoral administration is about more than just preventing electoral fraud. There is another crucial role our elections office plays which should not go unrecognised. It is also the job of our elections office to engage the citizens of Leeds in the elections and reach out to hard to reach groups in the city.

The Conservative and Lib Dem Coalition Government brought in individual electoral registration in 2014 which creates a number of challenges for Local Government and Electoral Services. This new system resulted in thousands of students and renters falling off the electoral register. In spite of the serious obstacles this presented, Leeds City Council and partners across the city have done great work to not only meet the previous numbers of registered electors in Leeds but to exceed them. Leeds City Council has put a great deal of resources into canvassing door to door in areas of the city where registration is low. Democratic Services have also worked closely with

universities and student unions to help increase registration among students since individual registration was introduced.

In 2015 the Council part-funded the joint Give An X Campaign with the three student unions which targeted new students during Freshers Fortnight and funded doorstep canvassers for the halls of residence and other student accommodation. This was very successful and had a significant impact on the number of students that registered to vote. The Council has continued working with universities, colleges and student unions and we are now trying to include voter registration in the student enrolment process and to ensure that student registration in Leeds remains high.

It is important to remember that voter registration and increasing participation is not just a student issue. My ward, Armley, which is a low income area with a high volume of rented housing, has one of the lowest turnouts in the city but has a fairly low number of students. We need to target those who may fall off the electoral register because they live in rented accommodation or change address frequently.

We also need to think about what we can do about the generational problems of non-voting in certain communities. There is certainly no quick fix to solving this but we must recognise that there is a problem in certain neighbourhoods where household after household have never voted before – not because they have not got to grips with the new system but because they feel like Local Government does not represent them or connect with them and their family.

It may be easy to dismiss these residents as permanent non-voters but the EU referendum showed that there is a wider electorate out there. As Councillor Grahame has said, Leeds had a turn out of 71.5% in the EU referendum, the second highest of all the Core Cities. This shows that there are people out there who do not engage with local elections but are willing to show up to the ballot box when the cause matters to them.

The challenge ahead is to find ways of engaging with the wider Leeds population in local elections and doing as much as we can to show the people of Leeds that elected Members make decisions on their behalf on a daily basis which affect their lives and the services they receive. While the turnout of the EU referendum was 71.5% in Leeds, the turnout for the local elections which took place only six weeks previously was just 34.5%.

As elected Members we can all play a role in helping widen participation in the election process. We can work with local schools, colleges and universities in our communities to help reach out for disenfranchised young people and students; we can speak to residents in neighbourhoods with low turnout rates about the importance of registering and turning out to vote.

Finally, we must all remember that these are not just tick box exercises to complete in the last few weeks of an election campaign. As a Council we need to make sure that this work is being done year round. I am proud of the work we have done but we must keep up this important work to ensure every Leeds citizen feels engaged and included in our city's election process. As has been said, the public needs to have confidence in their vote and the robustness of the system but this is only half the battle. The public also needs to understand that their vote matters and is worth using. Thank you, Chair. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Alice. Councillor Golton, please.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Chair. I am getting more and more irritated at this debate goes on. This is the principal opposition of the Council and the only White Paper they can bring before us is something which has probably been handed to them by their Party Office and said, “Make a fuss about electoral fraud because it is usually the Labour Party that is in trouble.” I think actually your side has been pretty dignified in the face of that because we know what it is all about, it is a little bit of Michael Howard, “Are you thinking what I’m thinking?” *(laughter)* that is what this is all about and it is a waste of time. It is a complete waste of time because I have been in this Council for 17 years now. The Electoral Services in this Council are second to none and I have never known them to be unprepared for any addition in the rules, any change in the voting system to the point where this city has been unprepared in the face of any election.

I do not know why there is a purpose for the Conservative Group to bring forward a White Paper asking the Council to make that so because it has always been so. Quite frankly, why are you not bringing a White Paper which is lambasting this lot for something they are doing wrong as opposed to something they are actually doing quite right? *(interruption)*

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Like you did.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: We do not do anything wrong.

COUNCILLOR: You did so well.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Yesterday – Executive Board yesterday.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Excuse us for getting – Councillor Anderson, I am talking. This is democracy, Councillor Anderson.

COUNCILLOR ANDERSON: Waffling as usual.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Mr Chairman. I appreciate you do not like people talking about democracy.

THE CHAIRMAN: We were doing so well this afternoon. Can we keep together for the last hour or so? Continue, Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR: I thought you were friends!

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: I am sorry, I am not waffling. I am getting to the point, Councillor Anderson, because I do not see the point of your White Paper.

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Your Chief Whip does.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: If you are wanting to talk about how do we engage better with the public in this city I would appreciate that because under the current system – and this is the reason why we put our amendment in – under the current system people

in City and Holbeck do not know who you are because you do not deliver any leaflets down there.

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: They certainly do not know who you are.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: No, we do not deliver leaflets there either because the current system means that the constituencies that we have, you might call them equal - they are equal in numbers but they are certainly not equal in the outcomes for those citizens that live within them.

COUNCILLOR: Everybody's vote counts the same.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Everybody's vote counts the same, yes, but do you know what, people are not encouraged to vote the same and the one lesson that we can have that you are right, actually, on this side, the one lesson that you did get right is that the referendum gave people a reason to think, "Do you know what, for once my vote counts because there is a binary choice there and I can choose for *that* or I can choose for *that*" and it got people out. Too often, unfortunately, because of the way that you two have stitched up the electoral system over the years, people do not have that choice. (*interruption*) Unless you actually amend that electoral system, like Councillor Buckley was pointing out, you extended the suffrage...

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: Stitch up the Government system.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: We will remind them, Andrew, we will remind them.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: ...time and time and time again and when you did that you also changed the way that you vote.

COUNCILLOR: You remember that now. You had forgotten that, had you?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Well, look...

COUNCILLOR: Forgot about the Coalition.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: I am going to conclude now. I am sorry for those people who have sat there very patiently.

THE CHAIRMAN: Come on.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: This has been a non-debate. The thing is, I can assure you, Councillor Carter, that the Electoral Services in this city will be able to implement whatever recommendation comes through from the Government and it will be no thanks to you. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Golton, for livening up the debate tonight! It was in danger of simmering along. Councillor Carter to sum up, please. Councillor Carter.

COUNCILLOR: Follow that, Andrew.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Stewart, you have got ten minutes before they start casting for the pantomime at The Grand. On your way! *(laughter)* I do not know which end of the pantomime horse you are going to be but probably the back end would be the best one!

Councillor Golton is becoming a bigger caricature of himself at every Council meeting that goes past. My Lord Mayor, this was a serious debate on a very serious issue. This side took it that way, I have to say. Councillor Robinson hit the nail on the head. It is about the electoral system as it currently is. It is not about the Liberal Democrats trying to get an electoral system to give a corpse the kiss of life. To be fair to Councillor Bentley, he did seem to understand that and he looked a bit embarrassed about having amended it in the first place.

Councillor Golton, if you believe that there is not corruption in Local Government elections and possibly Parliamentary elections in this country you are living in a world of your own.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: In Leeds. In Leeds.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Nobody said that our Electoral Services are not equipped to deal with it – indeed over the years they have dealt with it very well indeed but it has not stopped the fact that more and more instances of corruption have been uncovered.

Let me quote the words of Richard Mawrey QC who is acting as an Election Commissioner on one particular case. He said, and I guess he knows a lot more about this than any of us here and particularly you, Councillor Golton:

“To ignore the probability that fraud is widespread, particular in local elections, is a policy that even an ostrich would despise.”

That tells you everything you need to know. Actually, no-one told us to put this down, it was my idea and my Group agreed and I am moving it. I am delighted I am doing so because if you are not concerned, if you are not concerned about the general view abroad about politicians, politics, Government, local national, all the political parties, then you ought to be. If you want a debate on another electoral system that favours your party, let's have one but do not try and get out of having to vote for a perfectly straightforward motion for debate.

I am delighted that the other major party in the Council Chamber appears to be going to vote for it. Take your compliments where you can because you will not get any more! *(laughter)*

I think the words of Sir Richard Mawrey are extremely telling and they are absolutely correct. In the case of Tower Hamlets most people believe there should have been criminal prosecutions, there should have been jail sentences. We need to make sure, and the Pickles Review is excellent. Not somebody I have always agreed with, as you know in this Chamber, but one thing you can say about Eric, he is thorough and he is straightforward and he is to the point and his recommendations are just all of that.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: You lost us there, Andrew!

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Let us hope, even if you do not agree with him. I look forward to the sensible Members of the Council voting on my resolution. Thank you. Don't be late!

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Andrew. Can we now move on to the vote, please. First of all the amendment in the name of Councillor Jon Bentley. *(A vote was taken)* That is clearly LOST.

Can we then move on to the motion in the name of Councillor Andrew Carter. *(A vote was taken)* That looks unanimous, thank you. CARRIED. It is unanimous, Andrew, you have struck gold today, mate! You have got your gold medal.

ITEM 13 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – AUSTERITY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

THE CHAIRMAN: Moving on quickly, Item 13, White Paper motion in the name of James Lewis. James, please.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Chair. With everybody working out what to call you this evening and settling on Chair I am reminded of my predecessor, Honorary Alderman Mrs Marian Gent Monks JP who, in overseeing Kippax Common Residents and Tenants Association, if anybody called her Chair she would kick off about it and say, "I am not a piece of furniture" and I think we can argue about titles but I think you have done a great job at short notice this afternoon.

Turning from Marian on to another unstoppable woman in politics, the current Prime Minister, Mrs Theresa May who, unusually I think for a Conservative Prime Minister might have taken a step that all of us in the Labour Party would agree with and that was sacking the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, at the end of six years of failed austerity.

I was reading my favour newspaper, the Daily Telegraph, and in there it gave a blow by blow account of people like Gove and Osborne and what-not being kicked out of office and it said that George Osborne was sacked because he had over-promised on the economy but not lived up to the grand promises that he had made. We all know that austerity has failed. The Leader of the Conservative Party agrees with my White Paper so I am sure this White Paper will pass through with the same unanimity as the last one as there seems to be a fairly strong consensus on mistakes and failures of the last six years in economic policy – a policy that was decided upon by the Coalition Government of Conservative- Lib Dems and then a year of Conservatives on their own at the end.

I think again, as other Members referred from various items of business this afternoon, times have changed very quickly in the last few months in politics. Again it was as media commentator said you have seen ten years of politics in ten weeks over the summer and I think our White Paper this afternoon is an opportunity for us to come together as a Council Chamber and be very clear about the need for the Government to move on from its failed policy of austerity.

Theresa May came into office saying she wanted to fight burning injustice and I think when we look round this city and we see the impact of the economics of the last six years, not just on the reducing resource available to this Council to deliver services to

our citizens but also on the city as a whole, there are some fairly stark statistics. We see 14,000 more people living in poverty than lived in poverty in 2010; median pay is down by 2.3%. Also within those groups of poverty the people that think work is a solution, two-thirds of children in this city that are in poverty live in households where somebody is working. We have had the scourge of austerity not just in reduced services but also in reduced incomes for people that are getting up every day and going out to work and that has had a really negative impact on the city.

We have seen a Think Tank called the Resolution Foundation looked at tax and benefit policies overall and showed that the impact of the changes were that the lowest 50% of households, the poorest 50% of households had seen a decrease in income as a result of Tory and Lib Dem tax and benefits policies, but the biggest increases of income as a result of those policies were seen in the top wealthiest 20% of households. This is making our city and our society unfairer and more unequal and it has got to stop.

I think it is also worth reflecting on the benefit system, the introduction of things like sanctions so anybody who voluntarily resigns from a job, like the former Prime Minister did this week, will be sanctioned for a minimum of 13 weeks. Poor David Cameron will not be able to get access to Job Seekers' Allowance for the next 13 weeks because he voluntarily gave up his job! (*laughter*) If the decision maker at the DWP decides it was his fault he gave up his job, then he could be sanctioned for much, much longer. I just hope that the food banks of Whitney (*laughter*) are ready and waiting for them but of course we have all been in this together and I think we are starting to see how thin that has worn.

We have also got to look at fairness as well. We have seen money poured into the South of England that has not been poured into this city. There is going to be, Members have talked about the benefits of leaving the EU and we are going to see far more resource available to the Government. We want to take that as an opportunity but we also want to see it done fairly. There is £340-worth of EU money assigned just to the Leeds City Region over the next four years. This is the scale of resource and it cannot be distributed on the unfair system we have seen implemented by this Government over the last five years where we see wealthy places like Wokingham, which is one we have often quoted but if Leeds had had the same funding formula as Wokingham applied to our Government funding, we would have £100m a year more every year in our Council budget to spend.

Times are changing, the Government has changed at the top. Let us see a change of policy and let us come together and say as a city we are going to stand up and ask for fairness and ask for resources we need. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, James. Councillor Coupar, please, to second.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: Yes, thank you, Chair and colleagues. I think after the last White Paper debate a dose of reality is what this Chamber needs to realise what it is like for the most poorest living in our city.

Deprivation is something we have fought hard to counter in Leeds with lots of positive work. Despite this the Government's welfare reforms have the effect of forcing more people into poverty. According to the latest Index of Deprivation in 2015 there were 164,000 people in Leeds living in areas that are ranked amongst the

most deprived 10% nationally, 14,000 more people than there were when the Coalition Government came into power in 2010, back when you were friends.

The misguided Bedroom Tax policy has meant that more people have been forced into poverty in Leeds. In Leeds we have paid £1.3m in discretionary housing payments across 2015 and 2016 related to the Bedroom Tax, 182% of the budget allocated to us by Central Government. This is indicative of the pattern. Citizens see their welfare squeezed, then Local Councils who can offer support are further squeezed. In this way some of the most vulnerable in society are doubly penalised.

We now know what we have long suspected; the policies of the Coalition Government were not based on doing the right thing but on short-term political calculation. One particularly unsavoury revelation from the man who was Deputy Prime Minister under the Coalition is that to George Osborne it did not really matter what the human consequences were of his fervent slashing of welfare. Thanks to this attitude many households now find themselves on the edge of poverty.

Research by the housing charity Shelter this summer found that one in three working families could not pay their rent or mortgage for more than a month if they were to lose their jobs.

In this Parliament we are seeing yet more welfare reform being imposed on struggling families, plans to cap housing benefit in the social sector at the same level as paid to private landlords is a policy which could destroy the finances of women's refuges, amongst others. We hear the Prime Minister is looking into the issue but we will need more reassurance that work will be carried out to protect these vital services.

One area that particularly concerns me is the effect that the Government's housing policy has had on Leeds. We hear again from Nick Clegg that in the last Parliament our former Prime Minister and Chancellor were opposed to the building of more social housing as they believed that this would create more Labour voters. What kind of attitude is that? It is not surprising that under the Prime Ministership of David Cameron fewer homes were built than by any other Prime Minister since Stanley Baldwin. Over the last six years the Government has boosted demand but not supply. This failure to build housing is contributing to a situation where more and more are priced out of the housing market and the supply of much needed social housing is squeezed. Furthermore, the Housing and Planning Bill introduces the pay to stay policy in which relatively higher owning social tenants are to be hit with increased rents. Increased rents will be imposed on households with a combined income of more than £31,000.

It is strange to consider that the national governing party sees itself as a party of aspiration, then the pay to stay policy acts as a perverse disincentive against people increasing their earnings.

The pay to stay policy also contributes to a narrative where social housing is demonised. This could create a self-perpetuating downward spiral where building new social housing will be seen as increasingly unattractive. It is vitally important that we are able to build new homes in Leeds. With a change in Government I really hope that there is a change of course on the disastrous Housing and Planning Bill, a change of course on disastrous welfare reform such as the dead on arrival Universal

Credit, and a change of course in the squeezing of Local Government funding. I second the White Paper, Chair. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Debra. Councillor Golton to move an amendment. Stewart.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Chairman. I have to say I agree with most of what the White Paper says in terms of its sentiment in terms of Government and Local Government funding. However, Councillor Carter's amendment also roughly covers the same territory as well.

We are very much in agreement on this one and so I was wanting to see what difference this White Paper motion was actually going to add to all the other White Paper motions that we have had in the past which deplored the fact that Leeds (a) did not get as good a deal as anywhere else; (b) national Government was unfair to Local Government generally; (c) there was some kind of regional disparity.

It does not really add anything, unfortunately. Asking for more core funding when the Government has already told you you are not going to get any more core funding, even if there is a new Secretary of State who is actually more disinterested than the previous one, he is not going to be a champion for our Local Government funding, is he?

There seems to need to be a little bit more about what we are going to do in the face of that because it is not a picture that is going to change. Even when the parties were competing under Ed Miliband at the last election, the Labour Party Local Government spokesman was not going to provide any more money than a Conservative Local Government Minister was going to do, and now we do not even know what the Local Government policy is from the Labour Party any more, do we, because I am not sure who actually is your Local Government spokesman any more and actually I do not think most of you do.

It is not a really good time to lecture somebody else about Local Government policy when actually the principal opposition, a little like this principal opposition here in the Council, is not offering any decent policy changes.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: They are Googling it now to find out!
(laughter)

COUNCILLOR: Who's the Leader? *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thankfully, like under the Coalition Government that Debra Coupar was talking about, and quoting Nick Clegg, we can offer an alternative and hopefully we can guide you away from one of the extremes or other in terms of what Local Government is about. Actually this Group on the Council wants to actually implement some of the stuff that your previous Leader was advocating. Councillor Wakefield, I am praising you, you want to pay attention.

COUNCILLOR WAKEFIELD: Repeat it!

COUNCILLOR: Are you sure?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: The Commission for Local Government that he set up came forward with recommendations and it basically said, do you know what, we are not in a position for the financing of local Government to change and we need to set our own course and we need to create our own destiny, and that means working in different ways. That is something that should have been in your White Paper, to point out what you are doing to cope in this new environment and to have a long term plan to say this is where our city needs to be, we want it to have a stronger economy and a compassionate city and this is what we are going to do which is different to all the other Councils, rather than just going to Central Government again and asking for a bit more money so we can deliver what we have always done. That is a little bit of a disappointment and that is why we thought we would help you out with an amendment that does put that in. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Stewart. Councillor Campbell, please.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Thank you, Chair. Just before I start can I say thank you to Councillor Carter for the pantomime joke – it is only the fourth time I have heard him tell it in this Chamber but it does not lose anything! (*laughter*)

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: You have been here too long as well then!

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I have to say, Councillor Lewis, I really do not know what you have got against Wokingham. When I read the White Paper I thought why Wokingham? Where the hell is Wokingham, quite frankly! I did what – I do not know if he has found that on Google yet about your spokesman but I actually went on Google and Googled Wokingham and they come up. They have got a really nice website, by the way, it is much better than ours!

The interesting thing is, I am just wondering why you are comparing like with like because the population of Wokingham is about 30,000 which actually is less than the population of Morley and the Government grant that Wokingham got last year was £2.1m. My calculation is that the people of Morley earned for this city in Government grant £10.5m. Whether they saw any of that I do not know. I do not understand why you want to go to that system, which seems to be much worse than the one we have got at the moment. Presumably when you are summing up you will tell us why you want to see a cut in grant – I do not know why.

I have to say, it is the same old knockabout, isn't it? We have got the Labour Party in denial about their role in the financial crisis which forced (*interruption*) a re-evaluation of public finance. It did that.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: We are getting a history lesson now.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I have to say, you have not learned anything since because such Corbynista policies as we can see will actually make things much, much worse so there is no real change there.

I suppose we have got an issue as well with the Tories because I do have a problem with them forcing the less well off to fund the dogmatic book-balancing exercise while basically ignoring the fundamental inequalities of society but the new Chancellor is not pointing us in a new direction. We are still carrying on down that road so there is no change there.

Whereas I would agree that we do need a different system for Council grants from Central Government, we have needed this since 1974 because it has been wrong since 1974 and Andrew we will agree with you there, the basic principle on which the Leeds grant is predicated was wrong in 1974 for a variety of reasons which we will not go into but it has never been addressed.

It seems to me that, as Stewart said, the Commission for Local Government concluded councils must respond to the challenges of funding cuts by empowering individuals, communities and the Third Sector to pioneer more efficient locally focused services and delivery. We have to do that because we cannot rely on the Labour Party in Westminster or, quite frankly, the Government in Westminster, to come and bale us out. I second the motion. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Colin. Councillor Andrew Carter to move a second amendment.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Thank you, Chairman, acting Lord Mayor, whatever you are! Nice to see you, Jim!

THE CHAIRMAN: You too, Andrew!

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: I am not sure why Councillor James Lewis would want to mention Chancellors of the Exchequer, or ex Chancellors, considering his choice for Chancellor did not get sacked in a Government reshuffle, he got sacked by the people of Morley and is currently performing on Strictly Come Dancing. I guess George Osborne, even given his reduced status...

COUNCILLOR: Give him time. *(laughter)*

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: ...might hum to himself "Look on the Bright Side of Life"! *(laughter)*

You should have listened to Colin Campbell instead of boo-hooing at him because he is spot on. Wokingham, why do you keep mentioning Wokingham? Presumably some nerd in your Head Office, if you have still got one, tells you Wokingham is the one to choose because nobody knows where it is and it sounds really leafy and Tory. Tell them it is that one.

COUNCILLOR: Surrey.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: Maybe it does, and they get two million quid. That is what they get from the Government. We get £588m.

The things you should be looking at, James, are the comparisons with like-for-like Authorities. You should be looking at Bradford, at Bristol, at Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, all hundreds of pounds per head more than we get and it has been the same and getting worse since 1974. Until we have a complete review – and we have called for it before and we call for it now, a complete review – of Local Government finance and the relationship between Central Government and Local Government, it will never get sorted out.

It goes back to 1974 and, of course, as subsequent Governments come in of both parties and the Coalition and they tinker with it, because we are in such a poor place to start with it gets progressively worse. Now, Bradford, fifty-odd million quid a year more than we get, per head of population. If we had the same per head of population spend from the Government as Bradford, we would have fifty odd million pounds more. How can that be right? If you look at Bradford, yes, of course it has got areas of deprivation as bad as ours but it has got leafy suburbs as good as ours. It has got Ilkley, it has got Baildon, it has got Shipley, Wetherby, Harewood – compare them. Why is it that Leeds has historically since 1974 lost out? Do not talk about Wokingham, James, talk about a sensible comparison and come up with some sensible ideas for how we can jointly say to Government this is what we need, because we are actually in agreement about that. Leeds has historically, from your lot, from my lot, from his lot, had a bad deal and it all dates back to 1974 and until you put that right it is never going to improve. Just understand it and deal with it.

I have to say, you are supposed to be in charge of resources, so they tell me. I have to say I wonder if Government have a look at some of the money that gets wasted. You have a building across the road here, a hotel that has not had any work done on it for nearly two years, as far as I can see. I am told we sunk five million quid into that. Where has that gone? Up in smoke? I understand that the LEP put money in, more Government money up in smoke. Are we going to get it back?

Someone looks at Leeds and says what's up with these guys? They are always moaning about money but my goodness me, they can throw it around when they want to. We should get our own house in order as well. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Procter.

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: Second, Lord Mayor, and reserve the right to speak.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Charlwood, please.

COUNCILLOR CHARLWOOD: Thank you, Chair. I am going to talk about Adult Social Care budgets now – a bit more prosaic.

Since 2010 the Adult Social Care share of the Council's budget has risen from around 29% to over 40% in 2016/17, accounting for over £200m of the Council's budget. This is indicative of the rising numbers of older and disabled people needing essential care and support and the increased complexities of their needs set against a background of significant cuts to wider public services.

While the Government is attempting to convince communities that they have increased investment in social care, the effect has been very small to meet the widening funding gap for these services.

Indeed, the introduction of the Social Care Precept, aimed at addressing some of these pressures, has instead meant that this has been used in part to address new pressures such as the national living wage.

These imposed cuts on public services and the need to address some of these pressures have forced Local Authorities across the country such as Leeds to seek

efficiencies and service transformation to ensure we can continue to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities effectively.

Nationally the Government has been warned for some time now of the state of Adult Social Care and the adverse effects of imposed cuts. Key groups such as the Health Foundation and the King's Fund estimate that there is likely to be a funding gap of between 2 and 2.7 billion pounds by 2019/20, even taking into account the additional support. Moreover, the Local Government Association predicts an even worse funding gap of £4.3bn by 2020. It is clear to see that the Government has failed to listen to these warnings and as a result its response has been at best complacent and at worse negligible.

There have been five years of funding reductions nationally totalling £4.6bn and representing 31% of real terms net budgets to Councils. Last year Adult Social Care budgets reduced nationally by a further £500m in cash terms, and taking growth and the numbers of older and disabled people into account, this means that an extra £1.1bn would be needed to maintain the same level of care as last year.

ADASS has further warned we are at a tipping point where social care is in jeopardy. These pressures and these issues will not just go away as the Government seems to hope. In fact in Leeds on current estimation we will see the number of people aged 65 and over rise by almost a third by 2030. With this will come new challenges, further pressures and a greater need to meet the demands of the complex needs of older and disabled people.

Similarly, as many of you in this Chamber are aware, key public health services which play a vital role on the wider health preventative agenda in the city also have been and continue to be subject to more cuts. Cuts to ringfence grants in year and public health spending will mean we effectively have £25m less to spend on public health priorities in Leeds.

Behind all these numbers are people who will face the greatest impact of these brutal cuts because of Government's inability to recognise the scale of the challenges which have gripped local health and care systems across the country. Since 2010 the Government had adopted an approach where it is all too willing to shift responsibility for providing services from the centre to local level, but failed to match this with sufficient funding, instead opting to implement cuts.

In her first speech as Prime Minister Theresa May put tackling inequality as one of her key priorities for her new Government. We will wait to see whether a change in Government signals a change in policy direction, especially in the upcoming Autumn Statement. However, what remains clear, at least to the many growing voices across the country, is that it is time the Government started to listen to our communities, investing in their health, investing in their care and ultimately putting an end to the failing austerity agenda which has significantly hit the poorest communities in Leeds hardest and across the country. Thank you, Chair. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor David Blackburn, please.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: Thank you, Chair. When I first read this motion I was somewhat wondering what the administration was aiming at. The fact is if you read the last two paragraphs, I think everybody, almost everybody in this Chamber

would go along with it because our level of funding is not good enough and has not been and was not good enough before 2010, before any of the present cuts, and basically any decisions we want to make we want to hold off until after the Autumn Statement, because we want to know what the new Chancellor is doing.

Then you look at the first part and I fully agree with it so do not start booing me when I say this but I am going to support your motion, but if you want to influence the Government you do not kick it because the fact is they will turn round and say no and what you need is, you need support of all the parties in this Chamber to go forward and ask them if they will support you and we are not doing that.

While everything that is in your motion is correct, and I agree with every bit of it, it is not the way to go and conduct negotiations with Government. People do not like being kicked and they will say no and that is the problem we have got.

I know, being a member of a little party and having to deal with all you various people when you have been in power, the fact is if I want to get something...

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: You were in power with us.

COUNCILLOR D BLACKBURN: I know (*laughter*) but the fact is if you want to go and influence stuff, if you want to try and get something out of it for your constituents or for whatever, you do not get it by shouting at them; you get it by talking to them, persuading them and we are not doing that there.

As far as the motion is concerned, what it contains, if you are Government bashing we will support you because we think they need bashing, but this is the wrong motion. Thank you, Lord Mayor. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Councillor Ryan Stephenson – not your maiden speech this time, congratulations!

COUNCILLOR STEPHENSON: Thank you, Chair. I did not think I would get the opportunity so early in my time here to partake in a debate on Labour's lack of economic credibility but what I will say first is that where there is agreement, it is right that we do say so and both the White Paper in the name of Councillor Lewis and the Conservative amendment today do reference a call to Her Majesty's Treasury to allow us to delay decision making on our core four year funding settlement until the Autumn Statement. I do think that is a sensible element to Labour's motion. It is, however, the only sensible element, Chair.

The motion talks of wrong political choices, the imposition of policies such as austerity. I know Labour Members are trying to forget the results of the last two General Elections but a gentle reminder, the British electorate of this country and here in Leeds, I think, as Councillor Carter referred to the seat of the Shadow Chancellor as well, did vote overwhelmingly against the policies offered by the Labour Party.

Indeed, the political illiteracy of this motion is really quite commendable. Complaining that economic downturns are felt hardest by those on low incomes – of course that is the case because those on low incomes are least able to protect themselves from an economic collapse. That is why the Government of today and 2010 were elected, to fix the mess it inherited. When we return to economic

prosperity those on low incomes have the greatest opportunity to improve their wages and their circumstances.

The comments in the White Paper about the former Chancellor just quite simply show no humility at all for the Deputy Leader of Council. In fact, he wants to be careful of the glass house he sits in when we talk about people in Westminster. We have the Leader of the Opposition, the Shadow Chancellor described as the Chuckle Brothers of politics telling us in some sort of comedic fashion economic theory of Chinese communism. It is not so much to me to you, maybe more from Mao to President Hu.

Members opposite can do all the name calling they want because the British electorate have voted twice now. They have recognised that bringing the public deficit and public spending under control both in Central and Local Government is necessary to fix the legacy left by the last Labour Government. This term Austerity Chancellor might provide good commentary for Members opposite when they are addressing the unionised masses of the constituency Labour Parties or, indeed, pretending that they support Comrade Corbyn to the threatening militants of Momentum. I do not look at anybody in particular from our area of Leeds but we on this side can stand by a record of action we have delivered and crucially in support of the British electorate, the fastest growing economy in the Western world, the deficit down, wages up, the highest ever employment rate, tax cuts for working people.

One could be forgiven for forgetting what the Labour Party is for any more. While the Conservatives have been fixing the public finances this White Paper highlights exactly why Members opposite still exhibit they just do not get it, Chair. It is like they have crashed the car and now they are complaining about the rise in the insurance premium.

I know not all Members opposite share the micro-economic obsessions of the new Old Labour consensus. I know some Members opposite refuse to take leave of their senses and long for a return of the day when the party was not infiltrated by the Red Army affiliates, but I call on Members opposite them, comrades if you will, join us, vote down this White Paper and support the sensible amendment in the name of Councillor Andrew Carter reiterating and calling for a Royal Commission on the future of Local Government finance. Thank you, Chair. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Stephenson. Before I call the next speaker can I point out that it is her maiden speech so may I call Councillor Arif, please.

COUNCILLOR ARIF: Thank you, Chair. During the tea break I met with Alan Lamb and he said to me “You owe me” and I said “I do”, and he said, “Yes, I gave up my space so that you could talk.” I would like to take this opportunity wholeheartedly to thank you, Councillor Lamb. I can get paid now! *(laughter)*

I suppose at some point all Members are faced with the prospect of delivering their maiden speech so naturally I was anxious to know when I would be delivering mine. Not having heard anything up until Friday I assumed I was off the hook but I was wrong.

I stand before you today to support the motion passed in the name of Councillor James Lewis. When I discovered I would be talking about austerity and the impact

that it has had in my ward and I knew I had to get everything I needed to get across in four minutes, I will get straight to the point.

Austerity has and continues to have a disproportionate impact on certain groups of people. It has unduly affected people who live in deprived areas, namely women, children, young people and those who are most vulnerable in our society.

Chair, I know this because I was born and now I represent an area which is statistically the most deprived area in Leeds. I proudly represent the people of Gipton and Harehills, two areas which could hardly be more different except for their level of deprivation.

To give you some facts, Gipton and Harehills has the largest population of zero to 15 year olds in this city. 58% of the residents receiving housing benefit or Council tax. Life expectancy is two years shorter than the city average and, alarmingly, the child poverty rate is 43%.

To tackle these issues my ward needs investment. It needs investment in health and social care, children's services, jobs and skills, housing and education. Instead, Chair, what we have is the age of austerity which has resulted in this Council's budget being squeezed – and I repeat again, squeezed – by £240m since 2010 with a further £100m to come. Unfortunately it is not only my ward that is bearing the brunt of austerity. Across the city the number of people who live in the 10% most deprived areas in Leeds has increased by 14,000 since 2010. Over 25,000 people in Leeds received food from a food bank or food parcel provider last year, almost 25% more than the previous year. The Conservatives say more jobs have been created but in Leeds more than 60,000 people earn less than the real living wage and around 10,000 people in Leeds are on zero hours contract.

Evidence shows that poverty and deprivation have increased since 2010. The poor are suffering from deeper poverty and the gap between the rich and poor is only widening. We were promised that the richer would shoulder the burden of austerity, yet last autumn George Osborne announced transitional support for rural Authorities. This saw additional grant funding for mostly southern Councils – Surrey, Hampshire, Hertfordshire – I have not mentioned Wokingham! *(laughter)*

In contrast what did Leeds gain? It gained nothing. Both the former Chancellor and former Prime Minister have slipped away (there is, after all, some justice) but, sadly, they have left no good behind and I feel equally ashamed and saddened that a Government which prides itself in being the sixth largest economy in the world is blind to the poverty within.

Lastly, the new Chancellor has announced he will deliver the Autumn Statement on 23rd November. I sincerely hope he recognises the desperate need to increase investment in public services in communities like the one I represent. Thank you, Chair. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Salma. It is great to see young Councillors coming here and making their maiden speech with such passion. Well done.

Can I call on Councillor Alan Lamb, please.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: That is a surprise, Lord Mayor. I did not anticipate getting to speak in this debate, actually; I did indeed switch places. Having been a new Member not all that long ago I remember how many times I prepared speeches and then did not get to deliver them in debates and I thought you would probably rather hear from Councillor Arif than me, but as it happens you get to listen to me as well which is an added bonus!

Mr Chairman, what a silly White Paper this is from Councillor Lewis. As Councillor Blackburn has hit the nail on the head, if he actually wanted to achieve something and he actually wanted to do something about Local Government finance, he would have come and talked to Councillor Carter and Councillor Golton and Councillor Blackburn and Councillor Finnigan and said “Right, we have got a problem here, we need to do something about it and the only way that is going to happen is if all parties go and make representations to Government consistently.”

This is nothing to do with trying to do something. It is simply about coming here, having a bit of knockabout, having a pop at the Government, rallying your troops and, of course, as ever, in doing so you are completely trying to re-write history and ignore the last Labour Government’s responsibility for the position we find ourselves in.

Councillor Campbell alluded to Labour being responsible for the financial crash. I do not entirely agree with that assessment, they did have some responsibility for the oversight. Where they have absolute responsibility is for leaving us totally unprepared and starting to run a deficit budget, which people keep forgetting. From 2001 onwards we have been spending more than we earn as a country for now 15 years and that meant that when a recession came we were not able to apply the normal stabilisers that you would of running a small deficit that you could then bring back into play, so the Labour Government is absolutely responsible wholeheartedly and every one of you that supports them is equally responsible for every bit of pain that is being felt in trying to fix the mess that you lot created. That is all I am going to say about that. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thanks, Alan. I think we can just squeeze you in, Councillor Ritchie, before we go to the vote.

COUNCILLOR RITCHIE: Thank you, Chair, and thank you Councillor Lamb for your speech there. I want to speak in support of this White Paper and draw Council’s attention to the impact of Mr Osborne’s austerity measures on a section of society who are unable to do anything to help themselves. I am talking about the impact on children.

Poverty affects one in four children in the UK today and when children grow up poor they miss out and so do the rest of us. They miss out on the things that most children take for granted – warm clothes, school trips, having friends over for tea. In short, they miss out on childhood.

Just to illustrate that, in my ward, my son goes to the local school, Leeds West Academy, and they have had one trip in the three years that he has been there because two of them were cancelled because the majority of the kids could not afford to go there. Another example, I came across a constituent who had just got a Council house, cannot afford carpets, could not afford to get a kid the school uniform so I found a charity that would get her a new school uniform so that kid could go to school

in dignity. That is why when you are telling us that we are talking nonsense and it is a nonsense White Paper and I am reminded of a recent Plans Panel when Councillor Procter told us that Ling Lane had been devastated by the size and shape of a well; this really puts it into context what some people in this city are going through.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Misrepresentation, my Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: He is not the Lord Mayor.

COUNCILLOR PROCTER: He is still in my eyes.

COUNCILLOR RITCHIE: Contrary to what the Government would have you believe, even work does not provide a guaranteed route out of poverty. Two-thirds of children growing up in poverty live in a family where at least one Member works, so that means 18,000 children in Leeds are living in poverty in working families.

Would we be happy if our children were forced to live as some of the examples that I have just given, because I am pretty certain no Government Minister would allow it either, so why do they think it is suitable and acceptable for other people's children?

It is more about what happens when they are children. Child poverty has long-lasting effects. By GCSE there is a 28% gap between children receiving free school meals and their wealthier peers in terms of achieving five A to C GCSE grades. Most of us here are school governors and we know the gaps in achievement. The Government recognise it as well and introduced the Pupil Premium to try and close that gap but as well as trying to fix the issue once it has arisen, why are we not investing in preventative strategies at the very beginning? We all know how successful early intervention is.

What we need to do is to put resources into eradicating child poverty and actually keep going until they have done it, and I do not just mean through changing the definition. Child poverty imposes costs on broader society estimated to be at least £29bn a year. Governments forgo prospective revenues as well as committing themselves to providing services in the future if they fail to address child poverty here and now.

We have spent the last six years looking for the compassionate and family friendly Government we were promised. The children and families of Leeds cannot afford to wait any longer. Austerity is not a necessity, it is a deliberate political choice. I urge you all to vote with your consciences, just as we did in the last White Paper, and support Councillor James Lewis's White Paper. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor James Lewis to sum up.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Some excellent speeches in that debate and I think Councillor Arif's maiden speech and Councillor Stephenson making one of his first contributions.

When I started off it was always said if the Opposition get personal with you, you are winning and that is how I felt during that last debate.

COUNCILLOR ANDREW CARTER: There is always an exception.

COUNCILLOR J LEWIS: I think I will help Andrew Carter out. As the Executive Member for Resources said, I will help him out. The hotel over there was not funded by this Council but by the LEP, which is a Government quango and a Government funding stream. In terms of where George Osborne goes next, given the amount of times he has been seen in his hi-vis jacket when work starts again, I bet George Osborne is working on that building site! *(laughter)* It will give him chance to get his hi-vis jacket out again!

Like soldiers of the Second World War that continued fighting in the Pacific long after the war was over, I think some of the Councillors down there are still fighting a war that has been lost. Nobody but nobody is arguing for austerity any more; whether it is the Leadership of the Conservative Party or the Leadership of the Labour party, everybody recognises austerity has failed. That is what this White Paper is about and let us be clear about that. Those Members of the parties down there, those Members of the Coalition parties that still seem to think that Austerity is the right thing, it is desirable and will deliver economic outcomes that are successful are living in the past and your own party Leadership has accepted that. One day the message will reach up from there.

Again, I looked at the Tory and Liberal amendments and there is some good stuff in there we would not argue with, but the central point is there. We have been very clear, and this is the point of the White Paper that has been put in by the Labour Group. The Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer have said they want to fight injustice and they want to stop austerity. We are asking them very clearly that the way they can do this for this city is to put extra resources into the Local Government Settlement and into our Local Government Settlement in the autumn. It is a very simple ask and I believe it is in line with what we have been saying.

Members have talked about the impact of austerity very eloquently on this city and it is time to bring it to the end. This idea that somehow or other – I was intrigued by the Lib Dems who are obviously are suffering from Stockholm Syndrome, they end up believing their captors, because to listen to Councillor Golton's speech and to read their White Paper amendment they want austerity to continue. They do not believe that there is anything wrong about deliberately starving public services, and let us not remember a couple of Conservative Members referred to deficits and borrowing. There is one fact, I have used it in this Council Chamber before but I will repeat it again. George Osborne borrowed more in six years than every single Labour Government has ever borrowed in history. What did those Labour Governments do over time? They created the Welfare State, they created the NHS, created institutions like the Open University to open up learning, brought in things like the minimum wage, they rebuilt schools and hospitals that were decaying. That is what Labour did without borrowing as much as George Osborne did and what did George Osborne get for six years of borrowing? He got the sack. Quite right. George Osborne has gone, David Cameron has gone, austerity is going.

I urge you people to vote for our White Paper. We want a fair deal for Leeds and we want the resources we want from this Government in the Autumn Statement and we will come together, as Members across the Chamber said, and make that message to Government and we will do that by voting for the White Paper in my name. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: We need to move towards the votes then. Can we firstly vote on the amendment in the name of Councillor Golton. *(A vote was taken)* That clearly falls. LOST

The second amendment in the name of Councillor Andrew Carter. *(A vote was taken)* That falls as well. LOST

Can we move on to the motion in the name of Councillor Lewis, then. *(A vote was taken)* That is clearly CARRIED. Thank you.

ITEM 14 – WHITE PAPER MOTION – AMAZON FACILITY AT LOGIC LEEDS

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we move on now to White Paper 14 on the agenda. Before I do, Councillor Alan Lamb needs to raise a point of order. We do not know what it is at this stage but we shall listen very carefully to it.

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Mr Chairman, it is nothing to do with the Wombles and, to be fair, I do think Councillor Blake should not talk down the achievements of the Wombles in Wimbledon, they have done a lot of good things!

COUNCILLOR: Recycling!

COUNCILLOR LAMB: Yes. Mr Chairman, in light of the content of the next White Paper and specifically the mentioning of the GMB Union and the Unite Union and potential actions they may or may not take, can the City Solicitor give some clarity to Members about what interests they should declare in relation to this item.

COUNCILLOR HESELWOOD: You just hate the unions. *(interruption)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillors, we need to hear this. Councillor, can we listen to the advice and then we will move on.

THE CITY SOLICITOR: I can confirm actually that those Members who have the interests that you have raised have actually sought legal advice prior to the meeting. That legal advice, which I am happy to share with Council, is that that interest is too remote for it to constitute an interest and they do not need to declare anything.
(Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Campbell.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Given the legal advice that this Group were given in relation to particularly the GMB, can I get a clear understanding that the advice you have given is pertinent to the fact that for those Members of the GMB and Unison who may have taken part in the action of the GMB and Unison on relation to their campaign, Amazon.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are leaving that point, are we? It was not clear for the solicitor, I am afraid.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I will say it again then. Given the advice you have just given to us and given the advice that we as a Group received in relation to our

White Paper, can you confirm that that advice actually covers those Members of the GMB and Unison who have taken part in action in relation to Amazon and Sports Direct, i.e. have taken part in the direct action.

THE CITY SOLICITOR: Chair, through you, yes I can confirm that that advice stands for that particular situation as well, so there is no interest to declare.

THE CHAIRMAN: Moving on then, can we move to the White Paper in the name of Stewart Golton. Stewart.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Lord Mayor, first of all though, sorry to be technical again but in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 14.9 (a) I would like to seek leave of Council to alter the wording of the motion in my name to include the amendment in the name of Councillor Jonathan Bentley, so that it reads thus:

“This Council welcomes the strong economy compassionate city agenda and believes that good quality jobs are essential to ensuring inclusive economic growth.

Council notes that a BBC investigation into a UK based Amazon warehouse found conditions that a stress expert said could cause ‘physical and mental illness’ and supports the GMB campaign for improved working conditions at Amazon warehouses, noting that similar campaigns have had a positive effect, in particular the recent success of the Unite campaign that has forced Sports Direct to improve conditions for workers in its warehouses.

Council believes it is hypocritical for the Labour administration to have purchased the Amazon warehouse at Logic Leeds without making any efforts to improve working conditions for employees at that site and that having done so undermines the strong economy compassionate city strategy.

Council therefore calls on the Labour administration to use its position as landlord to secure improved working conditions for employees at the Amazon facility at Logic Leeds.

Council further instructs the Executive to devise and implement an ethical employer policy to apply to commercial tenants of buildings owned by Leeds City Council that addresses issues of low pay, exploitative working practices and trade union recognition.”

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE CHAIRMAN: We do need a seconder for that. It is not open for discussion, it goes straight to the Council for a vote. A recorded vote.

(A recorded vote was held on the Procedural Motion in the name of Councillor Golton)

THE CHAIRMAN: The number of Members in the Chamber is 76, the number of Members voting “Yes” is 71, there is nobody voting against this so that is clearly carried. Can I invite Councillor Bentley to consider withdrawing his amendment at this stage.

COUNCILLOR COUPAR: It is a Leadership challenge, Stewart, his amendment.
(laughter)

THE CHAIRMAN: You need to withdraw the amendment.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: With respect, Chair, can you explain the reason behind that, given that actually we have not got a motion proposed yet because Councillor Golton has not proposed his motion, so we cannot do anything until he does. He cannot move his amendment and the Labour Party cannot move their amendment either.

THE CHAIRMAN: Colin, I invited him to consider – I have got something here that suggests that was going to happen, that is all I am going to say. It was an invite, you are quite right, you do not have to if you do not want to.

Moving on, Councillor Golton.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Lord Mayor. I hope the clock has started afresh! As our motion says, we are fully committed to the Council’s policy of building a strong economy within a compassionate city. Going back to the debate we had a little bit earlier around election fraud, we need, if we are to keep the trust of our electorate, to make sure that what we demonstrate in our policy adds up to the rhetoric of our policy and in our strong economy with a compassionate city one of the strong points in it that I think everybody in the city can unite for is the fact that we want to make sure that when we are building our economy in this city we have good jobs that are well paid and where people feel secure in their employment and that they can progress, advance and their families have a more secure future.

I notice that in the Executive Board on 21st September we are going to have a paper which is talking about the Council’s Breakthrough Project and in that it is going to talk about how we are going to get more jobs, better jobs in this city. It talks about the actions that are going behind that Breakthrough Project and I am going to list a few of them here.

It says we are going to develop a city-wide approach to tackling low pay through championing the living wage. It does not say how we are going to champion the living wage. Signing up to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Low Pay Charter that covers pay policy within West Yorkshire Councils. We have done a lot, actually, and the Labour Party should be proud of their record in administration in what they have done around the living wage within this Authority and within its own workforce.

It is going to host a Better Jobs Better Business national conference with Leeds Enterprise Partnership and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in Leeds in March focusing on creating a virtuous cycle of skills, training, progression and improved business performance. It is also going to host a national Living Wage Conference in April.

Those are really admirable things to do. Unfortunately, they are not actually actions which are making an effect on any jobs that we currently have in this city other than within the Council's own employment, nor any future jobs that we are currently negotiating with some of our big business partners that we have got at the moment. This is why I am talking about how we need to be consistent in order to have credibility for the people that we represent.

If we are serious about a strong economy and a compassionate city then we do need to live up to it in how we talk to big business and we do not want to look like we are in awe of them and that we will bend over backwards to enable them without getting any kind of benefit back.

I mentioned Burberry earlier and I am sure that the Council is doing the right thing there and making sure that the jobs that are coming forward from that partnership will be good quality sustainable jobs for the future.

I think it is unfortunate that the Council has gone into a property deal where an incumbent could perhaps potentially cause some embarrassment given the policy that the Council is adhering to, and what we have suggested ever since this came to Executive Board is that the Council does something to demonstrate that they might have an interest in it.

I think when you are landlord to a property what goes on under your roof is your concern and therefore when you have a tenant you might not be able to force them to do something but you can certainly encourage them to do something. All that this is doing is making sure that, given the circumstances that we are in at the moment, we can potentially have discussions in the way that the GMB Union is suggesting and has asked Local Authorities to do in this particular circumstance, but moreover in our future relationships, given that we are going into property speculation and we will be a landlord to a lot more organisations, that we are making sure that we are ethical landlords and that we are encouraging that same ethical employment practice that we will expect, for instance, in those companies that we trade with through our procurement rules.

That is simply all that this White Paper is asking and I do not think it is a lot for the people of Leeds to expect for you to live up to your stronger economy compassionate city project. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Wilford to second.

COUNCILLOR WILFORD: Thank you, Chairman. As individuals we buy goods from Amazon, whether it is CDs, DVDs, books or even food and wine all at the touch of a keyboard and it is delivered to our doors, so we all invest financially in Amazon and contribute to their profit base. This is the same Amazon who have recently attracted media attention around working policies and practice – for example, long working hours with minimal breaks and zero hours contracts. In addition there are concerns around the fair payment of tax as a major international retailer in the UK, using tax loopholes to avoid payment.

Therefore, it concerns me that the Amazon facility at Logic Leeds should be run ethically for workers and we acknowledge the involvement of unions in improving working conditions at Amazon for the people of Leeds who are its employees.

As a landlord the Council has a responsibility to monitor working practice and the environment and to work with Amazon to ensure this venture is a success in more than just a mutual financial gain.

I therefore would encourage the Council to act as a partner in the facility at Logic Leeds and if need be to hold Amazon to account. We have a reputation to maintain that should go beyond party political point scoring. We need to work together to achieve the best outcomes for the people of Leeds, the businesses who invest within the city and to take a lead by becoming a Council which has an ethical employer policy which applies to commercial tenants of buildings owned by the Council. Thank you, Chairman. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Wilford. Can I call Councillor Richard Lewis, please, who wants to move a procedural motion.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: I would like to move the Procedural Motion in the terms of the notice, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Lewis. Councillor Rafique.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can I put that directly to the vote?

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: Recorded vote, please, Chair.

(A recorded vote was held on the first Procedural Motion in the name of Councillor R Lewis)

THE CHAIRMAN: We have 73 Members present and there are 72 in favour of that, so that is clearly CARRIED.

Can I ask Councillor Lewis to move a Procedural Motion to introduce an amendment at short notice. Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Chair. I would just like to move the second Procedural Motion in my name, thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Rafique.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: I second, Lord Mayor.

THE CHAIRMAN: We need to put that one to the vote. A recorded vote, I heard.

(A recorded vote was held on the second Procedural Motion in the name of Councillor R Lewis)

THE CHAIRMAN: Here we go again. 71 present and voting; 69 “Yes” and two abstain, so that means that Councillor Richard Lewis will now be allowed to move an amendment at short notice. Over to you, Councillor Lewis.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Thank you, Chair. Was the word “omnishambles” ever better used than for what has gone on here! *(laughter)*

Just to explain those two procedural motions, that was purely because of the Lib Dem nonsense that they actually have an amendment to their own White Paper. Aren’t you glad that Made in Leeds went home so early? When you have just said so much to the city about your abilities to run the place, or your pretensions. I despair.

Let us just look at what this is about. It is about the Lib Dems trying to cosy up to the unions and to be the workers’ friend. For some of us that might seem a little bit peculiar because, Stewart, we do remember your lamentable record during the bin strike, we have not forgotten that, and we know what will happen when the Budget debate comes round because you will be up on your feet demanding the cuts to trade union facilities in this place.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: We are consistent.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: You are not a friend of the trade unions, you have been trying to chat up the GMB but it has not worked, they have turned the other cheek, haven’t they, and they will continue to do so.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Yes, they accepted your dollar.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: As a Party you are in a state of deep confusion about workers rights and about Amazon, because what has just happened to Nick Clegg’s Special Adviser in his period in Government, Ruwan Kodikara has just gone off to work as, what is it now, Senior Management for Corporate Communications for Amazon. Isn’t that nice? We like these cosy relationships, don’t we?

To be honest, Clegg is not exactly the most credible politician and I almost felt sorry, I almost shed a tear when I was reading this weekend about how his family sing the sad song to him in the supermarket. You realise a man has hit rock bottom and you should not kick him any more.

COUNCILLOR TRUSWELL: No, kick him!

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: What is this all about? Let us get in the real world. Let us get in the real world – if Leeds City Council having taken over a lease on this building were now to say to Amazon, “We do not want you here because we are pure and we do not want any firm that has low pay,” what do you think Amazon would do? Would they be quaking in the Boardroom? Would at international level they be saying, “Bloody hell, Leeds has taken a stand against us, what shall we do? We will change all our working practices.” Of course it would not. What would happen is that they would go. They would go to Selby or they would go to Castleford and what good would that have achieved for the citizens of Leeds? Absolutely nothing.

Let us be a bit realistic.

COUNCILLOR CLEASBY: So we have low pay?

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Be quiet for a moment, Brian, will you. If we were to look at all our tenancies because we actually are a big landlord. We will be a smaller landlord in terms of the number of tenants we have in a couple of years because we are having to dispose of a lot of buildings to keep ourselves afloat, let's be honest about that.

With all those relationships do you possibly think that we could check up on what they pay to people, on what their working practice is? Of course we could not, it is a total nonsense. What this is about is a futile gesture, because that is all you want.

When I had the economy in my portfolio what I actually took up was the whole issue of how we talk to the City about things like wages and I sent you this document, some of you might remember. (*showed document*) "This is How we do Business", which was about how we talk to the City and how we raise those issues. It is hard work and it is difficult and it is complex and you have to do it year after year after year. It is not just about a simple thing of saying, "We do not like firm X." It is about engaging with loads of different firms and you have to have a different question for one firm compared to another. It might even be that you are talking to a posh legal firm that insists that its secretaries wear high heels and have to wear full face make-up. We might have a different view on that to them and that is a serious concern as well as the low pay issue. You have got to engage with every firm on a different basis.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can you finish, please.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: We are committed to this, Judith is committed to this and we will continue to be committed to this long after you have forgotten all this nonsense. Thank you, Chair. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Rafique, please, to second.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: Thank you, Chair. I am pleased to speak today on the More Jobs Better Jobs Project in support of Councillor Richard Lewis's amendment. This is an integrated approach to promote economic growth and tackling poverty which sees us work with our partners at the Joseph Rowntree and Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership to create a focused research programme. This research identifies the action needed to create more jobs and better jobs and greatly informs our Breakthrough Project.

For me the key element of the Breakthrough Project is the creation of better jobs. It will not make sense to create more jobs that did not significantly improve financial inclusion, economic growth for all in the city. In-work poverty affects around 5.1 million adults in the UK. In Leeds this amounts to about 18% of the households. This is precisely why we are placing greater emphasis on creating improved jobs in the city and great work is already under way which will undoubtedly help to reduce this figure and enhance the ability of all our citizens to contribute to the economy with their full potential.

Councillor Golton has spoken about the need to bring good quality jobs into the city and whilst I agree with him on that aspect, I feel that the Breakthrough Project goes above and beyond that. We are providing high quality jobs, championing the living

wage, providing outstanding information and guidance and skills training and seeking to overcome the disconnect between deprived neighbourhoods and economic growth in the City Region.

The Breakthrough Project is an holistic approach to supporting growth and accessing the economic opportunities through employment and infrastructure and attempts to reach all communities across the city including our most deprived.

Leeds City Council has led the way in developing a city-wide approach to tackling low pay. Since adopting the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Low Pay Charter we have committed to pay our staff a minimum rate of £8.01 which will increase to £8.25 before the end of this financial year. This significantly, Chair, outstrips the national minimum living wage of £7.20 introduced by this Government about five months ago.

To take this further we will use our reach to influence partners and employers across the city to tackle low pay with the same determination as we are. To this end, Councillor Golton, what we have done is we have just as we speak appointed a Key Account Manager who will engage with 150 key businesses in the city to build relationships with those business to also better understand their needs but also to champion our cause in terms of them embracing our agenda.

Leeds is a growing city and we are now in the top five cities in the UK for the number of inwards investment projects and are attracting more major new investment than ever before.

We also have the highest number of fastest growing scale of companies of any area outside London and the south-east. This is why we are actively pursuing the work stream backing innovators and entrepreneurs which focus on building a more productive economy, retaining more graduate talent in Leeds and creating new firms and transforming small business into medium sized enterprises at the very least.

Councillor Golton, our regenerative approach is based on improving prospects for people in our most deprived neighbourhoods. Much work has already been done on this front but we now look to target support of those furthest way from the labour markets and to do it more effectively. We have already been identified by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation which has done the research in the City Region area, we have been identified as the city displaying the best practice on this front where we have actually used our employment and planning obligations to create employment, apprenticeships and also Section 106 agreements.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mohammed, could you finish please.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: The next step will be to extend this practice further and target those living in poverty. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I call upon Councillor Bentley to move a second amendment.

COUNCILLOR J BENTLEY: Thank you, Lord Mayor. Can I move under the provision of Council Procedure Rules 13.2(d) and 14.10 leave of Council to withdraw the amendment in my name.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we have Councillor Campbell to second.

COUNCILLOR CAMPBELL: I second and in response to Councillor Coupar's comment, yes, we will have a recorded vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we go straight to the vote to withdraw that amendment.

(A recorded vote was held on the Procedural Motion in the name of Councillor J Bentley)

THE CHAIRMAN: With the revision and the failure of some of your units to work, there are now 73 Members voting and 71 have voted in favour, which means that the amendment has been withdrawn.

Could we go straight on to the agenda. I am going to call Councillor Leadley now to speak.

COUNCILLOR LEADLEY: Mr Chairman, I had thought about moving an emergency motion at short notice (*laughter*) but possibly we do not want to be here until midnight!

Mr Chairman, there are two curses visited upon ordinary folk in this land since the Millennium. One is the parasitic landlord who lets out houses in Leeds, often small back-to-backs at four or five hundred pounds a month, and the other is low fixed wage jobs with poor terms and conditions of working. We have seen a little bit of progress on the former with this year's withdrawal of tax relief for buy-to-let mortgages and progress of different sorts on the latter, with a gradual acceptance of the idea of a slightly higher living wage and the recent shaming of Sports Direct which, very oddly, seems to be chaired by a former senior police officer not entirely unknown in these parts.

When the principle of the National Minimum Wage was being spoken of about 20 years ago I supported it but there were some who opposed it because they said that after a while a wide range of unskilled, semi-skilled and service jobs would sink to a national minimum rate even if before they had been above it. Millions would be trapped in a wages flat landscape so lacking in upward slopes that there would be no way out of it. Those people may have been right and seem to have drawn on their knowledge of what happened in other countries when making their judgment.

Firmly fixed low hourly rates with no bonuses or commission or piece work, limited hours or zero hours contracts and poor conditions of employment are all problems that this Council should try to do something about. Highly publicised cases like Sports Direct have helped to start the tide running against practices which seem to have become established over the past 15 years or so. In a different way BHS helped to strengthen the tidal flow against the unacceptable face of capitalism. It is time to go with that flow.

Buying the Amazon warehouse, as highlighted by Councillor Golton, gives the city a chance to show that it is an ethical investor. I support his motion as revised. Thank you, Mr Chairman. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Tom. Councillor Cohen. Dan, please.

COUNCILLOR COHEN: Thank you, my Lord Chairman, as I shall now refer to you. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13.2 – no, I am sorry, I just joined in with everybody else! *(laughter)*

I must confess to being utterly baffled by Councillor Golton's White Paper because it seems to me that Councillor Golton is trying to introduce a whole new raft of a new system of landlord. I had the pleasure – and I am using that term advisedly – of sitting through hours and hours of lectures on landlord and tenant law and nowhere, I can assure you, did I see any provision that exists for landlords to dictate to a tenant with an existing lease how they should run their perfectly legal business. We might not like aspects of it; that does not give us a legal right to impose new duties on them.

Look, we understand Councillor Golton's concerns, we understand the concern you are trying to address, notwithstanding the fact you did seem to water it down somewhat in your speech, but this is not the way to do it. This is a misconstrued White Paper.

Your White Paper throws light on a really important issue facing the UK and, indeed, our city in the face of globalisation. Our city needs to make itself attractive to business in order to continue to thrive economically. Regardless of your view on Amazon – and their success would suggest that the vast majority of people are very fond of them, notwithstanding their tax or employee arrangements – it does seem quite a step, I would argue perhaps a step too far, to ask Council's to police employment contracts and employment conditions. It would be the thin end of the wedge. Should the Council really be monitoring or dictating working practices of business tenants or, indeed, any business within our region? It is a legitimate question but such powers would indeed make us less attractive to business, especially those who may well not be tied to any particular geographical region.

I would like to turn now to the Labour amendments. You can really imagine the scene in the Labour Group office and in fact Councillor Lewis pretty much confirmed this. They saw Councillor Golton's White Paper and panic ensued. They thought, "Oh my word, he is stealing our thunder, praising the unions, cosying up to them" and there was blind panic. "Quick, let's get an amendment in praising the GMB a little bit more." Lovely. Nowt wrong with that, as we say in Alwoodley, but wait, the phone rang and there was a phone call from the Unite desk, "What about us? Don't forget us." Quickly they had to amend their own amendment just to keep the paymasters happy. Unbelievable. No question who rules the roost over there.

What do we have? We have a White Paper on an important issue but one that seeks to do the impossible. Then we have got amended amendments to ensure that Labour's real leaders are kept happy. What a mess, what a wasted opportunity. Thank you, Lord Chairman. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Procter, please.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Well, Lord Mayor, I hesitated to get to my feet to join in what is probably the most farcical debate I have ever seen in this place in the however many years I have been here, 26 years or so that I have been here. What a

joke, what a joke. I thought better of the Liberal Democrats, actually, and I know some of their number to be sane, rational people.

COUNCILLOR WALSHAW: Name them!

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: They cannot have turned up at the Group meeting though clearly and this subsequently slipped through.

Let us be clear, everybody in our Group and I am sure in the whole of the Council, the elected body of the Council that is, wants to see the best of working conditions for all workers wherever they may work, whether it is in this city, outside of this city or for that matter internationally. This motion does none of that.

In effect what this is seeking to do as a motion is to take this Council back to the very, very, very bad old days where we once were. Do you remember that we used to own a football ground at one point in time? Yes? What happened then? We had Councillors on the Board of Directors of a football club, for goodness sake, deciding how a football club was run. It was a joke. Free tickets to elected Members and to those they chose to dole them out to. Absolutely ridiculous. Your Party was the one who with us eventually shamed the Labour Group into abandoning such a stupid, ridiculous proposition.

COUNCILLOR LYONS: You all went.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: Yet here you are now effectively doing the same. Did you ask the City Solicitor what her view was on us being able to enforce any form of working conditions on a tenant of ours? It is just a joke, an absolute joke.

I have a question for Councillor Golton. When another property deal was proposed at Executive Board where a substantial law firm was involved, was he raising the same issues? Did you raise any issue? Any issue at all about future tenants of that office block? Did he say, "Well, I would be happy with some tenants moving in but not with other tenants moving in?" Of course he did not, he said nothing at all about it and, indeed, my understanding is that he was wholly in favour of the Council owning a property portfolio. I have to say I personally have got doubts. You talk about austerity, I am not quite so sure why we should venture in to the property world and start buying up investment property all over the place. I would have thought that was for the private sector myself but clearly Councillor Golton is in favour of that but only if he gets the tenants he likes – only if it is people that he likes.

As often happens with Labour amendments, what you see and what you get are two completely different things. I get a bit fed up, actually, of hearing about good quality jobs. I would like Councillor Rafique to send me a list of all the jobs that he thinks are bad quality jobs because I will take great delight in circulating it to all of the people who are in bad quality jobs, as he would describe them. I think it is hugely insulting, hugely insulting.

COUNCILLOR RAFIQUE: Fair bit.

COUNCILLOR J PROCTER: There are a fair bit are there? It is hugely insulting to the people who provide services right around this city and it will be, I am sure, the service sector that he is referring to, so I look forward to receiving that list from him.

Lord Mayor, can I suggest that the Labour Chief Whip and the Lib Dem Chief Whip start talking to one another and then perhaps we will avoid the farce that we have had this evening. Thank you, Lord Mayor. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Hayden, please.

COUNCILLOR HAYDEN: I am really looking forward to this! *(laughter)* Nearly over! Part of the Enterprise Zone is in my ward of Temple Newsam and there are lots of young people living in my ward who need not only employment but quality employment.

As a teacher that means to me, good quality employment means to me a job that is paid a good living wage, that has training and a career path and somewhere to go, no matter what the skill level. I think we have got a bit of confusion between a good quality job, which is what Councillor Rafique was referring to with those qualities and the skill level that Councillor Golton has talked about all afternoon.

Agency – and we know that Amazon do not always provide this kind of work which is why it is important that we have robust conversations with them. Agency work, zero hours contract, surveillance of staff is not something we want to see in Leeds or, as Councillor Procter said, anywhere in the country or internationally. However, this is true of any company employing people in the city, not just those where we are landlords. Directing efforts only at our own tenants, especially when we have limited resources to do so, lets other employers off the hook.

We have seen from Sports Direct that companies can be forced to do some improvements but this is a process that involves pressure from across the system. The proposed improvements, however slight at Sports Direct, came as a result of Parliamentary and Union pressure.

To get change in employers we need to have support from the Government. Another is to ensure that there are strong unions able to operate in workplaces in order to hold employers to account, but Central Government instead has put in place the Trade Union Bill that makes union activities harder. Whilst trade unions in the public sector have significant challenges, at least recognition from their employers is not one of them. With more difficult hoops to jump through, particularly on strike ballots, there will be less ability for unions to show employees that they can work on their behalf of make those improvements we all want to see.

This is something, of course, that the Labour Group at Leeds City Council tried to address. The White Paper was discussed in March this year, put forward by Councillor James Lewis. After some sensible words from the Liberal Democrat Group they chose not to vote on the substantive motion. The motion was carried purely on the votes of the Labour Group, so it is really nice that Councillor Golton has recognised here this evening the great work this Labour Group has done to implement and encourage ethical work practices not just in our own Council and our own employees but across the city.

Now there is a sensible discussion to be had on this topic and we all want to see residents have high quality jobs. As a teacher and the young people that I taught and that I meet on a daily basis in my ward, I am proud of each and every one of them that

puts in a good day's work. What I want for them, no matter what their skill level, is for them to enjoy their work, to feel valued, to have union representation and a decent living wage.

Let us be clear about where we want to direct our scarce resources and whether they should be mostly or exclusively on our own commercial tenants or where it is needed most, whoever their landlord is. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIRMAN: Can I call on Councillor Golton to sum up, please. Stewart.

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I am really glad we had this debate personally because I do think sometimes we need to self-evaluate ourselves and make sure that we are living up to what we say we are doing, and I think the debate we have had today has actually clarified for quite a few of our Labour Members there that actually creating a compassionate city is hard and sometimes you have to do hard things.

I was a little bit concerned because Councillor Lewis is in charge of this particular portfolio.

COUNCILLOR R LEWIS: Which one?

COUNCILLOR GOLTON: In terms of economic development, and we were talking previously about how many of the new jobs that we are bringing to our city since our policy says we want good quality jobs, high value jobs, that actually we were thinking that around about 38% of them were actually going to be what we qualify ourselves as low paid jobs. You said that, if I remember rightly, we have had to downgrade our ambitions. I can go into the verbatim a little bit later but you did actually say that. The thing is that the policy that we are working to has not been downgraded and I do not think we should be downgraded.

I remember there were quite a lot of people that said when the Government brought in the living wage which was quite high – I think it was the highest in Europe or something at the time, wasn't it? – “Oh, my God, you are going to create an environment where no-one is going to want to invest here.” Then when you are talking about when you talk to employers, “Well, we are going to have to compromise sometimes because you know what, if we do not get them Castleford will get them.” Well, maybe you might want them to go to Castleford because maybe we are wanting to build a strong economy in a compassionate city and maybe we need to make sure that those principles are clarified to people about what we expect from them.

We also had somebody saying we cannot go and check everybody, can we? Well, we have a procurement policy which means that anybody we want to do business with where we are buying services from them, we do do checks on them, actually. Most of it is actually self-evaluated and self-projected but we do check on them so I cannot see why it would be such an issue for us to do as a landlord.

I appreciate the points that have been brought forward as well about the legal aspect in terms of well, you cannot force people to do what you do not want them to do, and then somebody else says you cannot pick and choose who your tenants are. Well, actually you can. If you are a landlord you can set standards, whether it is in domestic dwellings as well as in commercial dwellings. This is part of the reason why the

GMB Union asked to talk to Councils, because they appreciate that sometimes it might be a hard negotiation but maybe they might be able to help you and back you up.

There is nothing wrong with having principles. The problem is, if you do not carry them through then people do not consider you consistent and they think you are not credible and on this aspect I think this is something that we can work on. We cannot codify every single thing to any kind of tenant; what we can do is offer them principles to say this is a Council building that you are going to be occupying, our aim for the city is this, this and this and we hope you are going to join us in fulfilling that. *(Applause)*

THE CHAIRMAN: I need to call for the vote.

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

The amendment now becomes the substantive motion. *(A vote was taken)* That is clearly CARRIED.

Thank you for your attendance. I think we can go home now. Safe journey home. *(Applause)*

(The meeting closed at 7.27pm)