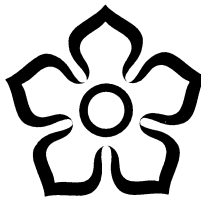


Thursday, 18 September 2014





Leicester  
City Council

At a meeting of the LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL held at the Town Hall at FIVE O'CLOCK in the afternoon on Thursday, 18 SEPTEMBER 2014 duly convened for the business hereunder mentioned.

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**BUSINESS**

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**1. LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of 19 June 2014 are available to view at <http://www.cabinet.leicester.gov.uk:8071/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=81&MId=6366&Ver=4>. Copies are also available from Democratic Support on 0116 454 6352 / [committees@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:committees@leicester.gov.uk).

**4. PETITIONS**

- Presented by Councillors
- Presented by Members of the Public

**5. QUESTIONS**

- From Members of the Public
- From Councillors

**6. REPORTS OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

6.1 Scrutiny Annual Report 2013/14

**7. REPORTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

7.1 Revision to the Constitution of Leicester City Council.

**8. EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES**

To vary the composition and fill any vacancies of the Executive and any Committee of

the Council.

9. **NOTICES OF MOTION**

10. **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

**PRESENT:**

JOHN THOMAS, LORD MAYOR  
CHAIRMAN

SIR PETER SOULSBY – CITY MAYOR

Abbey Ward

HARSHAD DAHYABHAI BHAVSAR  
ANNETTE BYRNE

Freemen Ward

ELLY CUTKELVIN  
WILLIAM HENRY SHELTON

Aylestone Ward

ADAM CLARKE  
NIGEL CARL PORTER

Humberstone and Hamilton Ward

RITA PATEL  
BARBARA ANNE POTTER  
GURINDER SINGH SANDHU

Beaumont Leys Ward

VIOLET GEDDES GRAHAM DEMPSTER  
SUNDIP MEGHANI  
PAUL THOMAS WESTLEY

Knighton Ward

ROSS GRANT  
INDERJIT SINGH GUGNANI  
DR LYNN MOORE

Belgrave Ward

RASHMIKANT JOSHI

Latimer Ward

MANJULA PAUL SOOD

Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields

ANNE GLOVER  
WAYNE JAN NAYLOR

New Parks Ward

DAWN ALFONSO  
STEPHEN PETER CORRALL  
MALCOLM WILLIAM UNSWORTH

Castle Ward

NEIL CLAYTON  
PATRICK JOSEPH KITTERICK  
LYNN SENIOR

Rushey Mead Ward

CULDIPP SINGH BHATTI  
PIARA SINGH CLAIR  
ROSS WILLMOTT

Charnwood Ward

PAUL DARREN NEWCOMBE  
ABDUL RAZAK OSMAN

Spinney Hills Ward

HANIF AQBANY  
SHOFIQUUL ISLAM CHOWDHURY  
MOHAMMED DAWOOD

Coleman Ward

MIAN MOHAMMED MAYAT

Stoneygate Ward

LUCY CHAPLIN  
IQBAL ALIBHAI DESAI  
MUSTAFA KAMAL

Evington Ward

DEEPAK BAJAJ  
BALJIT SINGH

Eyres Monsell Ward

VIRGINIA CLEAVER  
RORY PALMER

Fosse Ward

TED CASSIDY  
SUSAN WADDINGTON

Thurncourt Ward

LUIS FONSECA  
ROBERT WANN

Westcotes Ward

ANDREW IAN CONNELLY  
SARAH CHRISTINE RUSSELL

Western Park Ward

DR SUSAN BARTON  
GEORGE COLE

## **LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Lord Mayor gave details of the MP6 annual political speaking competition open to all city schools which aimed to provide a platform for young people and their political concerns, in front of key decision makers. The Lord Mayor explained that MP6 was more than a competition and was an initiative with the goal of engaging a curiosity in world affairs, a thirst for political literacy and the knowledge and understanding to communicate in an increasingly globalised landscape.

The Lord Mayor was delighted to announce that this year's competition had been won by Isaac Saunders, from English Martyrs School, speaking on the subject "UKIP; Good or Bad?" with second place taken by Rebecca Stone from Hamilton Community College, speaking on "British values". The Lord Mayor noted that he was particularly pleased to announce the winners as he had attended one of the first of the competitions at Hamilton some years previously.

The Lord Mayor invited Isaac and Rebecca to read out their winning speeches.

The Lord Mayor thanked Isaac and Rebecca on behalf of Council and congratulated them and all those who had taken part before presenting the prizes.

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Lord Mayor invited Members to declare any interests they may have in the business on the agenda.

Councillor R Patel and Councillor Potter each declared an Other Disclosable Interest in Councillors' Question 31 under agenda item 5. "Questions", as they both represented the Humberstone and Hamilton Ward, in which the Netherhall Luncheon Club operated.

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, this interest was not considered so significant that it was likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest and so were not required to withdraw from the meeting

## **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor and carried:

14. That the minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 19 June 2014, a copy having been sent to each Member of the Council, be taken as read and that they be approved as a correct record.

## **PETITIONS**

### **PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

None received.

### **PETITIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

Councillor Willmott presented a petition with 236 signatures in the following terms:

“Yog Sandesh Health Magazine, which cost 3 pence a day to library department, was removed by library department from Belgrave Library. The members of Rushey Fields Residence Association and residence of Leicester would like to request Leicester City Council to have the above named magazine in Leicester libraries in English, Gujrati and Hindi.”

Councillor Waddington presented a petition with 36 signatures in the following terms:

“This is a petition to get the rocks removed from the play area in the Rally Park as they are getting very dangerous.”

Councillor Meghani presented a petition with 12 signatures in the following terms:

“Residents of Blakesley Walk in Beaumont Leys are petitioning to request that a small fence on Council-owned land is fixed, and that the area surrounding the broken fence which has unfortunately been used to dump rubbish, is properly tidied up. Local residents have tried to get help from Council officers already but have only received excuses and unhelpful replies. We have therefore approached our local Councillors, who in addition to assisting us present this petition, have also taken and submitted photographs clearly showing the extent of the problem. The area in question is located between two sets of garages in the final cul-de-sac on the left of Shottens Close, off Great Meadow Road. We would very much appreciate it if Council officers took this seriously and worked promptly to resolve the matter.”

**The Lord Mayor stated that under Council Procedure Rule 13a the aforementioned petitions would be referred to the Monitoring Officer for consideration and action as appropriate.**

### **QUESTIONS**

#### **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

**Lord Mayor:** Questions from members of the public. Mr. Mark Garthorpe

**Mr. Garthorpe:** Shall I read my question out now, straight out?

**Lord Mayor:** Carry on straight into it.

**Mr. Garthorpe:** OK. My question is or my comments/question – Wordsworth House, a former hostel used and funded by Leicester City Council has, through the removal from Council services, essentially been banned from housing Council homeless clients due to unworkable preconditions and commissioning. Bureaucratic ramifications of this have led to no-one wanting to be temporarily housed there as they would be considered to be adequately housed and would get no further support. Why has this been done at a time when homelessness is increasing, putting vulnerable lives at risk?

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Connelly to respond.



**Councillor Connelly:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. As Councillors will be aware last year the Council reviewed our homelessness strategy which the previous strategy, whilst was good was simply not good enough. Clearly as an authority we were spending significant amounts of money in respect of providing hostel beds, and for many people that was the sign of whether, as an authority, we were looking after the homeless. The reality was that we were significantly failing to prevent people from becoming homeless, we were not directing our resources to prevent people from becoming homeless, and then when they did become homeless we were not providing them with the support to get back into settled accommodation. So following extensive consultation, both with councillors, Housing and Scrutiny Commission and with the voluntary sector, we introduced a new homelessness strategy which I am pleased to say appears to be working. In respect of homelessness those who have come to us who were possibly going to be homeless we have increased that from 72 cases to 83% this year so that people will be prevented from becoming homeless. In respect of those who do become homeless we have been able to accommodate them. We have 131 bed spaces provided by ourselves, by the Council at either the Dawn Centre and at Border House and we commissioned 130 bed spaces in the voluntary sector. The reality is there are no unworkable preconditions because the voluntary sector went out to tender, the voluntary sector tendered for that and were successful. The present position is that at the moment is that we have seen no increase in homelessness. In respect of rough sleeping we have reduced that down to an average of 9 and where we identify anybody sleeping rough through the no second night out project we do look to get them rehoused as quickly as possible. So in respect of that, as an authority, I believe we have taken the right decision about the new homelessness strategy. I understand the position of Wordsworth House but the other voluntary sector groups did tender because they were of the view that there were no unworkable preconditions. If there were unworkable preconditions none of them would have tendered for the work.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Connelly. Mr. Garthorpe do you have a supplementary?

**Mr. Garthorpe:** Yes. There are lots of facts and figures I have got and I should just be candid about the fact that I will endeavour to get hold of them. I have heard things which do contradict the quality you came back with but I would be here a long time and I just want to stick to the essentials as I think this would be best for everybody. I stayed at this hostel myself for approximately 1 year. I am candid about this issue also but the reason is I think adds some political validity to it. And that is I am in recovery from alcoholism and my first engagement with recovery was via that hostel, and if it had not been for that hostel engaging as professionally as they did, quite frankly I could be dead now, and people are out there and they are dying and cuts in services and cuts in homeless hostels, because that is what it is all about when it comes down to the bottom line, it is about saving money and cost effectiveness. And for the first time in its history Wordsworth House now has 5 empty beds and the reason is that they expanded the number of beds from whatever it was up to 18 because of the increase in demand for street sleepers, and there were at least 22 homeless people just a few months ago. Ann Branson was the person I think who gave a telling off to one of the sections that have engaged with the homeless street sleepers. So these very low figures that have flown out there like 2, 3 4 is a complete nonsense. When I was a street sleeper which I was and friends of mine in fact, we were never spoken to or seen or recorded. There are many people out there sleeping homeless. I don't know how many because they are unseen and really I think that is the reason we need a people's budget because of the disgraceful situation that we are in at the moment.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you very much Mr. Garthorpe.

### **QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

**Lord Mayor:** Before we start this I have got a short announcement to make. You will notice that we have a rather large amount of questions. More than I have ever known before, but I want to get through all of them if I can, so I am going to ask everyone to be reasonable in my view. And this is quite reasonable. Instead of repeating the question that is written on the order paper, which we can all see, just put the point to the meeting that you wish to ask question 1,2 3 whatever. If it does not need a supplementary or you don't really require a supplementary please indicate that you don't and if you would sooner have a written answer please indicate that you would be content with a written answer. With that if you will try and observe that for me because it is only me trying to help you, I'm not trying to curtail anything, but we are going to be here quite some time. Thank you very much. So we will start off with Councillor Dr. Chowdhury to put question 1.

**Councillor Dr. Chowdhury:** My Lord Mayor I would like the City Mayor the question number 1 as in the order paper.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Chowdhury.

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I will seek to be as brief as I can in my responses. This is a particularly interesting question from Councillor Chowdhury and quite a novel one. I have tried to think myself into the position of my predecessor back in 1485. I rather suspect that my predecessor would be motivated as I am by considering what are the best interests of Leicester and I suspect that I would have been a Royalist at the beginning of August and a Royalist at the end of August. I would expect that the Mayor then cheered Richard and wished him well as he left for Bosworth and cheered Henry and congratulated him on his victory as he returned. I suspect then, as now, it was a question of a King being dead, long live the King.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Chowdhury do you have a supplementary question.

**Councillor Dr. Chowdhury:** Yes. I am glad that City Mayor has said that you know he would have supported the reigning King you know. In that event it would be fairer to say that the current idolisation of Richard III is not a monetary exploitation or could it be said that this is not a City of opportunist akin to the Stanley Brothers at the Battle of Bosworth. Obviously as the City Mayor has said that he would have again congratulated the winning King, King Henry VII and then with that support Leicester might not have a prolonged winter of discontent.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I trust that I would not have been as treacherous as the Stanleys were or as opportunistic as they were, but I would as I have said I think have been mindful of the interests of Leicester. But I do say to Members that actually, if they have not as yet done so, I do encourage them to go to the visitors centre because actually the visitors centre tells the history of that period remarkably even-handedly and in a way that is very informative indeed and does actually treat issues like Richard's reputation and the historic reality as against the Tudor mythology that Shakespeare was a part of, in a very interesting way and has given

me, certainly, a considerable number of insights into that period that I did not have before.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Waddington.

**Councillor Waddington:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I would like to ask Councillor Vi Dempster question number 2 under my name.

**Councillor Dempster:** Thank you Lord Mayor. This is an incredibly emotive subject. The whole area of getting your child into the school of your choice is very, very difficult. There are a whole range of reasons why somebody wants to choose a particular school for their child and it is no consolation, and I recognise that, to be told that we are putting millions of pounds, last year, this year and in the coming years into increasing the number of school places that we have actually got extra staff into the admissions team to strengthen that team to help them to address issues in a timelier manner. A very difficult situation for a very small number of people. Now I do think that sometimes it is important to be clear on the scale of the issue. We have 4,500 children that went into Reception this year and got one of their choices. But there are a number of children, some 60 odd children, that have been given a school place that is more than two miles from their home and that is largely – now I am not talking about mid-year admissions, I am talking about people who have been long term resident in the City – who have perhaps, for a number of reasons, not put in one of their local catchment schools as a choice or perhaps for other reasons the application went in slightly late and it is a hard way of doing things but we do have to have processes in place, and so for a small number of people they are in this very difficult situation. Now there are roughly 180 places every year that are allocated and not taken up and this year is no different. So we have roughly 180 places that we know have been allocated and then the children have not turned up and of course we have to wait for a couple of weeks to see if those children do turn up, then we have to look at where those places are, what children are on the list, on waiting lists, what children have been allocated schools that are more than two miles and we have to match them. So yes I understand the tension for the parents, I understand also though that in order to get it right it is a time consuming process. But I can give an assurance that we have strengthened the Admissions Team to ensure that all is done in as timely a manner as possible.

**Councillor Waddington:** Thank you my Lord Mayor, and I thank Councillor Dempster for her answer and congratulate her and the team for finding 4,500 children one of their first choice of schools. I am aware that CPYS does take action when needed to enable children to have a school classroom. Only today I read in the paper about Catherine Junior damaged by fire and the children were given classrooms nearby until the school could be redeveloped. So I am asking for the same rights and opportunities to be extended to the 15-20 children who live in Fosse and indeed in other parts of the City who are now expected to travel more than two miles from school which for parents may mean a total of eight bus journeys a day which is not reasonable. So what I am asking then is if these children cannot be found a place at a local school by the end of the month could Councillor Dempster arrange for a mobile to be located in an area so they can get education close to home or taxis to be provided so that the parents can get their children to school. Measures of this kind I think are vitally necessary because it is a crisis if children miss their education at the beginning of their school career.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Dempster.

**Councillor Dempster:** Yes thank you. And I absolutely understand the imperative

for those families to have this matter resolved as early as possible. At this moment in time it is not actually clear what the scale of the issue is. That is the first issue. The second issue in terms of a mobile, I know that you are aware of the fact that in Fosse Ward just as an example, in Fosse Ward Fosse Primary School itself is a very constrained site. Aldermen Richard Hallam is currently undergoing an expansion and it will be increasing its intake. Inglehurst Infant and Junior again share neighbouring sites and it recently underwent a build programme to replace mobile classrooms, and we did look at increasing the numbers on role and of course again Slater Primary is a very constrained site. So in terms of sites there is not actually much availability. But of course the other issue is again the fact that the Admissions Service is one of those services that we are very much constrained, have to work within the law. And so if we were to put a mobile on a particular school site then what would happen is that the children that are on the waiting list for that school would have the first option to attend that school. So that actually would not help the 14-20 outstanding children in the Fosse Ward. I have said that we would look at the issue around transport to ensure, as far as possible, that families are not at a financial disadvantage because you know it is a tough world out there and we would not want that, but I can give that assurance that we are doing everything possible in as timely a way possible to help these small number of families.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you councillor Dempster. Councillor Meghani.

**Councillor Meghani:** Question number 3 to Councillor Connelly.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Connelly.

**Councillor Connelly:** Thank you Lord Mayor. My thanks to Councillor Meghani for the question. The Council has a longstanding policy that we review on an annual basis to ensure, as far as possible, there is adequate provision of temporary accommodation during periods of inclement weather. During the winter months the weather and the forecasts are monitored on a daily basis and if needs be additional beds are made available during periods of severe weather conditions to mitigate the risks of anyone having to sleep rough. As I said previously to the previous question the Council has 131 temporary bed spaces and we also fund a further 130 in the voluntary sector. Certainly on our experience so far that provision has been more than adequate and yesterday we had vacancies both in our provision but also in the voluntary sector provision. But in addition to that if there are problems we do have 14 emergency beds at the Dawn Centre to ensure that we can always quickly help anybody who finds themselves sleeping rough. Furthermore, if that is inadequate we do have agreements with the voluntary sector to increase their number of bed spaces and we see no reason why anybody in inclement weather would need to be sleeping rough because we have adequate provision.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Meghani have you got a supplementary question?

**Councillor Meghani:** Just to thank Councillor Connelly for the answer and really I guess I wanted to get an assurance from him, I think he has perhaps already give it, but the point is this. Over the coming winter months we as a City will have ample provision for every single person who finds themselves on the street and that is the case and I am glad if that is the case.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Connelly anything further? Councillor Meghani.

**Councillor Meghani:** Question number 4 to Councillor Clair.

**Councillor Clair:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. First of all I thank Councillor Meghani for asking this question and I would like to put my thanks on board all the Elected Members and community representatives and officers who worked hard to achieve this project in the central location of the City which was much needed. So well done everyone for their involvement. As Councillor Meghani asked in his question, yes we do publicise this site by leaflets and I did provide about 70 or 100 leaflets to Councillor Meghani in the recent past, and those leaflets are available on crematorium, places of worship and all funeral directors as well as most of places of worship and on website. I do recognise that we need to have further promotion and marketing for this site. I have learned that somebody without knowing went to Birmingham. I am convinced that we need to do some further work. What I would suggest that we have that sign board on site. I will ask officer to consult with other stakeholders to design and come up with some suitable signs which can be either located inside that prayer hall where people gather after the funeral or probably externally in the car park. So obviously something needs doing and I have asked officers to do some more work on that.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Meghani a supplementary?

**Councillor Meghani:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Just two points. Firstly Councillor Clair was very gracious to thank various people. May I also thank him and the Executive for acting promptly in getting this new site up and running, it is good work and it is a good job. The second question. I am glad that he is in agreement that there ought to be a sign at Gilroes Crematorium in Beaumont Leys for the new site. Can he just give me a time estimate. I am hoping that the sign is up and in place by the end of the year. If he could just elaborate.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Clair.

**Councillor Clair:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Obviously now the design work and consultation sometimes can take longer. But I can assure you that I will work with officers so that we can do it as soon as possible but I would not be able to give you a precise date at this moment in time.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Clair. Councillor Meghani.

**Councillor Meghani:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Question number 5 to Councillor Palmer.

**Deputy City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I am delighted to offer our congratulations to the fantastic Darlo Mums who marched from Jarrow to London in protest at the government's changes and damage to the National Health Service. It was great to see so many people there to welcome them to Leicester and indeed many colleagues from this Group were there. Those marchers sent an incredibly powerful message about the government's changes and damage to the Health Service. They advanced a powerful argument and they have become, I think, a source of inspiration to everyone campaigning to save the NHS and that better NHS that we all want and believe in.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Deputy City Mayor. Councillor Meghani a supplementary?

**Councillor Meghani:** Can I thank the Deputy City Mayor, not only for this answer, but also for the excellent speech that he gave on the steps of the Town Hall on the Saturday. I wonder if he would be interested to learn that when I was with the NHS

marchers the following day in Market Harborough not a single Tory or Lib/Dem politician bothered to turn up. Does he have a view on this?

**Lord Mayor:** Deputy City Mayor.

**Deputy City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I guess my view is one of being not entirely surprised by that. I think that contrasts powerfully with the scene in Town Hall Square when the marchers arrived here in Leicester to be welcomed by a good number of people from right across the Labour movement as they were all the way from Jarrow to London, and as I said in my initial answer those fantastic people have become a real source of inspiration to everyone campaigning to save the National Health Service from the destruction being wreaked upon it by this government.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Deputy City Mayor. Councillor Joshi.

**Councillor Joshi:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. May I ask the City Mayor question number 6 as per Council script.

**City Mayor:** My thanks to Councillor Joshi for this question. As he knows the removal of the flyover has made a tremendous difference to that part of the City, and has begun the process of re-connecting the golden mile to the City Centre. And while in many other contexts I have been very critical of Sainsbury's I am very grateful to them for the fact that they have, as part of the Section 106 agreement, actually funded not just the removal of the flyover but also the work that is going on at the moment that is enabling us to actually take the benefit from that connection in terms of the quality of the road coming in, we are widening some of the road and getting more capacity into it, and indeed particularly the quality of the pedestrian cycle routes in. I am pleased to confirm that it was always the case that the majority of that work would be done before Diwali. There would be a pause during Diwali and it would be completed afterwards. That is still the case. The majority will still be done before Diwali. There will be a clear pause so it is right off site during Diwali and the celebrations go on as originally planned with the work being finished afterwards. So that is a categorical assurance and I am very grateful obviously to the Councillors for the area, both Belgrave and Latimer, but also the support that we have had from local residents and businesses who worked very closely with us both in planning the taking down of the flyover and in constructing in its place something that is much more fitting and much more appropriate for the area.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Joshi do you have a supplementary?

**Councillor Joshi:** Thank you my Lord Mayor and thank you to City Mayor for his answer. May I also ask the City Mayor if he can give reassurance that the views and wishes of the residents and businesses in Belgrave Latimer Ward area are taken into consideration with regards to the regeneration of the old Sainsbury's site.

**City Mayor:** Yes Lord Mayor I can. Particularly working with the businesses and the residents on what happens, as it were, on the street. The extent to which we have control over what happens on the former Sainsbury's site is limited. Obviously we are a planning authority but it is a site that remains in their ownership and therefore clearly they are primarily responsible for determining what happens there. Nonetheless we are working very closely with them trying to encourage them to get a development there that is appropriate for that very prominent site and that compliments the offer of that vitally important part of the City Centre. So yes I will

continue to work with them but we have to recognise that we don't actually own the site therefore Sainsbury's are to some extent in the driving seat.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Meghani.

**Councillor Meghani:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Question number 7 to the City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** Thanks to Councillor Meghani. I can say a little bit about the arrangements for the re-internment and give him the reassurance that he seeks as part of that, but I do know that our partners in this, with whom we are working very closely, particularly the Cathedral, are beginning the process of actually setting out the timetable of events in a way that I think they will particularly want to lead in terms of their presentation to the public. But it is their intention and ours that we should maximise the opportunity for public involvement and particularly maximise the opportunities for the involvement of all of the communities of Leicester and Leicestershire. And of course we are not just looking at Leicester and Leicestershire because this is something that is expected to be televised nationally and probably covered internationally. So we will have the eyes of the world on Leicester during that period. It isn't just the day of the re-internment itself that is going to be important though. We are looking to reflect the diverse and the multi-faith dimensions of Leicester throughout what will be in fact a seven day programme and much of that will happen out and about in the City and the County not just in the Cathedral. There will be opportunities for public involvement along processional routes in the County and in the City, there will be opportunities for the public to pay their respects over three days while the remains lie in repose in the Cathedral, and there will be opportunities on the re-internment day itself for there to be large screens to enable the public to see live what is happening within the Cathedral and throughout all of this we are wanting to celebrate obviously the re-internment of the last English King to die in battle, but also to take the opportunity to celebrate Leicester as it is today and there will be opportunities for dance, drama and the arts to celebrate the vibrancy of the cultural life of our City.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Meghani do you have a supplementary?

**Councillor Meghani:** Yes thank you City Mayor for that very useful reply. Just to focus in on one aspect of it I suppose, in relation to involving as many young people as we possibly can. I think this is a fantastic opportunity on some many levels as you have eluded, but certainly also particularly for the younger people of the City, not only from a historical perspective to learn about where we have come from as a nation and the history of the City and the monarchy and what not, but also to get a sense of pride in where we are going in the future.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I can only agree entirely with the point that councillor Meghani makes. I think it is going to be vitally important that this is not just something that is reflective of the diversity of the community of Leicester, particularly something that is aimed at the young people of the City to enable them to engage in what is happening is something that could for many of them be obviously of considerable interest but I hope also of considerable inspiration.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Cole.

**Councillor Cole:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Can I direct question 8 to the City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor it is indeed the case that the present government is out of touch with the people and that has been one of the very evident elements of the campaign for a yes vote in Scotland – that those who have sought to campaign for that outcome have sought and I think to a large extent found a degree of sympathy in pointing out how remote and how out of touch with their needs is the present government. I think it is because of this that it is absolutely essential that the next Labour government re-engages with ordinary people both in England, but I trust in a Scotland that remains part of the United Kingdom. I do very much hope that that will be the outcome of the referendum that is taking place today. I do believe that there is a strong partnership between our nations that has existed now for some centuries and I do hope that in May we will be campaigning, and successfully campaigning, for a Labour government for the whole of the United Kingdom.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Cole a supplementary?

**Councillor Cole:** Can I just thank the City Mayor for his response and can I also just remind ourselves that the Coalition has not been a friend of Leicester either imposing savage cuts on us here at the Council and of course it has not been missed the affect that it has been having on all the people of Leicester. Can I therefore ask the City Mayor that he will continue to spend the little that we have wisely and in particular give priority to those who are less fortunate, the poor and those who often get forgotten by the Conservatives.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** Yes my Lord Mayor I can give that absolute assurance. I think you know we have the opportunity here in Local Government in Leicester and elsewhere where Labour has had the administration to demonstrate the different philosophy that guides us from that which guides the heartless and the brutal decision making of the Liberal Democrats and their Coalition partners in the Tories. We have the opportunity to demonstrate that in our day to day decision making and also thereby provide an example of what a Labour government can do at a national level when, as I am confident it will be, it is elected in May.

**Lord Mayor.** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Cole

**Councillor Cole:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Can I direct question 9 to the City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I welcome Councillor Coles' supportive comments on road improvements in the City Centre. Regeneration improvement in the City Centre is an ongoing programme of works and I think Members will recognise that those areas that have been completed, areas like Guildhall Lane, Silver Street and so on have been dramatically transformed. Undoubtedly though, while they are happening, they can have a significant disruptive effect on businesses and indeed the day to day business of those who are coming and going within the City. We have got to balance the need for the transformation that we are seeking to achieve with the short term disruption and ensure that that disruption is managed in such a way that it does enable businesses, and indeed other users, to come out at the other end still able to add and to contribute to the well-being of the City. There is a lot underway in the City at the moment, major transformation, and I am determined that we should seek to phase it and to plan it in ways that minimise the impact on people travelling into the City, travelling through the City, having their livelihood in the City Centre and particularly operating businesses in the City Centre and ensure



that we are able together to transform the City Centre and particularly to reconnect the City Centre in ways that don't actually disrupt the City unduly in the meantime but do give us that transformation in the medium to longer term.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Cole.

**Councillor Cole:** Can I again thank the City Mayor for his response and can I ask that the City Mayor and his team do as much as he can to ensure that the impact of the road works has minimal effect on business in the City because of course businesses represents income, it also represents work and you know in this current climate that is a difficulty for many people. Can I also encourage the City Mayor to continue making the wider public aware of the alternate routes around the City that makes their life much easier to get from point A to point B.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I gave an absolute assurance on both of those things and just to say I will be answering questions a bit later on about the work on Jubilee Square and just to say that I think there are aspects of that that do demonstrate some really good practice in terms of working with local businesses to show that we are you know able to minimise the disruption of them even on a big scheme of that sort, you know we have managed to do quite a lot of things that help them to continue trade and they have come out at the end actually in general being very grateful for the way we have worked with them. I think on some of the other aspects of how we go about this work, particularly how we sign post diversions, we are getting better. I don't pretend we always get it entirely right. I myself got very frustrated about 18 months ago I think it was now when an absolutely absurd diversion was put in for one piece of road works that were being done in the Charles Street area. I think, I hope that the officers got the message about the need to make these diversions sensible and generally I think they are able to do that. But I do welcome feedback from Members when they see things that aren't working well, particularly when diversions are not properly marked and sign posted.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Chaplin.

**Councillor Chaplin:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Just to ask the question number 10 on the order.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Russell.

**Councillor Russell:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Thank you to Councillor Chaplin for giving me the opportunity to explain what was a slightly strange thing for us to have to do in reopening the consultation which is looking at street drinking in the City and the opportunity for the police to have some additional flexible powers that would extend across the City rather than being tied into very tight areas. We ran a consultation over the summer about a designated Public Place Order for the City and received very, very positive responses to that. Because of the type of change it is we will be required to bring that decision to full Council and it needs to go through the full Scrutiny process of the Council. When it became apparent that that would need to go in November we decided to make sure that we were fully compliant with the government's changes in legislation through one of their pieces of anti-social behaviour legislation. So we are now consulting on it being a Public Space Protection Order. It is the same thing with a different name from every bit of legal advice I have had there does not seem to be any other changes other than a name, but this just makes absolutely certain that if we are able to introduce it if the

consultation results are positive and that Council decides to support it that we are fully compliant with the legislation. Thank you.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Russell. Councillor Chaplin do you have a supplementary?

**Councillor Chaplin:** I do my Lord Mayor. It is really useful to have a bit of background from Councillor Russell. I know residents in Stoneygate Ward are particularly frustrated about this because there has already been consultations about very local areas and they were about to be implemented when it was decided there would be a City wide thing and they were put on hold, and again it is going to be put on hold. It is good to know that the consultation has so far been a resounding yes, but it would be helpful to have a full timetable of when implementation is going to be and to make sure that those areas where people have expressed particular concern like Stoneygate Ward actually were given that timetable. Would that be available at our Ward Community meeting next month and also when these things are done in future if there could be more consideration about possible changes to timetables because it has been very frustrating for the residents in the Ward.

**Councillor Russell:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Clearly Councillor Chaplin's point about the ones in Stoneygate that we were looking to introduce were one of the things that prompted the look at the City wide issue. The way the legislation has been used previously in the City we can no longer have street drinking bans so these are an opportunity for the police to be able to take alcohol from people who they believe are behaving or are going to behave anti-socially because of it. What has happened when we have introduced them in very small areas in the past, and we have a number of them in the city, is that we maybe look at a park or two or three streets and within a very short period the problem moves to just outside that park or to the next street along and we then have to look to extending it, doing another round of consultation re advertising, all putting through a whole new process all of which is not only time consuming and frustrating for the residents but it is also very costly. So because of that we did start to look at the opportunity to do a City wide approach which is what we are consulting on. As I said in my previous answer it won't delay it. We were never going to be able, sadly, to bring it to this Council meeting and ensure it had the full scrutiny that such a change deserves. So it will go ahead at the timetable to be hopefully coming to this meeting in November. If there are any changes to that we will of course publicise them but I would hope not and we will try and ensure that the full timetable is produced for the Stoneygate meeting. Thank you.

**Councillor Chaplin:** Thank you. Question number 11 on the order paper.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Russell.

**Councillor Russell:** Thank you Lord Mayor. The programme of installing alley gates has been real success across the City. We have put money in to it and we have also been very successful in bidding in to the office of the Police and Crime Commission for funding because it works. We know that when we put in one alley gate it can often protect nine or more properties. It does not just protect those properties that directly use the gates it protects those that back on to those houses and can often make a full street much more secure. So it is something that we know works, it reduces burglary and is really, really important. So there has been so far just this financial year £53,526 spent on alley gates in the City and that has secured well over, and this has directly secured so not the ones that back on to,

directly secured 609 properties. Now that works out at about £79 per property which is the difference it makes to families to feel secure is considerable. So we are looking at putting in some additional funding but given the high demand we want to make sure this funding goes as far as possible so we are going to try wherever possible to work with landlords or private householders to seek some contribution so we can make sure as many households as possible can be protected through this scheme. I thought it would be useful for Councillor Chaplin to know that there have been 47 households protected within her own Ward through this scheme.

**Councillor Chaplin:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Indeed Councillor Russell is correct it is very popular in Stonegate Ward to the extent that I think you have run out of money for the ones that are coming up and I am heartened to know there is more money coming in. Would she be able to confirm that as well as the traditional terraced house alley ways that usually are the beneficiaries for this scheme, that other alley ways and maybe footpaths could be considered, that may be slightly wider which also is something that is in demand in the Ward as well.

**Councillor Russell:** Me again. There has been a number of these completed my Lord Mayor that have been for non-traditional sized gates that have protected alley ways often that serve a number of households. What this means is that not only do the households feel more secure, they are less likely to be burgled, but it also means that we don't get the fly tipping and anti-social behaviour in open alley ways that can cause great difficulties to local residents. So yes I am happy to confirm that we will still be looking at those non-traditional sized gates as well. Thank you.

**Councillor Newcombe:** Thank you Lord Mayor. I move question 12 as in the order paper.

**Councillor Dempster:** Yes, currently there are nine academy schools operating within the City. It is quite interesting that up until 2012 there was one academy in the City and that is because it was a very different programme in those days, it was a programme about giving extra resources to schools in particularly challenging circumstances. Whereas what we have had since the Coalition government has come in is basically academy status has run riot a bit like knot-weed across the whole of the country, but fortunately not in Leicester.

**Councillor Newcombe:** Yes thank you Lord Mayor. What steps / work is being undertaken to encourage more schools to stay under local authority control as opposed to academies?

**Councillor Dempster:** Thank you. I think the very fact that every school in the county I think, every secondary school certainly, has gone academy and even a number of primaries have gone academy, shows that we have a very different approach in the City. And basically what we are doing is building on the very strong partnerships that we have with our schools, but also that we have developed between schools. So you know I have said this before I cannot actually see many schools in this City, cannot see any benefit, financial or in any other way, for academy status, and so it really is a nonsense as to why any school would consider it to be honest.

**Councillor Newcombe:** Thank you Lord Mayor I move question 13 as on the order paper.

**Councillor Dempster:** Thank you and thank you for this question. We currently have 109 schools in this City and yet again we have had a year on year increase so

we now have 75% of our schools good or outstanding. In terms of that small but outstanding status that a small number of schools across the country receive in this City we have 12 outstanding schools, 8 are primary, 3 are secondary and 1 is a special school. And given Councillor Newcombe's interest in academy status I thought I would just point out that only one of those schools is actually currently also an academy and that school received its outstanding status when it was actually a local authority maintained school.

**Councillor Newcombe:** No supplementary Lord Mayor.

**Councillor Newcombe:** Hold on hold on.

**Lord Mayor:** Sorry what.

**Councillor Newcombe:** Sorry I haven't got a supplementary to .....

**Lord Mayor:** I thought you said you had not got a supplementary.

**Councillor Newcombe:** ....to question 13 but I would like to ask Question 14 please Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Sorry I had moved on. Sorry I had moved on, I got mixed up there. Sorry. Thank you very much for getting rid of that problem there.

**Councillor Newcombe:** I move question 14 as on the order paper.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Dempster

**Councillor Dempster:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Yes, I mean the bottom line is that because of the regular changes to the inspection framework I don't think that we can say that even if a school was to move from outstanding to good that that is because of a decline in standards. That is one of the problems if you keep continually fiddling with this as this government seems to want to do, then how can you really have the confidence in what comes out the other end. So I don't think that we should link it in that way I think that we need to be very, very aware of the constancy of change and how that is impacting on schools across the country really.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Dempster. Councillor Newcombe a supplementary?

**Councillor Newcombe:** Yes thank you Lord Mayor. What steps are being taken to help the schools maintain their outstanding status and does the Assistant Mayor for Education think that the City would be vulnerable to a City wide inspection if more schools only achieve good now that the satisfactory level has been deleted?

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Dempster.

**Councillor Dempster:** I think that it is really important that we focus on all our schools and we are very, very clear in having a relationship with every school that at the beginning of every academic year we talk to the Head Teacher and the Chair of Governors about what the school's needs are and about what resources are needed, how we should identify those resources, how those resources should be paid for to ensure that there is that really rigorous attention to standards. And also to the wider issues around children and young people, and I think that is really

important that we take a very holistic view of school improvement and what makes a good school. So things about pupil progress, things about how happy our children are, things about what is happening in the playground, incidents of bullying, ensuring that they are being reduced, so there is a whole lot of other indicators that indicate whether or not a school is good and that holistic approach and that relationship that we have with our schools is absolutely crucial to building on the great work that has been achieved over recent years.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Dempster. Councillor Singh – I knew I would get there in the end.

**Councillor Singh:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Can I refer the City Mayor to the question on the order paper under my name please?

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Members will be aware that the City undertook a major and very successful regeneration of the River Soar corridor to the south of West Bridge under the City Challenge project some years ago now and it saw the transformation of the Berry scrap yard into what is now Bede Park and the business park on the one side and the housing on the other side. It saw the regeneration of the former power station site which now has the King Power stadium on it and that transformation has had a knock on effect and continues to have a knock on affect across the whole of the west end of the City with continued investment there. We now have the potential to have an equally transformational initiative to the north of West Bridge right the way round on the riverside, Frog Island and beyond and to enable us to see as much potential brought back into use there as we have to the south. Now we are able to do that now with confidence because we have achieved a £20m package of funding from the local growth fund as part of the strategic economic plan which we will be enhancing with our own resources which will enable us to put £25m in total into that area, particularly into land acquisition and infrastructure. The necessary pre-requisite for bringing private sector investment into the area for residential, commercial development and indeed a range of other initiatives. In addition to that of course we have just started on site the project that I think will provide a kick start to regeneration of the area which is of course the Friars Mill site where we have got £6.3m, nearly £4m of that coming from the European Regional Development Fund which will show what can be done in that area and its potential, and in addition to all of that we have also managed to achieve some £16.2m of funding for the major transport corridors through that area particularly the A6 and the A50 corridor. All of that taken together I think gives us a real opportunity and I am determined we should take it to get some real change happening in that area and to give the confidence that is necessary to the private sector for them to follow up with our initial investment.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Singh a supplementary?

**Councillor Singh:** Yes thank you my Lord Mayor. Lord Mayor, thank you City Mayor. I am delighted that the City Council's focus and intent on regeneration and economic development strategies are robust and thereby leading to the employment outcomes because that it what it is all about, employment outcomes to the benefit of the City constituents Will he assure this Council that he will continue to develop the Riverside economy at pace.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** I can give that absolute assurance my Lord Mayor and I will also say I am very much looking forward to working obviously with the Scrutiny Commission

on this but also with the Ward Councillors for that area because obviously they know the area well, they represent the people who live in that area and it is important that they are part of the partnership that actually develops the plans and delivers them.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Singh.

**Councillor Singh:** Yes my Lord Mayor. May I refer the Deputy City Mayor to the question on the order paper under my name please?

**Deputy City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Sorry Deputy City Mayor.

**Deputy City Mayor:** I think it would be impossible not to have concerns when we see a plan being developed which is underpinned by the need to take £400m out of our local health economy so there are concerns about that plan on many different levels. For me, and it is worth saying the plan is still very much subject to consultation and public discussion, for me there is one very important concern which I think needs to be understood by those charged with taking forward this plan, and that is that individual decisions and proposals come out of the overall plan is that the voice of the public, of patients and the staff are properly heard as part of those decision making processes. In terms of the role of the local authority we have two important roles. We certainly have a role in helping to shape parts of that plan particularly around the linkage with adult social care services, but also I think we have a really important responsibility to provide challenge and rigorous scrutiny as this plan develops as well. I think through both the Health and Well-being Board but also through the Health Scrutiny Commission the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission as well we will be able to do both of those roles as this plan moves forward.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Singh a supplementary?

**Councillor Singh:** Thank you Lord Mayor. My thanks to the Deputy Mayor. Can I say that I share his concerns because £400m deficit by 2019 is not a small figure to say the least and I guess the same concerns are being shared by most Elected Members in this Chamber as regards the future well-being of local health services. Can I request that the Deputy Mayor to continue to be vigilant and to make those appropriate representations and I think in essence he has already given us those assurances but it is so fundamental that this sort of deficit is unheard of in the history of the National Health Service so therefore will he continue to make appropriate representation and safeguard our local NHS provision.

**Lord Mayor:** Deputy City Mayor.

**Deputy City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Of course I think we would all want to be in a situation in an ideal world where we weren't facing that financial challenge across the Leicester and Leicestershire health economy but unfortunately for a number of reasons we are and I think Councillor Singh's sort of call for vigilance and scrutiny is certainly something I hear but it is something that we all have a responsibility to act through from different parts of this local authority and I would urge Members to take a keen interest in this as particular decisions and proposals emerge from this plan.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Deputy City Mayor. Councillor Naylor.

**Councillor Naylor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Before I start thank you for what you said at the beginning of this but as we have not dealt with the constitution I feel it is only fair that I read my questions out because quite frankly the people at home who are watching on the webcast will have no idea what has been going on so far and I think that it is only fair that I read our questions out because a number of those were actually asked directly by people in the community to us.

**Lord Mayor:** I asked the whole of the meeting as a request to the efficiency. You are entitled to do just exactly as you wish and other people are entitled to judge those actions. Carry on.

**Councillor Naylor:** OK thank you my Lord Mayor. "At the time when the Council is spending millions of pounds on regenerating projects in the business centre of the City, how can the City Mayor justify cutting the £130,000 from voluntary and community organisations resulting in the closure of services and losses of jobs?"

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor it can't surely have escaped Councillor Naylor's notice that local government in general is being required to make a disproportionate amount of cuts by the Conservative and Lib/Dem government. It will of course also be known to him that we are being expected in total to cut about £150m a year out of our revenue costs and in those circumstances we are being forced to consider some things that might otherwise have been very much unpalatable to us and are very difficult to us now. I think Councillor Naylor is aware of those funding challenges and it puzzles me really that he is asking me to justify it rather than asking those Members next to whom he has chosen to sit. It does please me that if it pleases him I can reassure him that I will continue to work with people across the whole community, religious groups, ethnic cultural groups and communities to look at the impact of what we are being forced to consider and he can have my assurance that we will continue to work hand in hand with those organisations that are genuinely committed to promoting cohesion and working together to value and promote our cultural diversity and the good will and the well-being of the people of Leicester.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Naylor a supplementary?

**Councillor Naylor:** I would like to thank the City Mayor for his reaction there but I would also say that there has been opportunities there where we could have actually gone back to Westminster to actually argue the case for the City but clearly those have not been taken up. Given the majority of services targeted by those cuts supporting majority of religious and ethnic groups, does the City Mayor not think that the introduction of a competitive tendering process for funding at a time of increasing economic instability affecting these communities will also only serve to heighten tensions along racial and religious lines and that particularly in a City as culturally diverse as Leicester for the Council to bring in such charges is adherent and a dereliction of its duty of care to citizens of Leicester.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I rather suspect that Councillor Naylor did not listen to my initial response because I did actually cover those issues in my initial response. I was able to do so because Councillor Naylor had very helpfully provided me with the script of his supplementary which has obviously been written by others for him and I did ensure that I did actually touch on those points in the initial response. But I would say my Lord Mayor I am astonished by Councillor Naylor's suggestion here this evening that somehow some representations by us could have been made and made a blind bit of difference to what his new friends are doing in government. I

have to say that he makes those points now, he never once made them while he was a member of the Labour Group.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Naylor.

**Councillor Naylor:** It is quite interesting that because I have not supplied anything so clearly my email has been hacked. Given that the Caribbean carnival, a long standing popular community organised event was on the receiving end of cuts to funding this year, can the City Mayor confirm how much money was spent on the 10 days of the second City Festival and detail which funding streams were used.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor. Councillor Clair, sorry.

**Councillor Clair:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. The carnival festival which we value as a City what diversity it brings to City Festival calendar. This year carnival received £16,000 and on top of that my understanding is that there was funding from outside agencies and in kind support from Highways and Transport, Festivals unit to assist and help them to set up infrastructure and also there was a support in kind from Police and Fire and Ambulance authorities. 2014 City Festival was made up of around 70 separate events including miller and Skyride held in 41 different venues, and yes it was spread over 10 days and there was many partners and organisations who was involved in the delivery of City Festival. There were many different funding arrangements and some events were part of bigger regional, national attracting external funding. In addition, we had a considerable in kind support from officers as well as from volunteers across the City. My Lord Mayor the total summary of the cost of City Festival from Arts and Museums Services it was £148,500, Council support services which was £7,500, Council transport team ride Leicester £41,000 and also it is worth recognising and to remember that those organisations has enabled to attract funding from other partners in circa of up to £300,000.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Clair. Councillor Naylor.

**Councillor Naylor:** No point in the supplementary there Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** So you don't wish to ask one. I only want to clarify the situation. I only wish to clarify the situation.

**Councillor Naylor:** Don't worry I will double check. Don't worry I will double check.

**Lord Mayor:** I mean I will ask you again do you want to ask a supplementary or don't you? Just say yes or no.

**Councillor Naylor:** Don't worry I will check. Anyway in relation to the grievance. Sorry, sorry yeh, hang on. In relation to contact we have received from one of the City's unions against the Council for failing to address ongoing problems regarding the recently established private hire firm in the London Road area, irrespective of the issues surrounding planning control, does the Executive not think it irresponsible of the Council to permit a further private company as one has already been established in the area for 30 years to undercut the incomes of self-employed taxi workers at a time when many are struggling to find work and resorting to self-employment at a risk of great personal insecurity out of lack of other options.

**Lord Mayor:** Before we go any further I just want to clarify the situation. I asked



quite properly as I should do as the chair if you wanted to do a supplementary. Now I did not get an answer at all to that. I take it now, and I want to be very clear about this, that you have moved on to ask question 19 – is that correct?

**Councillor Naylor:** Very sorry Lord Mayor I have moved on I do apologise.

**Lord Mayor:** OK that is fine. Thank you very much Wayne. Councillor Clair.

**Councillor Clair:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. The Local Act 1976 deals with licensing of private hire operator. The licensing authority has the duty to grant an operator's licence provided the applicant is fit and proper person to hold such licence. The presence of other licence operators in the vicinity not a valid consideration. The majority if not all the hackney carriages and private hire drivers are self-employed. The licensing authority set a maximum tariff and we meet with those ... members on a regular basis and recently we have reviewed their charges that they can actually just make some living out of that on their request and also there are some limit on hackney carriage licensing which we have agreed with them and at this moment of time we have 320 hackney carriage licenced cabs. However, the authority has no power to set fares for private hire journeys or to limit the number of licensing of private hire vehicles.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Clair. Councillor Naylor.

**Councillor Naylor:** No supplementary on that one Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Move on then.

**Councillor Naylor:** OK. "Disabled people, amongst the most vulnerable members of society, are being systematically isolated further by austerity – disproportionately affected by the bedroom tax and subjected to work capability assessments with the aim of meeting government spending cuts rather than supporting those in need. In these contexts how can Leicester City Council justify the cutting of yet more local provision for those with disability, such as the Douglas Bader Centre and the scaling back of the Watershed Youth Centre services, whilst MPs propose to increase their salaries by 10%, our own City Mayor increases his salary and the Deputy Mayors by £15,000 this year alone?"

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor the figures to which Councillor Naylor alludes at the end there are bizarre. Members will be aware that those are not the increases that I or any of my colleagues have had but I am not going to dwell on that. I am doing to dwell on the substance of the question. I am in no doubt that disabled people are amongst the most vulnerable members of society and that the austerity measures forced on us by the current government, supported by Councillor Naylor's new friends on the opposition benches, are having a drastic and life changing impact on many disabled people across the country. I know how isolated and threatened many of our disabled citizens feel as a result of those austerity measures and I am in no doubt that it will be for any future Labour Government and let us all hope and work for that to be something that happens in May of next year, will do all it can to improve the current situation. I am particularly pleased that the Labour party has committed to repeal the bedroom tax and trust that Councillor Naylor will join us in campaigning for a Labour victory to enable that that can take place after May. Incidentally my Lord Mayor while I am on my feet just for clarity and just to put it on the record that was something that Councillor Naylor sent to the Member Services

in the same way that other Members submit their questions. The difference was when he submitted it that he also submitted the scripted supplementaries and they were passed on to me as routinely would be the case with any questions....

**Councillor Potter:** He sent it to an officer and the officer gave it to the Elected Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Naylor a supplementary?

**Councillor Naylor:** OK no supplementary there Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** So we will move on.

**Councillor Naylor:** "The substantial increase of the discount (up to £77,000) offered in the right to buy scheme mixed with the total unaffordability of private sector accommodation has seen a 31% rise in Council housing sales over the second quarter of 2014 from which Councils nationally have received £211m. How much has Leicester City Council gained from this stream of revenue?"

**Lord Mayor:** Who is answering this one. Oh Councillor Connelly.

**Councillor Connelly:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Firstly I regret the fact that the Coalition government have increased the discount and also lowered the qualifying period before somebody can buy their Council property. I regret that and I believe that is a retrospective policy that I hope when a Labour government is elected will reverse that. In respect of, perhaps it is to be expected, Councillor Naylor has got his figures wrong because we have not seen in Leicester a 31% rise in Council house sales. In respect in Leicester between April and June last year we sold 50 houses under the right to buy scheme and this year we have sold 52 which is an increase of 4%. Furthermore Councillor Naylor is wrong in my view to suggest that we have gained from this stream of revenue. We have not gained from this stream of revenue because we have lost 52 Council houses and I think that is a great shame in respect of that. Furthermore we obviously lose the rental income from that but in respect of that it has generated a receipt of £2.2m to the authority.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Connelly. Councillor Naylor a supplementary?

**Councillor Naylor:** I will ask the supplementary thank you very much Lord Mayor. If not combined with a programme of rebuilding social housing the right to buy scheme merely results in a massive deficiency of secure, affordable accommodation for people with decreasing wages and job prospects amidst extortionate private sector rents and mortgages. Given that the limitation has now been lifted on Councils to reinvest this income into social housing, will the Council now commit to a progressive programme of rebuilding Council houses rather than the DCLG proposed thinking of yet more public money into private hands for profit.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Connelly is that a supplementary or another question?

**Councillor Connelly:** I think there was a question in there somewhere. In respect of right to buy receipts I am proud to say that we spend half a million pounds each year to top up funding for disabled facilities grants which allows residents clearly who are suffering from disability to stop in their Council houses. Furthermore we invest in affordable housing. So Councillor Naylor is probably not aware of this but in his own Ward in 2011/12 from right to buy receipts we built 22 affordable units. In 2012/13 we built 10 on Hayford Road and in respect of Winford Crescent there

were 7 built, affordable units. In respect of in 2013/16, and Councillor Naylor is aware of this because he was at Planning Committee, Hamlin Road we will be building in partnership 10 new units, Benbow Rise 17 new units, Queensmede 20 units and we have also got significant investment in converting 3 of our hostels into affordable housing. Of course Councillor Potter is opposed to affordable housing because she is on record as opposing the affordable housing on the Burnham Road so clearly in respect of your partner she has a concern in respect of affordable housing.

**Councillor Potter:** What the hell has it got to do with me.

**Lord Mayor:** I can see nothing it's got anything to do with you at all Councillor Potter. Right, thank you Councillor Connelly. Councillor Naylor.

**Councillor Naylor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. "Labour MP, Liz Kendall, welcomed NHS Jarrow marchers into Leicester and reaffirmed Labour's commitment, as did Councillor Palmer, to repealing the Health and Social Care Act and defending the NHS. Can the majority Labour City Council then detail what is being done currently to defend Leicester residents from cuts and privatisation in local healthcare, and come out in open opposition to the proposed cuts to the Maternity Ward and Intensive Care Unit at the General Hospital and the outsourcing which is now resulting in 20% cuts to Interserve cleaning staff at Glenfield Hospital?"

**Lord Mayor:** Deputy City Mayor.

**Deputy City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Let me take this point by point and perhaps deconstruct this a little bit. It was great to see Shadow Health Minister Liz Kendall there to welcome the Jarrow marchers and indeed to reaffirm our Party's commitment to repealing the Health and Social Care Acts. Can we detail what has been done to defend Leicester residents from cuts and privatisation in local health care. Well, Councillor Naylor may have heard me on the radio this week along with colleagues criticising the failure of Arriva patient transport services in the NHS. I have raised a number of concerns about the Interserve contract which UHL awarded last year. I did at the time and I have done since, and I am on the record many times saying that where NHS contracts are let they should go to NHS providers. So for example in the public health budget here the sexual health services contract which was let last year for a procurement exercise which I oversaw, indeed went to an NHS provider because I believe that we have a responsibility to safeguard and protect the National Health Service and to make sure we have an NHS there in future years. In terms of the maternity ward at the General, this obviously stems from the Better Care Together plan, and it is worth saying there is no clear proposal on this at this stage. Any proposals that will emerge will be subject to full consultation as would be required. If Councillor Naylor has concerns about the clinical rationale for consolidating the maternity services of this City into one specialist unit, so you have under one roof all the specialist neonatal maternity services under one roof at the LRI site, I would be interested to see the representations he has made against that and to understand his reasons for opposing that.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Naylor a supplementary?

**Councillor Naylor:** OK. Thank you Lord Mayor. Labour introduced the private finance initiative that created the marketised NHS Trust. Labour to that extent has probably as much blood on its hands as the other parties who have actually done

some damage on this. Will Labour come up with concrete programme to fight cuts and involvement of the private sector in health care.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor, Deputy City Mayor sorry.

**Deputy City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. It is interesting to hear Councillor Naylor's sort of renewed vigour on these issues since leaving the Labour party isn't it really because I don't recall him raising these issues when he was amongst this group. I have said many times that we have to find a way of reducing and omitting private sector involvement for the National Health Service. The Labour Party have said in government they will put in place measures to do that for?/from repealing the Health and Social Care Act which this government have put in place which has accelerated the privatisation, much of it by stealth, across our NHS. It is unacceptable. Let's be clear there is one party in this chamber and indeed in this City, that is serious about fighting to save and to defend and to improve our National Health Service, and I think we and probably all those people viewing on this webcast as well probably understand and know which party that is.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Deputy City Mayor. Councillor Naylor.

**Councillor Naylor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. "At a time of rising unemployment, spiralling cost of living, unaffordable housing and then the double hit for the most precariously placed bedroom tax and 20% cut to Council tax benefit, an increase in homelessness is inevitable and one now visibly apparent on the streets of Leicester. How can the Council reconcile the cuts of hostels, the bringing in of restrictions for applicants in the Housing Options and reworking of funding guidelines for services such as Wordsworth House to obstruct those without accommodation from getting the help they desperately need, whilst spending £4m on housing a dead man?"

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Connelly.

**Councillor Connelly:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Again I make no apologies for the homelessness strategy that we have introduced that has reduced the homelessness in this City and has reduced the number of people rough sleeping to the lowest level since 2008. That homelessness strategy was subject to consultation and as I said then and I will say again that was not driven by budget it was about what was best for the homeless in this City, and there are those who are of the view that the number of hostel beds that you have determines how much you are prepared to help the homeless. We redirected our services to prevent people from becoming homeless and we have reduced that significantly. But when somebody does become homeless then we look to offer support that we did not before because the issue was for many homeless they left their hostel and within weeks were back again either at that hostel or another hostel because we simply did not offer enough support to get them back into settled accommodation. If anybody thinks that the homeless become homeless in order so they can be accommodated in one of our hostels then they are sadly mistaken. Perhaps not surprisingly Councillor Naylor forgets that he was part of this Group that debated the homelessness strategy and I do not recall at any stage Councillor Naylor opposing the strategy. The strategy is working, I make no apologies for that. In respect of the hostels we have closed three of our hostels. We still have spaces as I said yesterday we have spaces in our remaining hostels, there are spaces in the voluntary sector hostels. But in respect of the hostels 34-36 Upper Tichbourne Street, we are converting that to eight flats. Councillor Chaplin we are able to rehouse one of her constituents who has been desperately waiting for suitable

accommodation. In respect of Loughborough Road we are going to convert the Loughborough Road hostel into nine flats and in respect of Lower Hastings Street we are looking to put in supported housing, seven en-suite bedrooms and six flats. So we are investing in affordable housing. In respect of the issue around why we are spending £4m on housing one dead man. Yes we have spent £4m in respect of the Richard III Centre. We need to recognise as a City we need to attract people from outside the City to spend their money here. In respect of that, we rescue people not banks. No argument with that. The realities of the credit crunch did not hit the bankers, who it his hardest was construction workers. So I don't apologise for the fact we have invested in our City to build the Richard III Centre. What I don't apologise for is us protecting and creating jobs in the retail sector, in the cafes and the shops around the Richard III Centre and those who work in hotels. I can only imagine Councillor Naylor that they are insignificant to him. The £4m we need to invest in the City. I represent postmen across the county and I tell you, you speak to postmen in Loughborough and they do not automatically come to Leicester for the weekend either shopping or whatever. They have got a choice of Derby and Nottingham and I will say to my shame that unfortunately not all my members in Loughborough support the Foxes, some of them support the Forrest. If you are in Hinckley you have got the choice of Coventry and Birmingham. If you are in Melton Mowbray and Oakham you have got the choice of Peterborough. We need to invest in our City in order to attract visitors who spend money in our shops, spend money in our hotels, spend money in our restaurants, spend money in our cafes because that secures and creates employment. You might think it is insignificant but those performing those roles it provides them with a living wage.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Connolly. Councillor Naylor.

**Councillor Naylor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. That may be the case but quite frankly when it is costing so much for the local people.

**Lord Mayor:** Wait a minute are we on 23 now?

**Councillor Naylor:** No it's a supplementary.

**Lord Mayor:** I thought you had asked it, sorry. Carry on.

**Councillor Naylor:** You know when it has become so expensive for most of the people who live in the City to be able to come into the City centre, surely some of that is lost. I would also like to add with that that you know, have you been into the City centre recently late in the evening and seen how many people are actually sleeping on the streets because it is increasing.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Connolly.

**Councillor Connolly:** In respect of that, yes I am in the City centre. Where I work is in the City centre and Sarah will testify that quite often I come home a lot later than she would like me to do in respect of that. We have had a spike in respect of rough sleeping which the Outreach Team are tackling and we have two issues. We have some rough sleepers who don't want to have assistance, simply do not want to move into one of our hostels.

**Councillor Potter:** You ignore them.

**Councillor Connolly:** No we do not ignore them Councillor Potter. You might do but we do not.

**Councillor Potter:** We don't.

**Lord Mayor:** That's enough. If we are not going to conduct ourselves in a proper manner then I will suspend this session completely. So just behave and treat each other with respect. You have asked questions, at least have the courtesy to listen to the answer. Carry on.

**Councillor Connelly:** So in respect of rough sleeping, I will again reiterate what I have said before. The average figure is down to nine, the lowest it has been since 2008. We are working in partnership with the voluntary sector on the no second night out initiative which is proving to be successful. The Outreach Team look to identify anybody sleeping rough and where they do we will move them into a hostel or more likely we will move them straight into settled accommodation whether it be a Council property or private sector property and we will give them support for them to maintain that tenancy. There are two issues in respect of that. There are those who simply refuse our help. You can't force them, you can't frog march them from wherever they are into one of our hostels, but we will offer that support. Secondly there is an issue in respect of EU nationals. Unfortunately as a result of government legislation we can't assist because if they are not working or not in receipt of job seekers allowance then we cannot spend public funds on them. In many instances we will offer to pay their fare home but many of them for different reasons are refusing. But we continue to tackle the issue of rough sleeping, we have been extremely successful to that and I think with the greatest respect Councillor Naylor, you perhaps owe an apology to those members of our staff who work so hard to reduce rough sleeping in our City.

**Lord Mayor:** And that's completed, right. Thank you. Councillor Naylor.

**Councillor Naylor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. "Following the Council's priv...., I'll put my teeth back in... following the Council's privatisation and selling off of all public run elderly care homes in Leicester.

**Lord Mayor:** Is this 24?

**Councillor Naylor:** the treatment of patients has occurred at the Fosse Court Care Home. Now bearing witness to the human cost of the lack of accountability in private ... sorry am I reading the wrong question? Very sorry I do apologise.

**Lord Mayor:** Would you like to start again Councillor Naylor.

**Councillor Naylor:** I do apologise. "Having allowed a major business to pay for the removal of Belgrave flyover, what consultation measures did the City Council take to consider the impact that the redirection of traffic would have on small businesses dependent upon custom generated that now reduced considerably by the loss of that major business in the local area"?

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor, I indicated in response to a previous question that we worked very closely with local businesses and residents who have been very supportive of us in the development process for the regeneration of that area, and have been very appreciative of the outcomes.

**Lord Mayor:** Thanks City Mayor. Councillor Naylor a supplementary?

**Councillor Naylor:** No supplementary on that one.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Naylor.

**Councillor Naylor:** “Following the Council’s privatisation and selling off of all public run elderly care homes in Leicester, mistreatment of patients has occurred at the Fosse Court Care Home. Now bearing witness to the human cost of the lack of accountability of privately run care homes. Does the Council intend to take its duty of care to Leicester residents seriously and fight to take the care homes back into public ownership and control, and does the Council also accept that finding “alternative arrangements” as per Councillor Patel’s email for such vulnerable and fragile residents will be highly distressing, not in their best interests and therefore highly irresponsible and unacceptable?”

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Patel to reply.

**Councillor Patel:** Thank you my Lord Mayor, and thank you Councillor Naylor for that question. The recent allegations of mistreatment at Fosse Court are unrelated to the Council’s decision to close or sell its own elderly people’s homes. It has been the case for many years that the majority of people who are in residential home have received their care from independent sector providers and this is not a new situation. Historically safeguarding issues have arisen in care homes in all sectors, and sadly they will continue to arise from time to time. The Council always has and always will continue to take seriously its duties to ensure that people are receiving care and are safeguarded regardless of who the provider of that care is. In recent years the Council has strengthened its approach to improving the quality of services provided by other organisations. A quality assurance framework is in place to assess and grade care provision and all homes that we have a contract with. They are all subject to inspection by the Care Quality Commission as well as by the Council. However, it should be noted that no inspection or assurance process will fully eliminate the risk of wilful mistreatment of vulnerable people. It is therefore important that we ensure where people see things that are wrong that they know how to report this to us. There is no intention to reverse the decision taken regarding the Council’s own care homes. As recently reported at Scrutiny, even in difficult circumstances with thought and care I believe that change can be managed so that it is not distressing and can ultimately result in a positive experience as I believe is the case with the former residents at Fosse Court.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Naylor a supplementary?

**Councillor Naylor:** No supplementary my Lord Mayor.

**Councillor Naylor:** “Recently 400 applicants went for 14 posts at the newly opened Richard III Centre. How can the City Mayor justify the £4m that has been spent on this project when existing public sector jobs are being lost left, right and centre as a result of cuts to vital services?”

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. My Lord Mayor the King Richard III visitor centre visitor numbers speak for themselves. They had 10,000 visitors by 25<sup>th</sup> August, that is within one month of opening, and visitors are coming to the Centre from all over the country, they come from abroad, as well of course from the City and the County. And indeed we have had this last week the first school groups

visiting as well which obviously is part of the work that it has to do as an opportunity to inspire and educate our young people locally. I did ask for some recent figures on leisure and tourism in Leicester and Leicestershire and am very pleased to be able to tell Members that it is up by 6%, which is compared to a 3% rise in other cities in the region, so it is a direct comparison. It has been suggested, and Members will be aware there are techniques for doing this, that that will have resulted in some £45million of extra income for our local economy, and I am sure Councillor Naylor will immediately be able to do the maths and recognise that if that is the case – it is producing some £45million – it is already something that is producing a return that is ten-fold from that initial investment.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Naylor a supplementary?

**Councillor Naylor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. My supplementary has actually been answered. Thank you.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Potter.

**Councillor Potter:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I will be reading the questions out, of course I will be. I would like to ask the Assistant Mayor for Housing “how many Council tenants are facing eviction with regards to rent arrears and bedroom tax?”

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Connelly.

**Councillor Connelly:** Yes my Lord Mayor. As of today there are 16 tenants in this position, of which three of them have some element of bedroom tax in their arrears.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Potter a supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** I certainly have my Lord Mayor. I would like to know what additional help and support the Cabinet Lead is offering the most vulnerable people in this City, and have these 16 people been taken to court with additional £130 charges, because that is exactly what is happening to your Council tenants. The question is, if you don't mind, the Lord Mayor does not mind stopping us interrupting, the fact is that you are taking your Council tenants to court and each time you take them to court it costs an extra £130. But they are already struggling my Lord Mayor to pay the additional rent and to pay the additional Council tax bedroom tax yet we are still insisting on putting fines on top of them. Can the Assistant Mayor assure us that they will give exceptional circumstances to these 16 families? Some of these families have got children because some of these families have contacted myself and Councillor Naylor's office and we are very concerned it is going to cost the City a lot more money to rehouse them eventually anyway.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Connelly.

**Councillor Connelly:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Those, particularly those on the Housing Scrutiny Commission, will recall that we had consultation and a policy agreed in respect of those tenants affected by the bedroom tax. We have taken a very enlightened view in my view, in respect of those tenants who have been affected by the bedroom tax. Effectively if they co-operate with us then we will not seek to evict them. Eviction is the last resort and yes in respect of if we have to take people to court, because we can't evict people without taking them to court, I think it is only correct that we look to recover some of our costs because otherwise it falls on the tenants, the other tenants, who are paying their rent, and I think that would be wrong to expect them to pick up that cost. The fact, is eviction is a last



resort and before we get to the position of eviction and taking somebody to court then very simply we will contact the tenant, we will visit them, we will offer support through STAR, we will take a number of steps to assist them in respect of their rent arrears. What I will say is that speaking to tenants, all our tenants recognise sometimes some of our tenants get into financial difficulties, perhaps lose their job or perhaps there has been a death in the family, a whole range of circumstances, and our tenants are sympathetic to those tenants who find themselves in those difficulties, as are we as an authority. However, what I would say is that tenants are not sympathetic to those to play the system and there are those in the City who tend to play the system and they are of the view that we are too lenient with those. But as a City bear in mind we have nearly 22,000 properties. Last year we evicted 68 tenants – this was an extremely low figure - as a last resort. In respect of, for want of a better term, in comparison to other authorities and housing associations, of which I have got a list of 18, we were third lowest in respect of evictions. So in respect of the supplementary, it is a last resort, we do look to assist tenants. If tenants co-operate with us we will not evict them. My officers will provide me in respect of anybody who has got any difficulties they provide me with regular reports and previously we have written to tenants saying this is your last opportunity, we would have taken you to court, we are giving you a final opportunity, co-operate with us, whether it be directly with us with Council officers or with STAR and we will not proceed with eviction. Unfortunately, there are tenants who won't pay and there are tenants who have difficulties and can't pay but won't engage with us, and it is unfortunate that we end up having to evict tenants, but it is a matter of last resort.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Connelly. Councillor Potter.

**Councillor Potter:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. “Is the Council able to be more compassionate when tenants lose family members? Is it possible that a period of discretion can be aired on the loss of a family member whilst the family have to deal with various issues instead of the current situation where families have to clear the property in four weeks and have to pay full rent whilst doing so?”

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Connelly.

**Councillor Connelly:** I am quite happy to answer the question, I assume that question 28 is not being put then?

**Lord Mayor:** Well that is what I...

**Councillor Connelly:** OK that is fine.

**Lord Mayor:** 29 you are answering, that is the question.

**Councillor Connelly:** OK thank you Lord Mayor. The Council endeavours to deal compassionately with the death of a tenant and in such difficult times every effort is made to ensure that members of the family are contacted at an early stage and allowed enough time to make arrangements to clear the property if applicable. Some families do not need a long period of time to make such arrangements and therefore they can make arrangements to terminate the tenancy within a week or less. This ensures that the estate of the deceased does not incur any additional charges. However, if they require a longer period of time, and I have in a number of instances authorised this, if they require a longer period of time this can be arranged and we have done so. The rent that is charged per week is charged to the estate of the deceased tenant.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Connelly. Councillor Potter. Have you got a supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** There is a supplementary. Unfortunately the Opposition Members across the way won't see the list of my supplementary questions because I did not print any. I ask from the heart, that's why. So I don't read...

**Lord Mayor:** Can we come to order.

**Councillor Potter:** He just asked me a question my Lord Mayor as opposed to you lot answering your questions that your officers write you out. I haven't got the officer support this side so we do it ourselves. Anyway, thank you very much for answering the question and I will get back to you. There is no supplementary to that at all obviously.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you.

**Councillor Potter:** Question 30. "I am aware that the cleaners are clearing up around the different floors of City Hall on an hourly basis. In fact I have actually seen them, I have been over there and witnessed it, so you can't deny it. They have all got their own little canteens and little tables, posh tables with nice little clean uniforms too. How many staff are employed to do this and at what cost to the City? Shut up you, was I asking you the question? Don't you think you've done enough damage to me already the Chief Whip. Don't push your luck any more with me.

**Lord Mayor:** Can we come to order.

**Councillor Potter:** I feel insulted to call him the Chief Whip and you lot should do too.

**Lord Mayor:** Can you cease from doing what you are doing at the moment Councillor Potter and come to order.

**Councillor Potter:** Don't you think it is about time that you stopped these lot interrupting me. You are quite happy to get us lot to tell the other way so be a bit fair will you my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** I am trying to be responsive to you and to everyone else and keep it going.

**Councillor Potter:** It does not look like it sitting this side.

**Lord Mayor:** Well it wouldn't do would it?

**Councillor Potter:** No but it doesn't.

**Lord Mayor:** Well try your best to see it that way.

**Councillor Potter:** Well we don't.

**Lord Mayor:** Would you like to ask question 30?

**Councillor Potter:** I have already asked question 30 and I am waiting for a response from the Elected Mayor, because he is the one that employs them and I

wasn't asking him to sack anybody. I was just asking him what is the mentality behind it. So now he can answer the question 30.

**Lord Mayor:** 30 right.

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I am disappointed that any Member of this Council should find it a matter of criticism of the Council that it provides its staff with clean uniforms and decent mess facilities. I am sure Members would wish us to treat our cleaners in a proper manner and to provide them with decent working conditions and that is indeed what we are doing. Members will be aware that City Hall as a whole is not yet open in its entirety, there is building work going on there and during that period inevitably there is a lot of dust being created, a lot more proactive cleaning regime is needed than is likely to be necessary once it is finished. And I am assured that the regime will be reviewed when it is finished and an appropriate level adjusted to take account of the fact that once the builders are out there will inevitably be less demand than there is perhaps at the moment.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you city Mayor. Councillor Potter a supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. You are quite right Sir Peter I have got no intentions of laying off or deploying anybody who does any form of job within the City Council. What I was trying to identify was the difference between the services you are getting over in City Hall to the services that we Members get in the Town Hall. We no longer get the papers, we no longer get the officer support, we no longer get the internet, we no longer get the telephone calls

**Lord Mayor:** Is this a question?

**Councillor Potter:** Yes there is a question my Lord Mayor, and the question is there is clearly double standards from one building to another, because we did not move across to the City Hall. Sir Peter has drained the Town Hall, look at the building, your Chief Whip does nothing to bring it up to standard and neither does Sir Peter apart from drain the budget from the Town Hall to take over to the City Hall, so we went to make things fairer my Lord Mayor and bring the services back over into the Town hall. That is the question, will he make things as fair for the Members of the Opposition as he does for his own team sitting over there?

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I have explained to Members that the present situation at City Hall is one where, to a certain extent, the building is significantly still a building site. There is a lot of noise and there is a lot of dust being created and that does require special treatment during this initial period. I would say with regard to the Town Hall that Councillor Potter and her colleague are very welcome to come across to City Hall and to join us in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. I would also say with regard to the Town Hall.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Potter.

**Councillor Potter:** Yes my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Can I listen to the answer that the City Mayor is giving or do I need to go further.

**Councillor Potter:** .... his answers my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Do I need to go further, just tell me.

**Councillor Potter:** Well there is only Member that goes over there and that is Councillor Newcombe.

**Lord Mayor:** If I need to go further with this I will do.

**City Mayor:** Actually Lord Mayor if I can respond seriously, I have at one time or another met most Members of this Council at City Hall, but leaving that on one side my lord Mayor I would just make one point and it is a quite serious point about the use of the Town Hall. Over the last few years the Town hall has been desperately underused and it doesn't need me to emphasise that point – it will be something that Members are intensely aware of. And part of the opportunities that have been taken by moving over to City Hall is to look at the ways in which the Town Hall facilities are used and to ensure that we do actually have activity in here that makes use of this important, historic building, throughout the working week, and not just on the occasion when we happen to be here.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Potter are we on 31 now I think.

**Councillor Potter:** Well I am surprised outside Members can afford the room hire of the Town Hall. Question 31. "I would like to ask the Assistant Mayor for Adults and Social Care that now the City has been awarded £5million for the older people, can the funds be put into the Netherhall area to assist with the running of the luncheon club there, as has previously been done from other funding around other areas of the City?"

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Patel.

**Councillor Patel:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. And just before I answer the question can I declare an interest that I represent Humberstone and Hamilton Ward.

**Councillor Potter:** I can't hear it my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Switch your microphone on Councillor Patel please.

**Councillor Patel:** It is on.

**Lord Mayor:** It's not on I am afraid.

**Councillor Patel:** It is on.

**Lord Mayor:** Try and find a microphone for....

**Councillor Patel:** Can you hear me now?

**Councillor Potter:** Yes.

**Councillor Patel:** OK. I just want to declare an interest because I represent Humberstone and Hamilton Ward and the Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre is actually based within the Ward. Thank you Councillor Potter for your question. I think it is great news that the £5m is coming to the City and I would like to take this opportunity to thank VISTA and all the community organisations who have worked so hard to make it possible. I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work undertaken by officers in Adult Social Care to initially set up the project team and galvanise the voluntary sector organisations to collaborate to

make the bid. The £5million big lottery money is awarded to VISTA in partnership with a number of other voluntary and community sector organisations in the City to reduce social isolation for older people over a four year period. I understand that a number of communities and communities of interest have already been identified and that 23 projects have been considered at the moment which range from peer information and support to gardening projects and learning and volunteering opportunities. We are not aware that any luncheon clubs have been funded at this time through that programme, but I think they are still going through the processes. However, I am really pleased to say that Adult Social Care is in the process of reviewing their eligibility criteria for funding social inclusion activities, including luncheon clubs, and once we have got the criteria sorted out we will be moving towards establishing a small grant aid programme with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. So I am really pleased to say that there is going to be an opportunity for luncheon clubs like Netherhall to apply for money to Adult Social Care small grant funds and information on the programme and how to apply for the grant aid monies will be made available in November, and you might be interested that I had already spoken to the group at one of my surgeries. Thank you.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Patel. Councillor Potter a supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. There is just a slight supplementary. I will declare the interest as well that it is actually my Ward that I represent and obviously been consulting with a lot of the users. My concern is that this particular group has been renting the Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre for 40 years plus, every week we take the money. Three/four months ago someone decides in the Council to change the way they facilitate the services in the community centres and no longer can the community centre managers or assistants assist them serving dinner my Lord Mayor. So for 40 years my pensioners have had their dinners every week, one dinner a week, it is only one dinner a week, one hot dinner once a week, and then the Council change the services. So now our centre staff cannot help with the luncheon club. But we find out that Belgrave Ward my Lord Mayor has actually got three chefs, paid from the Adults budget so the question is can we have a paid chef from out of the allowance? We don't want to be applying for grants, these ladies are 80s and 90s, we should not be putting this stress on applicants to fill out application forms, we should note that the service is lacking in a service and we need to be providing a service and all I am asking for is to feed the pensioners of Netherhall once a week. Take one of the chefs from Belgrave- we will have one of yours. It is not right for you to have three. Let's be a bit fair with the portions with what is going around my Lord Mayor. Let's be a little bit more fair and give us a share of what we are supposed to be getting. I am sure Rita Patel is more than aware, she has spoken to all the users in the centre and you have been more than aware of this problem all of this year. So all of this year they have not had a hot dinner.

**Lord Mayor:** Can you answer the question Councillor Patel, now that you have got an opportunity.

**Councillor Patel:** I just want to say a couple of things. One is that there are a whole host of different types of luncheon clubs that are funded right round the City. Historically there are anomalies, because they were funded through different departments at different stages under different conditions. At the moment we are working with Communities and Neighbourhoods in order to sort out a fairer system and a clear criteria for all of the luncheon clubs and that is the process that we are going through at the moment. So what I would say to Councillor Potter is, yes the whole idea of establishing a small grant fund is to help people like their luncheon

club in Netherhall. Different luncheon clubs have been charging different rates and some have just used volunteers to do the cooking and she is aware that we were using Neighbourhood staff in order to cook the lunches for the residents who came to the Netherhall Neighbourhood Centre's luncheon club. What we want to do, and I think it has already been established, that there are volunteers prepared to take over that role, but once we have got the criteria sorted out for the luncheon clubs, all luncheon clubs will be able to hopefully be on a fairer system and will be working to the same criteria. Thank you.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you councillor Patel. Councillor Potter would you like to ask before I get on the 32, would you like to ask question 28 which you inadvertently missed.

**Councillor Potter:** Oh well that is very kind of you my Lord Mayor. I did not recognise that myself. The reason why my Lord Mayor is because someone has already vetted the questions I want to ask. I have got a list of questions here that I submitted and these are the ones that have been accepted. I find it very confusing that somebody in the Chambers would refuse to take the questions from the Opposition. I wonder who that may be. Well I am going to give it the Mercury so that everyone can read the questions that we want answering. Alright? So thank you very much my Lord Mayor. Am I allowed to read the question out that has been removed my Lord Mayor?

**Lord Mayor:** No question has been removed. Question 28.

**Councillor Potter:** Yes there has. Yes there has. Opposition Members – has there been a question removed from my list of questions?

**Councillor Naylor:** Yes.

**Councillor Potter:** Would you like me to read it to you? Do you want to know it? Shall we take a vote? I am glad you are man enough to hear it, I really am. Ok then.

**Lord Mayor:** I have taken legal advice thank you, because you are always quoting that, legal advice, and I understand that the question was withdrawn.

**Councillor Potter:** Not from myself, I beg your pardon.

**Lord Mayor:** That's what I've....

**Councillor Potter:** Excuse me the officer came to me and said that you had to remove the question. Don't start "erring" me because that is a fact. Now the officer is present in the chambers. Let's not embarrass the officers anymore, because Peter has already done that tonight. I was told that question number 6 was taken off because I could not ask it my Lord Mayor. So if you've no objections and the Members want to hear it I will read it to you anyway.

**Lord Mayor:** No.

**Councillor Potter:** You want to make up your mind.

**Lord Mayor:** I am asking you. You missed question 28 on the order paper which was accepted. I am asking you if you want to ask that as a matter of courtesy and fairness. Do you want to ask it or not?

**Councillor Potter:** Well I do want to ask question 28 and I said thank you very much. The reason why there is a confusion is because I have got lists of questions here and officers only took these question here. Now there is a question that you have accused me of removing my Lord Mayor and I have not. So I would like to submit the question because Members of Opposition here have read my questions and they have said to me – why have you taken the question out and I said I haven't. You know what the question is Peter.

**Lord Mayor:** I haven't agreed that the question shall be put so you will not put the question.

**Councillor Potter:** Can we have a vote on it?

**Councillor Naylor:** For the sake of democracy let her have her question.

**Councillor Potter:** Who removed the question?

**Lord Mayor:** it was removed. The legal team removed the question as far as I am aware.

**Councillor Potter:** Who removed it?

**Lord Mayor:** And it is not part of the order paper. It is not part of the order paper.

**Councillor Naylor:** Let her ask the question.

**Lord Mayor:** No.

**Councillor Potter:** Why?

**Lord Mayor:** Because I am not allowed to let it be asked.

**Councillor Potter:** That is not democracy. You are not.

**Lord Mayor:** I am here. Alright well we can have an adjournment then and I think it is time we did. So I will adjourn the meeting for 20 minutes. So I will reconvene in 20 minutes at 25 to 8.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Lord Mayor:** OK the way we are going to handle this now. There will be a short statement made by the legal person to my left here and we will try and move on from there, and if you will make that statement now. Do you need this microphone? So everybody can hear exactly what is being said.

**Legal representative:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. In respect of the issue that arose previously to do with a question, the Constitution deals with questions at Council and in particular it says questions which shall not be accepted. The question that is the subject of some debate falls within that category and as such was not accepted by the Monitoring Officer and does not form part of the agenda today and therefore it is not a question which can be asked as part of this meeting today.

**Lord Mayor:** Right, now that is the explanation that has been given. I can give no

further details and can only say that that is the advice from the legal team and I am not allowed, whether I want to or whether I don't, to take this question at this meeting. That question will have to be answered, whatever it is, I don't know what it is, at some other time in some other way, so I will ask Barbara to do that. I want to try and get back to the meeting and in doing that for a start-off during the break Wayne Naylor approached the Lord Mayor's parlour and wishes to make a statement to the chamber. Wayne if you wish.

**Councillor Naylor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. On checking my email I have actually found that there was a mistake made and I would like to completely apologise to the City Mayor for the reference that I made and have that struck from the record.

**Lord Mayor:** Do you want to say anything in response?

**Councillor Potter:** Well said Wayne, well said.

**City Mayor:** If I may my Lord Mayor that is a very gracious apology and it is readily accepted.

**Lord Mayor:** Very good. Right, now I shall try to do this again and I will ask Councillor Potter do you wish to put question 28?

**Councillor Potter:** I do my Lord Mayor. Stop it. And I would also like to thank Legal for returning with their answer. There will be another way I will get my question out don't worry Peter. "How many Council tenants have been taken to court since April 2014 for late payment of Council tax and have gained court costs for this at a time when they can ill afford to be paying any additional charges"?

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Russell.

**Councillor Russell:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. From April to August this year a total of 15,491 summonses have been issued for non-payment of Council tax and of those 3,267 relate to Council tenants. I am sure Councillor Potter should be well aware that we have actively campaigned that for all residents who are facing financial difficulties to talk to us and there are a number of types of help available and that is available at any stage of the process. We are one of the few authorities that have a Council Tax Discretionary Relief Fund, we have also put in a number of additional stages for residents to be able to come to us for help, and we have widely promoted that if people do engage with us and talk to us then we will do whatever we can to help residents, especially those who are facing difficulties. Unfortunately there still some residents who ignore their Council tax bills and the number of attempts we make to contact them. And ultimately we have no choice but to issue court summonses for non-payment. We are of course legally obliged to collect Council tax.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Russell. Councillor Potter have you a supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** I would like to thank Sarah for the answer she has given. I'm obviously very concerned. I am aware of some of the things that she has already fed back to us but I would still like the Council to consider additional measures if they may. I just let Council know of one tenant that lives in the Humberstone Ward that has received Council tax warnings, with court charges, even though the Housing did not contact her. Now I do know of one tenant that has not been



contacted by the Housing or the Inland Revenue Department and she did get court costs saying that she had already been to court and she was not aware. So I would like reassurances from Sarah that this will be stopped in the future and can be stopped as we speak this evening.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Russell.

**Councillor Russell:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. It is obviously very concerning if somebody has had a letter to suggest they have been to court when that is not the case and it would be more helpful if Councillor Potter could supply me with the details and I will obviously look into the individual case. I would just like to make Members aware if they are not already that when we brought it in, had a look at changing the arrangements for Council tax last year for those that had previously received the 100% Council tax benefit, we negotiated a deal that when residents were required to go to court, if the amount we were talking about was relatively small we negotiated a much lower court cost in recognition of trying to reduce the costs that people were facing. But I will reiterate that if people engage with us we endeavour to ensure they don't end up at court.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Russell. Councillor Potter question 32.

**Councillor Potter:** Thank you my Lord Mayor and I will give Sarah the details at the end of this meeting. My Lord Mayor I would like to ask the City Mayor and the Labour Group to agree that under the current situations in other cities that Councillors should be CRB checked on entering a term of office.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Clayton.

**Councillor Clayton:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. The purpose of undertaking CRB checks under the current legislation is to make sure that we don't have dangerous criminals involved in regulated activity, which largely means working with children and vulnerable adults. That is not within the role of a City Councillor to carry out that work and our practice in line with most other authorities is that we carry out CRB checks just for those who are going to be involved in regulated activity with those vulnerable people. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Clayton. Councillor Potter have you got a supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** I certainly have got a supplementary to this one my Lord Mayor. It is not true that we are not put in vulnerable situations. I do regular Council surgeries, I do one a week, four a month and on several Council surgeries I attend I have been confronted with some very, very vulnerable constituents that live within the Ward or on the boundaries of my Ward. So I completely disagree with what the Chief Whip said and with Members of Opposition on this side of the Chambers we will make sure that all the candidates that we put forward will be all CRB checked and that is to cover our own backs to make us feel a lot better and to give the public reassurances that we are not dodgy in any sort of way and we have got nothing to hide. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Clayton.

**Councillor Clayton:** Lord Mayor I do find some of the accusations that Councillor Potter makes rather difficult to take. Within the Labour Party we undertake the most stringent selection criteria. We certainly do and Councillor Potter may laugh about

that. We do that, we have made them even more stringent this time and what I hope that we will do this time, and I will admit that occasionally we do make mistakes and the biggest mistake of course was that we selected a Councillor who actually ended up being elected and then being excluded from a local primary school because she could not behave herself. We will try our best to avoid situations...

**Lord Mayor:** I find that

**Councillor Potter:** My Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Hang on let me do it. Barbara let me do it. Let me do it. Councillor Clayton that is inflammatory and unwarranted.

**Councillor Potter:** You better deal with it Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** And I would like you to apologise for that comment it was not necessary.

**Councillor Clayton:** It was as reported in the press Lord Mayor, I don't feel I have any need to apologise I am sorry.

**Councillor Potter:** My Lord Mayor that was a very personal comment that he has just made that is clearly untrue and wrongly recorded and in my hand here this evening I have a letter from the Crown Courts to prove my innocence that he has so accused me of being so wrong within this Chambers and Labour Party. I left the Labour Party because of people like the Chief Whip and the Chair being a bunch of hypocrites and the question is why can he stand there and slag Members off in the Chambers and I get pulled in my Lord Mayor. I have not been found guilty of nothing and my record is completely clear.

**Lord Mayor:** Right, well I am glad you agree with that in the Chamber and I know one thing for sure I am going to tolerate no more, and I want to make that very, very clear. I thought I made that clear at the outset and now is the time to take action if I have any further, if I have any further comments like that from anyone, and from you Councillor Potter, I shall make a move, I shall make a move to do something about it. I don't want to do that but I will do it. Now I have asked you to respect each other and try and get along. We are here on webcam, you are here in front of the City and at the moment the conduct you are using is that of a bunch of school kids and not, and not the hierarchy of this City. So I ask you to think about that and control yourselves. Carry on.

**Councillor Potter:** Do I get an apology my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Apparently not. I've said what I've said and that's it.

**Councillor Potter:** That's OK I shall take I further myself my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** That will be up to you. Councillor Potter 33.

**Councillor Potter:** Certainly going to have a lot to answer to that's for sure. Thank you my Lord Mayor. Question 33 am I on?

**Lord Mayor:** 33, yes.

**Councillor Potter:** Yes it is. "How many times has the lift broken down within the City Hall and what has been the cost of servicing this?"

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor the lift has actually had four incidents since City Hall was partially occupied on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, in June rather. Two of those incidents were caused by misuse. One was some debris that got stuck in the door and the other was overloading. These were obviously covered by the maintenance contract so there was no additional cost. The two other incidents were caused by a failed relay, which was replaced free of charge under our maintenance contract as part of the fair wear and tear, and the other incident was caused by the failure of an inverter which put the lift out of action and that cost £958. Obviously the pressure on that lift is more significant at the moment than it will be when the other lift is opened at the other end of the building in the next few weeks, but I do think that the straight answer to the question is it has cost £958, which is not a significant sum in the context of the running and the maintenance of the building.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Potter do you have a supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** Just a very short one thank you. Thanks to the City Mayor for the response. I am just concerned that when myself and colleague, Councillor Naylor, went to the City Hall just a few weeks ago the lift was not working and that is why I raised the question and as you can see I am quite disabled, not able to use stairs at the moment either. So when the lift does break down what other opportunities or things are put in place to help and support the staff up and down the stairs, because it is a very large building.

**City Mayor:** Yes Lord Mayor as I explained the twin to that lift at the other end of the foyer will be open within the next few weeks, but actually during the periods when those four incidents when it was temporarily out of action, in fact there was a lift at the back of the building that was made available for members of staff who were actually taken around the building and shown where it was it they needed to use it to come up. But as I say the pressure should be taken off that particular single lift at the moment when the other one opens in the very near future.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Potter 34.

**Councillor Potter:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. "Is the City Mayor of the knowledge that many staff members are not happy with the new arrangements at the City Hall, especially with the cramped and impersonal working conditions there? What does the City Mayor intend to do about this?" I am a little bit apprehensive to have asked the question my Lord Mayor but I did not include any names and I certainly won't expose the members of staff that have spoken to me confidentially.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor. I do perhaps have some surprise that members of staff would choose to confide in Councillor Potter rather than in their own staff representatives, whether they be trade unions or their management. I have actually checked those reliable sources – the trade unions, the management - and all have confirmed my own impression which is that the use of City Hall has been generally very much welcomed by those who work in there. They do obviously find a changed working environment, one that is I think for most of them one that is in many ways more efficient and very pleasant in which to work. Of course there are teething problems during periods of change, I don't doubt that for a moment, but

certainly if Councillor Potter does have more specific information that has been confided to her uniquely I would be very pleased for her to pass it on and I would obviously, in an anonymised fashion I would take it up with the officers responsible for their welfare.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Potter, have you a supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** I certainly am responsible for their welfare and don't sound surprised that Members or officers do talk to me. There are some of the Members in this side that still talk to me there are some of them that don't, that is their choice. But yes I am quite happy but I'm not about to expose who these officers are because I think that is very unfair. The question would be the supplementary would be that there are different standards within the City Hall. You go over to the Elected Mayor's service, the members of staff can take their own personal belongings and leave them at their desk, they are not hot-desking. Whereas officers in other departments within City Hall are hot-desking. They are not allowed to leave any paperwork out, they have to clear their desks away every evening and it is very stressful. There was not a question there it was just an answer actually.

**Lord Mayor:** I think I got the question.

**City Mayor:** If I may my Lord Mayor comment on that assertion, because it is my understanding that the expectations of staff are applied uniformly across all parts of City Hall. I think all staff are expected to clear their desk so they can be used as hot desks where necessary. Clearly the extent to which that is appropriate for different employees does vary depending on the nature of the work they are doing and the extent to which they are actually in the office throughout the working day. To repeat the point I made earlier on, I do understand that were any members of staff to have concerns they might not wish to actually have their names recorded, but I genuinely say to Councillor Potter and indeed other Members, if they do hear of concerns from staff I would be very interested in hearing what they are. I would pass them on to the appropriate management and they don't need to have names attached to them. The welfare of our staff is a matter of concern to me and if there were legitimate concerns I would want to ensure they were addressed by management.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Potter, 35.

**Councillor Potter:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. "Can the Labour City Mayor confirm how much that Labour Group have paid for the use of rooms, hospitality and refreshments since being in power from 2007?"

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** I am inclined to respond to that by saying Councillor Potter is probably better placed to answer that than I, having been during much of that period the Chief Whip for the controlling Group and the one who would have been responsible for making the arrangements and for paying for them I would trust. Of course I was elected back in 2011 and I can certainly say that, since that period, obviously taking the advice of the Council's Monitoring Officer about the use of Council facilities and the ability for all groups to use facilities for matters that are related to Council business, and the necessity of all groups paying for things that are broadly party political beyond the Council, and I can assure Councillor Potter that as far as I understand it when she was in control of these matters and subsequently, the Labour Group has continued to maintain those principles.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Potter have you a supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** Well the first supplementary would have to be he has not answered the question, and as the Chief Whip - not Secretary, not Treasurer, Chief Whip - it is not my responsibility to pay the Labour Party bills off. It is actually the responsibility of the Labour Group Treasurer. That is why I have asked you a question. How much money have the Labour Party paid for hospitality for food and room bookings since 2007 because I am not aware that the Labour Party paid for anything. So I would like to know much you have paid Peter. Can we have the answer?

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I again draw this distinction between matters that are related to the activities of a political party as such and those that are related to Councillors when they are acting as a political group in relation to the activities of this Council. And my advice, well consistent advice of the Monitoring Officers is, that the latter is not something for which this Group or any other Group is expected to pay and the former is something that all are expected to pay for, and that distinction is absolute and I am aware that there have been occasions when the Labour Party as a party has used facilities here. We have had Party conferences here, I can think of at least two over the last few years and I see nods from colleagues over there. I know as a matter of fact that they were charged for and paid for and I would expect other political parties to adopt exactly the same process of drawing the distinction between Council business and party political business and pay for the party political business as we do.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Potter, 36.

**Councillor Potter:** Not supplementary to that question because he did not answer my question.

**Lord Mayor:** I thought you asked the supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** Yes but I had to ask him to ask the question my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** No, no it counts as a supplementary.

**Councillor Potter:** Alright I'll bring it back next time. Because you are not going to get away with it obviously. You can't charge us and then give yourself free rent and free food. Yeh, free refreshments and free fruit every three weeks. The Labour Party has room hire every three weeks and don't pay for it. Right question 36. "A member of the Executive from the Children's Service is leaving. Can the Assistant Mayor for Children's assure the chamber that in the future operations Members are informed of any part of any process to employ replacements within the service?"

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Dempster.

**Councillor Dempster:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Yes, I mean the last permanent appointment was for the Director of Children's Services, Frances Craven, and I am very pleased to say that she actually started today, and that Councillor Grant was part of the process, the interviewing and appointment process. So I can confirm that when appointments are made the recruitment process will follow the normal constitutional standards.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Potter have you a supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** No my Lord Mayor you will be pleased to hear.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Potter 37

**Councillor Potter:** “Can the Assistant Mayor for Heritage, Culture, Leisure and Sport give an update on the consultation regarding Humberstone Heights Golf Course?”

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I will answer this. The matter of the proposed closure of the golf course has been subject of a considerable amount of public debate. It is, I think, known by Members that we are currently consulting on the proposal to close Western Park Golf Course and continue to run, maintain and very significantly further invest in Humberstone Heights Golf Course which of course is an area with which Councillor Potter will be very familiar and I would expect her to welcome. Obviously what this will enable us to do is to invest in a way that will ensure the continuity of quality, municipal golf courses in our City while recognising the very dramatically changed situation for golf provision generally. At the time when municipal golf courses were set up they were for many ordinary people the only way which they could get access to golf. That is no longer the case and that is reflected in the usage figures both of our courses and in the pricing and membership structures of those privately provided courses. The consultation about the future closes on the 24<sup>th</sup> October and obviously Members will want to understand that I don't want to pre-judge the outcome of that consultation by saying too much more this evening.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Potter have you a supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** My supplementary is more of a comment. I would like to say thank you very much and very happy that Humberstone Heights is on the mend and going to have some future investments. I would like the City Mayor and Cabinet Lead to consider additional changes there would actually be to facilitate better toilets for the younger people that attend, it is attended by all nine young schools in the area attend golf matches and we would like some new changing areas for the younger people. I think it is only fair that the younger people should be taken consideration. I am very sorry to hear that Westcotes is, is it Westcotes? Western Park – very sorry to hear that Western Park is going to be sold off, it is obviously going to be sold off for affordable land I would imagine, but hey ho, Humberstone Heights is actually on the increase so I am pleased about that My Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**Councillor Potter:** Do you want to respond to that?

**City Mayor:** I was searching for the question.

**Councillor Potter:** There was no question I said it was just a comment.

**Lord Mayor:** Fine. Where are we now. Councillor Potter, 38.

**Councillor Potter:** “How was the delegation that went to Gaza chosen, the purpose of the visit and at what cost to the City?”

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor it is on the public record that this was not in any sense a delegation nor did I go to Gaza but apart from that there is a considerable amount of accuracy in the question. The fact is that I went with colleagues and friends to visit Jerusalem and the West Bank. Members will have seen my comments about that in the Leicester mercury and there was no cost to the Council associated with that. I would add that Members will be aware that since I was elected I have made no significant visits at the expense of the Council, and intend that to continue to be the case. Members will of course be aware that that is in contrast to some other Members of the Council. Members may be interested that Councillor Potter and Councillor Naylor are attending, I think next week, at the Council's expense, an event at the Holiday Inn in Kensington. Members may be interested to know that is anticipated to cost £245 per head. I am sure that given their new interest in costs falling to the Council from delegations, they will wish to ensure that on this occasion they pay for themselves. I am sure they will also wish to be reimburse their costs for similar jollies over the last two years.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Potter a supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** Oh well yes I will reply. Of course I am going to stand up and reply. I have not claimed any expenses - check it out. As for going to NABMA I did not claim nothing. Nothing. Check it out. And it is not the Council that pay for NABMA it's NABMA so get your facts right Peter. Anyway I have not got no supplementary. We will come back on that. Shut up being childish.

**Lord Mayor:** Did you want to make a further comment City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor the attendance at NABMA which Councillor Potter clearly feels is a good use of public money, others here may doubt that, cost £195 per head for each of them two years ago, £195 per head last year and this year will cost £245 per head of public money this year. Given their concern for public money I am sure they will wish to pay that out of their own pockets this time round.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Potter, 39.

**Councillor Potter:** Thank you Lord Mayor. "Can the City Mayor assure this chamber that he has no intentions of selling off any of our current children's homes?"

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Dempster.

**Councillor Dempster:** Thank you Lord Mayor. It is absolutely right that we continue to transform our services and part of transforming our services is reviewing our placement strategy. So we have a placement strategy and that has and that has a continuum from foster placements, lodgings and a very small part is residential accommodation either that we ourselves provide or that is provided by other authorities. So it is absolutely right that we do that review and that will be a wide ranging review that will say what are the changing needs of the young people that are looked after in the City, what are the resources that we currently have, and have we got the right number of services in the right place to meet the changing needs of young people. So that is a piece of work that is ongoing and I would think it will take some months.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Dempster. Councillor Potter have you a supplementary?

**Councillor Potter:** I haven't at this time but I thank the Assistant Mayor for the answer. Thank you.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Barton.

**Councillor Dr. Barton:** Thank you Lord Mayor. I am going to ask question 40 on the agenda paper and I hope that people are still watching on the webcast because I am hoping that we will have important information about supporting very needy children in the City and ways that we can support them. So I am asking question 40.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Dempster.

**Councillor Dempster:** OK. Thank you very much Lord Mayor and this is a question about the introduction of universal free school meals for children in years 1 and 2 and are we as a Council ready for that increase in numbers. And I am really pleased to be able to say that we have invested nearly £1m in individual schools, in school kitchens and also in the Edward Street meals kitchen. So almost £1m working very closely in partnership with individual schools to make sure that every child in year 1 and year 2 that wants a free school meal, a hot dinner, is able to get one in a timely manner, and I think that is really important. Nobody wants to be rushed through their dinner, particularly little ones. So I am really pleased with the level of investment, the work that we have done in partnership with individual schools and in actual fact I was out at Sandfield Close School last week and I actually saw it in action – it was working very well.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Dempster. Councillor Barton have you a supplementary?

**Councillor Dr. Barton:** Yes I have a supplementary. I am really pleased that more children are able to enjoy a hot meal at lunchtime that is really great news. But I am concerned that because of the automatic entitlement there could be some families that are no longer claiming free school meals because they are getting it anyway. Is that leading to a cut in our income for education because we are going to be losing the pupil premium which actually depends on people applying for free school meals.

**Councillor Dempster:** I would really like to thank Councillor Barton for bringing this up and bringing this to people's attention. Incredibly important issue. The bottom line is that how the pupil premium is calculated is in respect of numbers of children who are currently in receipt of free school meals or have been in receipt of school meals in the last six years. So obviously as time goes on it is more and more important that, just because you get a free school meal in year 1 and year 2 by right, that does not mean that you should not make the application. It is absolutely crucial that people who are eligible for free school meals make that application. Now it does not affect them directly, but it has huge implications for the school because if those children in year 1 and year 2 do not make that application for free school meals then that school will lose £1,300 for that child. So that is a significant amount of money. Now I know that our schools are doing some really good work. I know from the governor at a local school, King Richard School, the amount of work that they are doing to engage parents to get the forms filled in because of the difference that it will make. I understand that just a small primary school, if a third of their children, a third of the children in reception, year 1 and year 2 who are eligible for free school meals, yes, if they did not fill in the form they could



lose £40,000 if those families don't register. For a small school that is a significant amount of money. So yes, a very important point. It is really, really important that we get that message out to everybody. Please make the applications for your free school meals, it will benefit the whole school and thereby your child as well.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Dempster. Councillor Clarke.

**Councillor Clarke:** Question 41 my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I am pleased to be able to tell Members that the heritage open days this year, and I know some Members actually experienced them for themselves, have been a great success. Many more buildings open, even more organisations taking part. I think they were doing a calculation and they reckon that the number of buildings open and number of events associated with them has nearly doubled over the last three years which is really quite remarkable, and I do understand that we are now able, I think with confidence, to claim that we have a greater number of buildings open, a greater number of people going, than any comparable City in the UK which is really quite remarkable. It is very exciting. I think about 40 places were open revealing their history and their heritage. I got a chance to get a flavour of some of them. I was particularly interested to get another chance to have a look inside St. Peter's Church in Belgrave and that one was open I think for the first time. But I know others saw other buildings for the first time and I know that there was a buzz about the City while they were open; lots of people going around quite a number of buildings and thoroughly enjoying having access to them. So I am very proud that our heritage open days have been so successful and very grateful for all of those City Council staff or for the most part actually volunteers, who make it possible for people to experience our rich heritage that we have in our built environment.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Is there a supplementary?

**Councillor Clarke:** I am afraid there is my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** No that is sound Councillor Clarke, sound.

**Councillor Clarke:** What role do Leicester's heritage assets play in the Mayor's vision for the future of our City. And it is worth noting that there will be many more heritage assets created during the course of this meeting.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor. They play an important part in that vision, because I have talked on a number of occasions in this chamber and elsewhere about the importance of connecting Leicester. Now there is physically connecting the modern Leicester, think of the modern retail heart with its historic part in the old town, the Roman, the Medieval part, but also about connecting Leicester with the history that is represented in its buildings, in its built environment. And Members will have seen the panels that are going up around the City, I have talked about them too, that are beginning the process of enabling people just on a comparatively casual basis, to experience the quality that they have around them in their everyday life and to understand it and I do see that as an important part of enabling Leicester and Leicestershire people to appreciate the quality of what they have got, to be proud of it, but also to be able to share it with those visitors who are such an important part, not just of making this a vibrant City but also promoting its economy.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Dr. Moore.

**Councillor Dr. Moore:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I would like to ask question 42 of the City Mayor please.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I am delighted to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the work that Oxfam is doing. They themselves have described some of that work, and I do encourage Members to look at their website. I obviously have not got sufficient time this evening to go into it in full detail. But they do a tremendous amount of work, they are delivering safe drinking water to the best part of a quarter of a million people a day. They are providing generators to pump water, repairing water damage as a result of what has happened, the bombardment there, providing emergency food to many in the population and also supporting the medical services. In paying tribute to the work that Oxfam are doing I would want to do what I think they would expect us to do as well, which is to pay tribute to the other organisations who work alongside them. Obviously Islamic Relief, obviously Red Crescent, Red Cross, Medecins Sans Frontieres particularly – some very brave people involved there – and of course the United Nations agencies who are there very much in presence and no doubt many others. But I think Oxfam, while us paying tribute to them, would want us also to pay tribute to their partners.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Dr. Moore have you a supplementary?

**Councillor Dr. Moore:** I'm afraid so City Mayor.. Lord Mayor. Thank you for that City Mayor. I share your views on Oxfam. I recently attended an event at the City Rooms about Oxfam's very impressive and important work in the third world as you have just described, and this was particularly about work in Vietnam, supporting people out of poverty into self-employment and in South Sudan offering relief to absolutely desperate people in camps who have been displaced by the recent wars. And I was rather alarmed to learn when talking to Oxfam people that they had to pay the organisation running City Rooms for the use of the room. Would the City Mayor care to comment on the fact that a charity carrying out such important work actually has to be charged for giving this sort of presentation? Thank you.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** Yes thank you Lord Mayor. I don't know that it has, I do seem to recall having heard that actually the people who manage City Rooms actually did give us very substantial discount on their normal rate, but I can obviously look into that. I would just say to Members of course, that as Members will be aware, City Rooms is a building that is managed by somebody who is I think doing an excellent job in managing that historic building and giving new life to it, we were talking earlier on about that heritage assets and that is one that I think is a model of how those assets can be brought back into life under good private sector management. And no doubt he would have had costs associated with opening it. But I would be very happy to talk with Oxfam about ways in which we can enable them to have use of some of our facilities as we do other charitable organisations at rates that don't actually eat into their excellent work.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Dr. Moore.

**Councillor Dr. Moore:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Question 43 again to the City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** 43 yes. My thanks again. As Councillor Moore is aware we have had several highways and transport workshops to talk with Members about priorities and the ways in which we should use our highways works programmes most effectively at a local and a Ward level, and I am pleased to say that this process has helped shape those programmes and the priorities within them. With regards to Knighton Ward I am aware of some of the issues that Councillor Moore and her colleagues have raised, particularly issues in Welford Road, Knighton Church Road, Knighton Fields and Brinsmead Road areas and I know that officers have prepared a proposal of an environmental works programme and suggestions for next and later years have been informed by what Ward Councillors have said and many of the priorities that have been identified will be included. I would welcome an opportunity to continue the dialogue with Councillor Moore and indeed other Members, about priorities for their Wards and it may well be that in a supplementary question Councillor Moore wants to indicate some of the areas elsewhere in her Ward that still need inclusion.

**Lord Mayor:** Dr. Moore have you a supplementary?

**Councillor Dr. Moore:** Yes my Lord Mayor I do have and I will read it out, but I am happy to get a written reply rather than take up any more time in Council tonight. Particularly to be specific I would be grateful if the City Mayor could tell me what is happening to cut speeding in Craighill Road to deter cyclists from whizzing out of Newmarket Walk and crashing into pedestrians walking up Craighill Road. I am also interested as the City Mayor knows about plans to put a pedestrian operated lights on to Welford Road near Maston Gardens, and I can see the City Mayor grinning, and can we also have feedback from the scheme that has been operating on that very dangerous junction with London Road, Guildford Road and Ratcliffe Road where if a queue of cars builds up it does trigger the operation of the nearby pedestrian crossing lights. But as I said I am happy to have a written reply. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor you have been invited to provide a written response.

**City Mayor:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Officers have provided me with extensive notes on those issues, but think I will probably take Councillor Moore's suggestion and let her have them in writing and I hope I will be able to give her the reassurance she wants that those issues are being deal with.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Grant.

**Councillor Grant:** Thank you Lord Mayor. "Does the City Mayor still hold the view that scrutiny of by Opposition Councillors of his projects amounts to slagging off Leicester?"

**City Mayor:** No my Lord Mayor I don't hold that view and I have never expressed that view. I do take the view that Members through the Scrutiny process and in this chamber have a job to do in scrutinising the projects that are being undertaken by me and by the Executive and by the Administration. What I do object to is when Members use the process, whether it is in this chamber or Scrutiny, to talk things down which they know little about. There were a couple of examples that particularly irritated me at that Scrutiny meeting, but the one that I particular felt was wholly inappropriate and actually quite embarrassing for the Member concerned, was then Councillor Porter started going on about the shortcomings of the King Richard III Centre even though Lord Mayor he had not taken the trouble to walk

around the corner to see it.

**Councillor Porter:** Lord Mayor we just had an adjournment because you were saying people shouldn't start getting personal and here we are again with him making a personal attack. This has got absolutely nothing to do with me. The Richard III Centre was not built for my benefit, the point I was trying to make there was to say what are they doing to try and promote an increase in the number of visitors to it.

**Lord Mayor:** Can you please listen to Councillor Porter. I can get over this if the rest of the meeting will just listen to what Councillor Porter is saying. Carry on sorry to interrupt you.

**Councillor Porter:** Thank you very much Lord Mayor. As he knows very well at that meeting the point I was trying to get across was what are the Council doing to try and promote the Richard III Centre to get more visitors because 10,000 may seem like a lot of visitors but the previous thing at the Guildhall got 17,000 visitors per month, so that was the point I was making. I was not trying to slag it off or knock it I was actually trying to say... so for him to say that I have not gone round there to see it is neither here nor there unless it has obviously been put for me for my benefit, has it been built for my benefit.

**Councillor Clayton:** A point of order my Lord Mayor please. This is a question and answer session where Councillor Grant has put a question to the City Mayor. The City Mayor is entitled to answer the question in the way he sees fit in line with the Constitution and it is not because Councillor Porter is the subject of that answer does not entitle him, surely, to stand up and discuss the reply.

**Lord Mayor:** I am very pleased that you said "surely". Because at the end of the day after the volatile meeting that we have had, all played out in front of the Leicestershire public, then I think that if I thought I could get over it by having Councillor Porter qualify what he was saying which the City Mayor objected to it may get us over the situation. I don't envisage that it is going to be a regular occurrence, I just thought it would be appropriate at this particular time because we had been going on quite well, that is the only reason. Please City Mayor. Oh wait a minute where are we. We are indeed. Councillor Grant have you a supplementary?

**Councillor Grant:** Thank you Lord Mayor. I mean I must admit I take a point of difference with the City Mayor because at the meeting and as was reported in the Mercury, he did say this was the night for City Councillors, for Opposition Councillors in which I was included, to slag off the City's assets. Could he explain how Councillors doing their job in Scrutiny is slagging off Leicester and his comments on the Curve as the most disastrous project which was reported in the national media was not particularly in the context of the Curve and other investments which he has also criticised resulted in over £250m of investment in the City and worth many more times the cost that was actually incurred by the Council.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I think there is a distinct difference between the comments that I made about the Curve and the comments that some Members were making about some of the current projects. The big difference of course is the price tag. The criticism I made of the Curve was not of the finished project which I have on many occasions praised as an asset to the City, but it was of the way in

which, and Councillor Grant was of course a part of the administration that was responsible for that, the way in which the finances of the project were managed and the fact that it went a very long way over budget and of course that is money that could have been used for many other worthwhile things in the City.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Grant.

**Councillor Grant:** Thank you Lord Mayor. I am quite happy to receive answers to questions 45, 46 and 48 as they are written and prepared.

**Lord Mayor:** Can I just qualify that's 45, 46 and 48. So we will move to 47. I do appreciate that thank you very much Councillor Grant.

**Councillor Grant:** Thank you Lord Mayor. 47. "Is the City Mayor concerned about the design of Jubilee Square where there is a danger of injury to the public who may fall from pathways that have no distinct edge next to a drop?"

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I have obviously taken some technical advice on this and I won't perhaps read to Members all of it, but I haven't measured it myself, but I am advised that the sides of the lawn taper from 450mm to flush with the adjacent paving and unless Councillor Grant has measured it for himself I just take that as being a fact. Officers tell me that Part K of the Building Regulations require protection from falls or drops of 600mm or more. Clearly as Members can see the drop is not of that size. Apparently in order to mitigate the risks of falls the designers concentrated on contrasting colours and textures and that is very evidently the case which was developed in consultation with the Council's access officers. There are a number of other measures that they set out here as having been taken. But if I just come to the conclusion of it. Oh yes and Members will be aware that there are some benches to go in place which will significantly protect some of these potential drops. They are on site now and just about to be put in place. But apparently risk assessments are carried out when all large events are planned and depending on the event it may, on occasions, be considered appropriate to provide temporary fencing or barriers.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Grant a supplementary?

**Councillor Grant:** Yes, thank you Lord Mayor. I must admit I am worried about our use of technical guidance in this situation rather than actually looking at it and applying common sense. On a recent visit I had to administer first aid to a 23 year old who cycled off the edge and landed on his cheek. I have obscured his picture but I have actually got pictures. I had to get first aid equipment from the BBC and advise him to actually attend A&E for the risk of a fracture to his cheek. Obviously he may not have been paying attention but he was a fit young man cycling along. Some of the people who will come and use the Square won't be quite that nature and therefore I would ask him to reconsider because I am concerned that there is a real danger to people with accessibility. So the question for the City Mayor is will he reconsider?

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I think in any City Members will be aware that it is not possible to avoid level changes now and again. There are steps, there are level changes and things and you can't entirely in the real world design out or iron out

changes in levels and indeed risks that might be associated with them. What you can do is to take good quality advice as we have done, particularly from our access officer and from the people who have designed the scheme, about ways of minimising those risks and, where necessary, providing screen to them. The seats that I have referred to will actually provide quite a line across there, you know providing a visual and a physical barrier, and I think that Members will see when they are in place that any perceived risk is at least being acknowledged and minimised. But I am afraid my Lord Mayor we do need to live in the real world and recognise that you can't completely design out some risk in the environment.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Grant question 49.

**Councillor Grant:** Thank you Lord Mayor. I will only require a date on this, but it is asked on behalf of the school where I am the governor and other parents. "When will City Catering provide schools with finalised menus for 2014/15 so they can inform parents of the food their children are receiving at lunchtime?" Quite happy to take whatever answer Councillor Dempster has and there is no supplementary.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Dempster.

**Councillor Dempster:** Yes thanks for that. I have been told that the menus have actually gone out to all schools so what I will do is, I will get a written answer confirming that and I will ask officers to check up with schools what is happening to those menus because they should be making it available to all parents. Just to remind you that it will be on the Council's website and the third thing is that the menu is only until Christmas because there are new food standards coming in at the end of this year, there is also some changes in terms of allergens and therefore we will have to be making slight adjustments to the menus so there will be further sets of menus with clearer information which I think will be very helpful for parents in the New Year.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Dempster. Councillor Grant a supplementary?

**Councillor Grant:** No.

**Lord Mayor:** No, right over the page. Oh Councillor Grant.

**Councillor Grant:** Thank you. "Can the City Mayor make a statement in response to the reports on child abuse in Rochdale and Rotherham?"

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I know it has been quite a long meeting but I hope Members will forgive me if I read this statement in full. It is obviously important that I do respond to this properly and in a responsible manner. The first thing I want to say is that the City Council and the Leicester Safeguarding Children's Board take child sexual exploitation very seriously and regard this issue as a child protection matter. The sexual exploitation of young people is an uncomfortable reality in this country and around the world and there has been growing awareness of the scale of organised sexual exploitation of young people in recent years as a result of a considerable amount of academic and journalistic research. Also the work of the Office of the Children's Commissioner and some very effective investigations by some local police and some social work teams. Serious Case Reviews and some courageous evidence from some survivors has also helped us to understand the scale and the nature of these issues. There have obviously been a number of high profile cases which have hit the public domain in recent years and I know that all Members will share the public anger about the

evidence of sexual exploitation of vulnerable young people which have been revealed in the Rochdale enquiry and the recent Rotherham report. I understand from Councillor Vi Dempster, as Assistant Mayor with responsibility for these matters with whom I have had a number of discussions about this issue, that there was a very positive discussion about both what the Safeguarding Board and the Children's Services do in relation to child exploitation at the Children's Scrutiny Commission just a couple of nights ago. And I think it is imperative that Elected Members have the opportunity to engage in that kind of debate and to treat such debate very seriously and to receive information about what is happening locally given some of the concerns about the Rotherham situation have been about poor leadership from Elected Members in the issue. And it isn't a matter where we can abdicate our responsibilities in the matter. I know that both the Safeguarding Children's Panel and the Corporate Parenting Forum are both attended by Elected Members who receive regular information about child sexual exploitation and what the difference is that particular services can make. The Leicester Safeguarding Children's Board I know takes child sexual exploitation very seriously and I do understand and believe it to be the case that there is an effective multi-agency sub-group which focuses on the issue of child sexual exploitation. This I am assured has co-ordinated some very effective work, particularly over the last 12 months which has included commissioning a theatre group to undertake a hard hitting play on the reality of child sexual exploitation which I gather has been seen by more than 8,000 children in schools across Leicester and Leicestershire. And there has also been awareness training which has taken place with licensing and enforcement officers within the City so that they too are sensitised to these issues. Within the Council, Children's Services retain a tight management grip on all child sexual exploitation cases and of course it is up to us as politicians to make sure that is a reality and not just an assertion. And certainly I do know our clear policies and procedures. I believe there are some excellent examples of work carried out by social workers and the police in protecting young people and bringing perpetrators to justice. I think we are very fortunate that the Leicestershire Constabulary do take child sexual exploitation very seriously and I think are right when they assure us they strive to achieve a prosecution and to recognise the young person always as the victim. Joint arrangements have I think been a strength in the past but have been strengthened this month by co-locating a social worker in the police child sexual exploitation team. But I think I just want to conclude by saying that while I think there is every reason for us to believe that local arrangements are robust there is absolutely no room for complacency and as Elected Members and as senior management we must be alert to the reality of sexual exploitation of young people and never pretend to ourselves that it can't happen here.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Grant have you a supplementary?

**Councillor Grant:** Yes Lord Mayor. I would like to thank the City Mayor for his comments and the assurances to our residents. We received a report of officers last night on the Children's Scrutiny Committee but I believed it was important there is political kind of comment on this at the highest level. Certainly Members last night, and Councillor Cleaver mentioned it, have indicated that members of the public are asking us now about this and it is right that Members have been put in the forefront on this. Obviously there is ongoing concerns about high profile individuals involved in child sexual exploitation. Clearly the public don't believe any more that this can go on unnoticed so can the City Mayor reassure people by giving a commitment that in the time that he has been in charge of Leicester any reported incident has been reported and rigorously followed up and we continue to improve our processes in this regard.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor. I understand the question Councillor Grant asks, but I would say to myself, as I have said to other Members, that we cannot afford to be complacent. I can say that I am not aware that there have been issues that have not been taken up, but I could not say complacently for this Council that there are not such cases. I would say to Members that we must all remain vigilant, we must all be aware that when we hear of things, no matter how slight what we hear, we must seek to find the substance behind it. I wish I could give Councillor Grant the sort of assurance that he asks of me but I come back to the point that none of us can afford to believe that there isn't the possibility, perhaps the probability, that there are issues in our City that are of concerns and that we ought to be taking action on. And if we do hear about things it is vitally important that we know who to go to, that we go to them and that we make sure that they do something about it.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Porter.

**Councillor Porter:** Thank you Lord Mayor. My first question relates to the number of questions asked in full Council in 2010/2011.

**City Mayor:** Lord Mayor I am genuinely very puzzled by what is coming from this question because of course Councillor Porter is more than aware that this information is available on line, it is a matter of record and it also we have on line the full recordings of the Council meetings at which those questions were asked. However, to give him the answer it is 2010/11 he is asking about – yes, the total in that year was 177 questions.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Porter your supplementary.

**Councillor Porter:** Yes. Thank you Lord Mayor. Yes I have got a supplementary. I mean folk and certainly Members around here aren't entirely clear why the Council have suddenly put forward a proclamation that they are going to ban in the printed minutes responses to questions that are asked at full Council, and I must say that not everybody has the time or the inclination to spend hours trawling through the internet to try and research what was said at a previous Council meeting and I note that tonight a large number of Labour Councillors have put forward questions and if this policy is about trying to save the planet and save paper and save time – my question is coming - why don't the Labour Councillors rather than waiting until we have a Council meeting why don't they ask their questions at the Labour Group meeting so we don't have to be here until, what, quarter to nine before I get a chance to ask my first question.

**Lord Mayor:** I don't know who should answer that but it is a supplementary.

**City Mayor:** I am not sure where the question was in there my Lord Mayor but I am happy to reassure Councillor Porter that then we do come to the change in the constitution we will be making no change whatsoever to the way in which Council questions are required to be recorded. But I would also perhaps comment that I am not sure whether the numbers that I gave there were the numbers of questions tabled or the numbers of questions answered, because Members will be aware there can sometimes be a discrepancy between that, often caused by the fact that Councillor Porter is not always present to ask the questions that he submitted in his name.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Porter question 52.



**Councillor Porter:** Well I explained at the last meeting why I was not present because I was stuck in congestion thanks to his ludicrous bus lanes that he has put about the City and then tonight I thought I might try public transport but again you see I am still late. You can't win. Anyway my question number 52 on the Council script relates to "Are the Council supporting the County Council's proposals to axe concessionary travel on the park and ride buses?"

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I can assure Councillor Porter that we will watch with interest the consultation being undertaken by the County Council. I don't want to pre-judge the outcome of that. We will continue to work closely with them on the provision of park and ride. We are partners in that and we will wait perhaps to see the outcome of their consultation and what may come to us by way of proposals.

**Lord Mayor.** Have you a supplementary Councillor Porter?

**Councillor Porter:** Yes, yes, I'm surprised he is sitting on the fence on this one. The question was quite straightforward in terms of is he supporting it or not and clearly he is unwilling to make a commitment now. But I mean we must all agree Lord Mayor and I think you are one of them, that the park and rides in the City have been a very, very expensive mistake. £600,000 a year subsidy I think for just the Enderby park and ride and here tonight at the meeting we have heard Labour Councillors talking about the austerity measures from the government and Sir Peter has mentioned that the cuts have increased. I think he used to say last week it was £140m and then tonight it is £150m each year every year, I don't know where he gets his figures from, it must be from his imaginary book that he has got under his desk. But what I would like to know is, as the Council can afford to subsidise these park and rides which obviously benefit motorists why haven't they got the money that is available for the homeless people and for the different charities within the City which need help and support thanks to these draconian cuts that he keeps going on about whether it is £150m or £140m I am not entirely clear.

**City Mayor:** Lord Mayor Members will have heard Councillor Porter describe park and ride in Leicester as an expensive mistake. I think we can take it from that that it will be Lib/Dem policy in the run up to the next City Council elections that we will be cutting that they would wish us to cut park and ride in the City. If they were to be doing that they would not only be undertaking something that would significantly increase the carbon burden of this City but they would also be doing something that would put them very much at odds with their County colleagues and certainly with their party nationally.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you very much City Mayor. For the sake of the public record I would like to make it very, very clear that I have never made any comment regarding park and ride. I have made comments in the past about the complete lack of buses in my area where I live but that is all. Councillor Porter question 53.

**Councillor Porter:** I thought we had to put questions through the Lord Mayor so that it why I wasn't actually talking about you.

**Lord Mayor:** I thought you said you was one of them that's all. You know.

**Councillor Porter:** I don't know what you said about park and ride but I thought that was the procedure. If I say Lord Mayor I am talking about your role as the chair.

**City Mayor:** Oh get on with it.

**Councillor Porter:** Anyway, which one are we on now. Oh yes, 53. It's basically we are three and a half hours because of all your questions. I've only got seven questions. Anyway before I receive an answer to my question on the Ward boundaries I must say that despite the untrue claims that have been made by the Labour Group, I was never rude about anybody from Eyres Monsell as part of our campaign to try and save Aylestone from being split down the middle. I was never rude about Eyres Monsell or of the people who live there, so just if we can get that on the record. I am getting quite sick and tired I mean of untruths which are being spoken about me either here at the Council chamber or within the Ward. My question is: "Now that details of the Ward boundaries have been published, will the final recommendations be approved by full Council?"

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** I am being encouraged by the Deputy Mayor to give a single word answer which is "no". But I ought to say a little more than that which is of course to say, to remind Councillor Porter – I am sure he knows this – that the Boundary Commission is entirely independent of us. It is established by Parliament and makes its report to Parliament and it will be Parliament that will be asked not us to approve their recommendations. I understand the order has been made and will be laid very soon and we are anticipating approval of that sometime over the next couple of months. So the Deputy Mayor is right. The answer is no simply because it is not our responsibility.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Porter have you a supplementary?

**Councillor Porter:** Yes thank you Lord Mayor. Obviously everybody in Aylestone is highly delighted that we are not going to be split in half and merged with Eyres Monsell or part with Saffron which is great news. So my question to Sir Peter is how many residents from Aylestone supported Labour's plan to split Aylestone down the middle – was it four or five?

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor, we have had some bizarre questions this evening but that one is particularly off the wall. My Lord Mayor I really haven't a clue what representations were made one way or another with regard to Ward boundaries. I mean clearly this is something which is of grave concern to Nigel who no doubt would hope that somehow a Ward could be gerrymandered, but despite what has been happening at a national level he somehow would somehow come through on behalf of the Lib/Dems here in Leicester. I think actually his fate come the next election is going to be much more to do with his association with a party which is thoroughly discredited by having propped up a Tory government nationally than it has anything to do with any gerrymandered boundaries at a local level.

**Councillor Porter:** He has got a very short memory, being a Tory is an asset in Aylestone.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Porter - peace, peace.

**City Mayor:** The question is an asset to whom?

**City Mayor:** It is all good knock about stuff but can we get on. Councillor Porter

54 please.

**Councillor Porter:** My question number 54 is “Do the Council provide orange bins as well as black bins and green bins?”

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Russell.

**Councillor Russell:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. We currently provide orange bins to households of multiple occupation or flats where using the orange bag system would not work for that particular property.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you very much. Councillor Porter, have you a supplementary?

**Councillor Porter:** Yes thank you Lord Mayor. You might remember, I am not sure whether you do or not, but in 2011 the Council announced with great flourish that with the introduction of the orange bag scheme recycling rates would increase by up to 50% I think, maybe 48-50%. However, there was a slight increase in the level of recycling but I think the level of composting did decline. So the Council then decided in their wisdom to introduce the green bins which are obviously for people to put their compost in. But my question to the Assistant Mayor regarding this is, is it really sensible, and is it going to save the planet if you have lorries trundling around the City which probably do less than 20 miles to the gallon collecting compost when people could actually be doing the composting at home and wouldn't it be a better use of resources and a better way of protecting the environment to encourage people or give away composting bins.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Russell.

**Councillor Russell:** Thank you my Lord Mayor and it is always nice when Councillor Porter gives me the opportunity to talk about the fantastic waste and recycling services we offer which he seems to do fairly often

**Councillor Porter:** It's not that often.

**Councillor Russell:** So, it is worth pointing out that we still continue to offer heavily discounted home composting bins for residents whose needs that meets. It does not meet everybody's needs. Many gardens are such a size that actually just having one, two or even three home compost bins are insufficient for their needs. We have had residents who were uncomfortable because they maybe lived very near to water and have had difficulties with the potential to attract vermin through some of the home composting arrangements. We have also had residents who just were not comfortable with the process of doing it. And whenever we have gone out to talk to residents through Ward meetings, doorstep surveys, questionnaires, when we have looked at our waste and recycling services, people have asked us for the opportunity to have a green waste collection scheme. We introduced that earlier on this year and it has, on a voluntary basis, people pay to take that service up and that has been very, very successfully received and is contributing towards our overall figures. It is just worth saying, though, that Councillor Porter talks about the increase in recycling, one of the things that I was very, very keen on when we introduced the orange bag scheme which has proven to be the case is that we would increase the participation in recycling in the City. Sadly the green boxes for those of you who member them would be seen kicked up and down the street from the few households that were able to put them out and remember what they could or could not do with them. If you go out on bin day now the vast majority of households put out a number of orange bags and feel able to fully participate in the

scheme. We will continue to work to increase the amount of recyclables that go in them but I do believe that it is important that everybody in the City feels that they have the opportunity to participate. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Russell. Councillor Porter, question 55.

**Councillor Porter:** Thank you Lord Mayor. My question, I am surprised the City Mayor is going to be answering this rather than the Assistant Mayor or Cabinet Member who is responsible for it, but anyway, the question is: "Has Ward funding been used to pay for dropped kerbs?"

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor yes it is me because I think I am responsible for transport and highway maintenance issues. Anyway, I am informed that in one Ward, that is the Eyres Monsell Ward, residents and tenants work together with Housing and Highways to develop a joint scheme so that tenants and owner occupiers could have dropped kerbs. The scheme was an excellent scheme, partly funded by Ward funding and partly by the housing revenue accounts and local environmental works. The deal is that the tenant or owner occupier must first pay for or arrange hard standing in their garden before the Council installs the dropped kerb. It sounds like a win, win situation to me.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Porter have you got a supplementary?

**Councillor Porter:** Yes I have actually. It does concern me that funding has been agreed in Eyres Monsell Ward when I made a bid, a similar bid to the Ward committee fund for a specific one which already had hard standing put in place in my own Ward because of issues of anti-social behaviour. I was never given a clear reason why that was refused so it clearly seems to be that there are two standards in operation here. If you are a Lib/Dem Councillor in Aylestone and you put forward a bid you don't get it, but if you are a Labour Councillor in Eyres Monsell and you put forward a bid then you do get it. Is this fair?

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor would you like to reply?

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor, as I understand this this is something that has been done over three years, it is a well-established scheme and it is something that has been jointly agreed by the Councillors in that Ward and by working constructively with residents and tenants through the Ward Community meeting. I do understand that it is rather more difficult to get such consensus in the Aylestone Ward and I do understand that despite the efforts of Councillor Clarke, Councillor Porter has not been particularly co-operative when appearing in front of the public.

**Councillor Porter:** Mayor that is another.. I would like him to produce some evidence of what he has just said, in fact I will tell you exactly what I am unhappy about there is. We have already been through this meeting and it is turning again to personal attacks.

**Lord Mayor:** No, no that is not a personal attack that was a matter....

**Councillor Porter:** Saying I had been un-cooperative in front of the public at meetings which is completely untrue.

**Lord Mayor:** It is an opinion. Councillor Porter would you like to put question 56 please.

**Councillor Porter:** Right well if they can do it then I may as well join in as well. “Is it correct that Council officers and Council resources were used by the Labour Party to support Labour’s Ward boundary proposals, including Labour’s preposterous and idiotic plan to split Aylestone Ward in half?”

**Lord Mayor:** I thought you just asked that.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor in preparing for this I was provided with a copy of an email that was sent out to, it must have been sent to Labour Members, but it was also I know sent to Opposition Members and in that instance the two Opposition Members. It is from, I guess from somebody in Democratic Services and it says - I am conscious that this is sent on 31<sup>st</sup> October last year, “I am conscious that the 11<sup>th</sup> November deadline is rapidly approaching for submissions in relation to awarding patents etc, etc, should you be making a submission I wanted to ask if you require any specific information or support from officers to assist in this. Any information or support would of course be provided on a fully confidential basis. We can for example assist in drawing up maps for any proposals, you can also find electoral data” and it goes on to say where that can be found. Very clearly officers offering to all parties the opportunity to benefit from the support that you expect the Council to give in making submissions. I don’t know whether Members opposite took them up on that, I don’t know even to what extent the Labour Party took them up on that. I actually suspect that very little was provided because I know and I see him sitting at the back there that Councillor Kitterick personally did an awful lot of the background work to enable our submission to be made. But certainly I am entirely convinced from what is very clearly on the record that anything that was offered to the largest party on the Council was also offered to minorities.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Porter have you got a supplementary?

**Councillor Porter:** Yes, thank you Lord Mayor. So I can take from what he has just said, he can correct me if I am wrong, is that the Labour Party did get support from Councillors and Council resources were used. Well I think that is what he said. But my supplementary question is obviously the proposals for Aylestone that the Labour Party put forward did not go down at all well and in a sense what he has actually done, he has brought the community in Aylestone together in a united disgust at what the Labour Party put forward which was to split a Ward which has been established for hundreds of years in two, and I believe that if the Labour Party continue with this approach then it is going to be good news certainly for me in terms of when the election comes round because there is no support as far as I am aware for the Labour Party, and in answer to the question that he put forward that I put to him and he was unable to answer, I think there were four people in the whole of Aylestone Ward that is four local residents who supported the Labour Party’s proposals. So my question to him is has he got any other idiotic and preposterous plans for Aylestone?

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I will do my best to give a reasoned response to that. I explained in my initial response that the Council offered to all parties and it is on the record that they did that the opportunity to take advantage of Council resources on a confidential basis to support any submission they might wish to make, and the opportunity was there whether Members took it up or not it is entirely up to them to explain, but it was there. But what I do know and the only other comment I really want to make on some of the really rather silly comments that Councillor Porter has made there, is that the boundaries for Wards have changed even in my few decades with this Council on many occasions and that includes the boundaries for Aylestone. Sometimes Aylestone has been an integrated whole and sometimes it

has been divided, that is just the way it does and it is particularly true in recent times as the Boundary Commission have become increasingly concerned about the equality of representation and the size and sometimes that does lead, whether it is in Aylestone or other parts in the City to us having to draw lines that appear to go through communities. And if Members look at the present boundaries, while quite clearly we and the Boundary Commission have sought to preserve community identity, that overwhelming requirement to get equality of representation has led to some boundaries that appear to sever communities. And in some places you know we have avoided it and in some places we faced the inevitability of it. That is just the way things go. But I would say again as Members have heard me say on a number of occasions that Ward boundaries are not community boundaries. Ward boundaries have one sole purpose and that is to provide a division for the election of a Member to this Council. The way in which people perceive their neighbourhoods and communities often have little if anything to do with where those lines on the maps happen to be, and whether or not an electoral boundary went through Aylestone or goes through Spinney Hill where it does and has to, has nothing at all to do with the way in which the local communities perceive their neighbourhood and ought to have very little to do with the way in which we treat them.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Last question of the evening falls to Councillor Porter – would you care to put question 57 please.

**Councillor Porter:** Yes, thank you Lord Mayor. It has been a very long evening. I think they ought to take up the proposal that I said that Labour Party people should put their questions at the Labour Group meeting and not waste all our time down here tonight, but in response to what Sir Peter was just saying, it was not the Boundary Commission who put forward the proposals to split Aylestone it was the Labour party.

**Lord Mayor:** If you don't want to ask, if you do not want to, no if you do not want to put question 57 – regain your seat that is all I am saying. Ask it or put up and shut up that is the name of the game.

**Councillor Porter:** Hang on

**Lord Mayor:** That's all you've got to do come on.

**Councillor Porter:** No I think that is a bit..

**Lord Mayor:** That's the way you've got me go on – put the question.

**Councillor Porter:** That's not very funny. Alright question 57 on the Council script.

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. My Lord Mayor the Council numbers being paid more than £50,000 in the current year have been somewhat artificially enhanced by some compensation for loss of office and 13 officers who are only included in the 125 because they received redundancy payment during the year. But in fact I am advised that there are 337 employees receiving remuneration of over £50,000 per year but actually 63% - almost two thirds of those are employees in schools, where effectively their remuneration is being set by the governing bodies or indeed according to scales that are not within our control. So I think that perhaps puts it into context and I hope answers Councillor Porter's question.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Porter have you got a

supplementary?

**Councillor Porter:** Yes he did not actually answer my question because I asked him, the question was it is correct that 125 Council officers are paid more than £50,000. Well ... and the thing is Sir Peter was elected in 2011 I think, I don't know if you remember that Lord Mayor but he was. And in the previous May, May 2010 there were actually 119 officers who were getting more than £50,000 per year so it has actually increased by six. So can the Mayor explain how it is that with his drastic cuts that he alleges that he makes in terms of cutting senior staff the figure can actually be six members of staff higher in 2013/14 than there were in 2010 the year before he got elected which in fact Lord Mayor over the three year period would cost an additional £900,000 that is if they are all on £50,000 so I would just like him to answer my question my Lord Mayor then that is me sat down.

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. My Lord Mayor I am informed that in fact 18 additional officers are now paid just above £50,000 as a result of their incremental progression. They are just above £50,000 and have gone above that threshold over the last couple of years. So that actually counts for more than the number that Councillor Porter has asked me to ask for which is just about the way in which their salaries have grown through increments. But what I can say, and this is perhaps the most significant thing is, not the numbers who are above £50,000 but the amount we are paying in our senior management, and since I was elected the senior management pay bill has been cut by 30%. The senior management pay bill has been cut from £2.7m to £1.9m in 2014 since I was elected. That is a saving of £800,000 and that is £800,000 that used to be paid on senior management and is now available for vital front line services. I am proud of that.

## **REPORTS OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

### **Scrutiny Annual Report 2013/14**

Councillor Dawood chair of Overview Scrutiny Committee presented the Scrutiny Annual Report for 2013-2014 which contained details of the work of the Committee and Scrutiny Commissions during the year.

Moved by Councillor Dawood, seconded by Councillor Singh and carried:-

15. That Council formally notes and endorses the work of scrutiny in 2013/2014.

## **REPORTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

### **Review of the Constitution for Leicester City Council**

The Monitoring Officer and the Director of Communications, Delivery and Political Governance submitted a report which gave details of suggested amendments to the Constitution reflecting on going work to monitor and review the Constitution and reflect changes arising from Government Regulations.

Moved by Councillor Clayton, seconded by the City Mayor and carried:-

16. To agree the changes to the Constitution in line with the Schedule included in the Council report with:

- i. The exception of the deletion of the suggested change to Council Procedure Rule 14a (X).
- ii. The addition of the following text to Part 5 Codes and Protocols – Political Conventions, Part B, Section 27 *‘Chairs of Scrutiny Commissions may hold agenda planning meetings approximately two weeks before full scrutiny commission meetings, at which draft agendas and reports should be presented by an appropriate officer wherever possible, who may be the lead officer for the Commission.*

**EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES**

None

**NOTICES OF MOTION**

None

**ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None

The meeting closed at 9.42pm.