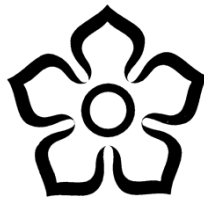


Thursday, 5 October 2017





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, 5 OCTOBER 2017 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 held on 6 July 2017 are available to view at:

<http://www.cabinet.leicester.gov.uk:8071/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=81&MId=8209&Ver=4>

Copies are also available from Democratic Support on (0116) 454 6350 or [committees@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:committees@leicester.gov.uk)

**4. STATEMENTS BY THE CITY MAYOR / EXECUTIVE**

**5. PETITIONS**

- Presented by Members of the Public
- Presented by Councillors

**6. QUESTIONS**

- From Members of the Public
- From Councillors

**7. MATTERS RESERVED TO FULL COUNCIL**

- 7.1 Service Plan for Food Law Enforcement
- 7.2 Treasury Strategy – Investments
- 7.3 Employee Appeals against Dismissal
- 7.4 Call-In of Executive Decision – Youth Service Remodelling

**8. EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES**

To note any changes to the Executive. To vary the composition and fill any vacancies of any Committee of Council.

## 9. NOTICES OF MOTION

### **National Joint Council Pay**

Proposed by the City Mayor, seconded by the Deputy City Mayor:

- “On average, across the country, National Joint Council (NJC) basic pay has fallen by 21% in real terms since 2010
- NJC workers had a three-year pay freeze from 2010-2012 and have received only 1% pay increase annually since then
- NJC pay is the lowest in the public sector
- Differentials in pay grades are being squeezed and distorted by bottom-loaded NJC pay settlements needed to reflect the increase Statutory National Living Wage
- Leicester City Council began paying our staff the Living Wage Foundation living wage in March 2013 and formally signed the licence with the Foundation to include services the council contract with in September 2015. We are committed to providing those on lower wage rates with a fair and decent rate of pay
- The likelihood of rising inflation following the vote to leave the European Union will worsen the current public sector pay inequality.

This council therefore supports the NJC pay claim for 2018, submitted by UNISON, GMB and Unite on behalf of council and school workers and calls for the immediate end of public sector pay restraint. NJC pay cannot be allowed to fall further behind other parts of the public sector.

The 2018 claim is for the deletion of NJC pay points SCP 6-9 to reach the Foundation Living Wage of £8.45 (UK) and £9.75 (London) and a 5% increase on all NJC pay points.

This council also welcomes the joint review of the NJC pay spine to remedy the turbulence caused by bottom-loaded pay settlements.

Council further notes the drastic ongoing cuts to local government funding and calls on the Government to provide additional resources to ensure local authorities can fund a decent pay rise for NJC employees and the pay spine review.

This council resolves to:

- Write to the LGA asking it to make urgent representations to Government to fund the NJC claim and the pay spine review;
- Write to the Prime Minister and Chancellor supporting the NJC pay claim and seeking additional resources to fund a decent pay rise and the pay spine review;
- Write to local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim and the pay spine review.”

## 10. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

## **Fire & Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

- The Council Chamber Fire Exits are the two entrances either side of the top bench or under the balcony in the far left corner of the room.
- In the event of an emergency alarm sounding make your way to Town Hall Square and assemble on the far side of the fountain.
- Anyone who is unable to evacuate using stairs should speak to any of the Town Hall staff at the beginning of the meeting who will offer advice on evacuation arrangements.
- From the public gallery, exit via the way you came in, or via the Chamber as directed by Town Hall staff.

## **Filming and Recording the Meeting**

The Council is committed to transparency and supports efforts to record and share reports of proceedings of public meetings through a variety of means, including social media. In accordance with government regulations and the Council's policy, persons and press attending any meeting of the Council open to the public (except Licensing Sub Committees and where the public have been formally excluded) are allowed to record and/or report all or part of that meeting. Details of the Council's policy are available at [www.leicester.gov.uk](http://www.leicester.gov.uk) or from Democratic Support.

If you intend to film or make an audio recording of a meeting you are asked to notify the relevant Democratic Support Officer in advance of the meeting to ensure that participants can be notified in advance and consideration given to practicalities such as allocating appropriate space in the public gallery etc.

The aim of the Regulations and of the Council's policy is to encourage public interest and engagement so in recording or reporting on proceedings members of the public are asked:

- ✓ to respect the right of others to view and hear debates without interruption;
- ✓ to ensure that the sound on any device is fully muted and intrusive lighting avoided;
- ✓ where filming, to only focus on those people actively participating in the meeting;
- ✓ where filming, to (via the Chair of the meeting) ensure that those present are aware that they may be filmed and respect any requests to not be filmed.

**PRESENT:**

RASHMI JOSHI, LORD MAYOR  
CHAIRMAN

SIR PETER SOULSBY – CITY MAYOR

Abbey Ward

ANNETTE BYRNE  
VIJAY SINGH RIYAIT

Aylestone Ward

ADAM CLARKE  
NIGEL CARL PORTER

Beaumont Leys Ward

HEMANT RAE BHATIA  
SUE WADDINGTON  
PAUL THOMAS WESTLEY

Belgrave Ward

MANSUKLAL CHOCHAN  
MANJULA SOOD  
JOHN THOMAS

Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields

STEVE CORRALL  
ELAINE HALFORD  
KULWINDER SINGH JOHAL

Castle Ward

PATRICK JOSEPH KITTERICK  
DANNY MYERS

Evington Ward

DEEPAK BAJAJ  
RATILAL BHAGWAN GOVIND

Eyres Monsell Ward

VIRGINIA CLEAVER

North Evington Ward

LUIS FONSECA  
JEAN KHOTE  
ABDUL RAZAK OSMAN

Rushey Mead Ward

PIARA SINGH CLAIR  
RITA PATEL  
ROSS WILLMOTT

Saffron Ward

ELLY CUTKELVIN  
WILLIAM SHELTON

Spinney Hills Ward

SHOFIQL ISLAM CHOWDHURY  
MUSTAFA MALIK

Stoneygate Ward

LUCY CHAPLIN  
KIRK MASTER  
AMINUR THALUKDAR

Troon Ward

BALJIT SINGH

Westcotes Ward

ANDY CONNELLY  
SARAH RUSSELL

Fosse Ward

DAWN ALFONSO  
TED CASSIDY

Western Ward

MALCOLM UNSWORTH

Humberstone and Hamilton Ward

VI DEMPSTER  
GURINDER SINGH SANDHU

Wycliffe Ward

HANIF AQBANY

Knighton Ward

ROSS GRANT  
INDERJIT SINGH GUGNANI  
DR LYNN MOORE

## **LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Before the meeting formally commences the Lord Mayor asked his Chaplain to say an appropriate prayer.

### **Councillor Palmer**

The Lord Mayor informed Council that he had written to former Councillor and Deputy City Mayor Rory Palmer on behalf of Council to congratulate him on taking a seat as a Member of the European Parliament, to thank him for his service to the City, the Council and the constituents of the Eyres Monsell Ward and to wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

### **Joe Humphries Memorial Trust**

The Lord Mayor informed Council of the work of the Joe Humphries Memorial Trust which was a charity set up after the sudden death of Joe who died of Sudden Arrhythmic Death Syndrome also known as SADS. The Lord Mayor noted that the current week was SADS Awareness week which sought to promote the campaign for better understanding and recognition of SADS and other heart conditions which can strike very suddenly, particularly in seemingly fit and healthy young people between 12 – 35 years old.

As part of the promotion work for SADS awareness week and to help raise awareness of the importance of CPR and defibrillator training copies of the book Ruffle the Life Saver, which was the latest in the series of adventures of Ruffle the Rail Dog, would be donated to every primary school in the City.

### **The Samaritans**

The Lord Mayor informed Council of a recent visit he had made to the Leicester Samaritans where he saw and acknowledged the hard work of the volunteers who were such a vital part of mental health networks. The Leicester Samaritans provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair and make a real difference to people in great need.

### **Diwali**

The Lord Mayor noted that the Diwali festival was soon to commence and that the City lights switch on was the coming Sunday and wished all present a very Happy Diwali.

### **Fire & Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Lord Mayor asked all present to note the evacuation procedures detailed on the Agenda for tonight's meeting and if anyone had any queries to speak to one of the Town Hall staff who would be able to assist.

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

Councillor Patel declared an Other Disclosable Interest as her sister was an employee of the Council.

No further declarations were made.



## MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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

13. That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 6th July 2017, a copy having been circulated to each Member of the Council, be taken as read and that they be approved as a correct record.

## STATEMENTS BY THE CITY MAYOR/EXECUTIVE

None.

## PETITIONS

### **Petitions for Members of the Public**

None

### **Petitions from Councillors**

Councillor Sood presented a petition with 349 signatures in the following terms:  
“We the undersigned Belgrave and Rushey Mead residents and users of Cossington Street Swimming pool feel neglected as a large community using third rate leisure amenities and request the City Council to invest in renovating and improving the dilapidated changing, showering and spectator facilities at the pool, as a matter of urgency.”

Councillor Corral presented a petition with 459 signatures in the following terms:  
“We the undersigned call on the Council to reconsider where it locates its proposed dance studio at Braunstone Leisure Centre and leave the Sunflower nursery where it is currently located thus removing the uncertainty for our parents and children.”

Councillor Osman presented a petition with 12 signatures in the following terms:  
“We the residents of Beeby Road would like to request Leicester City Council to remove double yellow lines outside 6 Beeby Road.”

Under Council Procedure Rule 13a the aforementioned petition would be referred to the Monitoring Officer for consideration and action as appropriate.

## QUESTIONS

### **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

**Lord Mayor:** The next item is questions from members of the public. May I please request Ms. Brennan, Miss. Jennifer Brennan, to ask her question. Thank you.

**Miss. Brennan:** “Why would the Council propose to consult about taking away half of the successful sunflower neighbourhood nursery built in a deprived area of Leicester that has been established for over 15 years providing employment and opportunities for the Braunstone community?”

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Clair to reply.

**Councillor Clair:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. The City Council is obliged to consider the potential of converting the space that was temporarily licenced to Sunflower Nursery to expand the health and fitness facilities at Braunstone Leisure Centre. We need to consider all the options to make sure we are able to keep our leisure centres on financial, stable footing. However the Council is also right to consider fully the impact of this proposal on Sunflower Nursery over the three months consultation period before the Council make any final decision. No decision yet has been made and the impact on the nursery and on the availability of children's provision in Braunstone will be considered as part of the consultation process.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Do you have a supplementary Miss. Brennan?

**Miss. Brennan:** No.

### **QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. That concludes question from members of the public. Questions from Councillors. The next item is questions from Councillors. Can I request that where any Members have questions for tonight's meeting that they bear in mind the requirements of the constitution that questions should be asked and answered without discussion and that supplementary questions must be a question for the purposes of clarifying the reply and not a statement. Please note that I will be seeking to curtail any Members that do not comply with this requirement and to achieve this the timer will be set for 30 seconds. If you have not asked your supplementary question by the time the red light comes on I will immediately put your questions or I will move on to the next question without further debate.

**Cllr. Kitterick:** Point of order Lord Mayor. This announcement tonight appears has been levied on us without any notice to Councillors, no consultations. This is not in order Lord Mayor to do this without consulting Members of this chamber.

**Lord Mayor:** When a question is being asked and it has been answered naturally there is a procedure where you will or whoever has asked the question will be able to format their supplementary question so this is what will take place tonight. Councillor Chaplin.

**Councillor Chaplin:** On a point of order Lord Mayor I do think that there should be some consultation because for some people and obviously if perhaps people might be on medication as indeed I am myself. Having to speak a bit more slowly is obviously going to take up time which will be more than the allocated 30 seconds. So I do think there is an element of discrimination in that ruling and I do think there should have been some consultation with Members to give us advance notice at least of terms of reference around that. I do feel like potentially I might be being discriminated against. Thank you.

**Lord Mayor:** I understand what you have said and what Councillor Kitterick has said but it is about managing the meeting as best as we can and I will use my discretion for those people who have an issue of us needing extra time to ask the question. So this is what the order of the day will take place tonight.

**Councillor Kitterick:** Lord Mayor I have got a question tonight on sprinkler systems in the City Council. Are you honestly telling me that this Council can spare

no more than 30 seconds to consider this matter. We meet about once every 2 months. The Executive don't have any restrictions on how long they take to reply yet actually this is inhibiting us in a key duty that we have as Councillors and to be frank Lord Mayor the fact that this was introduced tonight without any notice it is unbelievable Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Yes Councillor Singh.

**Councillor Singh:** Yes thank you Lord Mayor. I did hear right you are simply articulating something that is in the constitution?

Which bit of the constitution?

**Lord Mayor:** Well the aim of the reasons I ask to give 30 seconds is to avoid unnecessary statements being made and that is the whole idea of this and you can ask your question there is no doubt you will have your answer in the fullest as well, but it is about managing the meeting and we will review the situation after to see how this situation has gone and this is a trial period actually. We have to see how we can manage best in the circumstances and then we will have an option to repeal it in the next meeting. Thank you.

**Councillor Kitterick:** Can the Monitoring Officer please point to the area of the Constitution that Councillor Baljit Singh has indicated because I would like to see which area it says that questions must be asked in 30 seconds.

**Monitoring Officer:** I am not sure that Councillor Singh was referring to the 30 second stipulation. There is clear provision in the Constitution to ask a supplementary question confined to elaborating on clarifying the answer given in the main question. The 30 second proviso is something that the Lord Mayor has introduced to manage that time and to manage that general rule about asking supplementary questions.

**Lord Mayor:** So we will carry on and see how we progress and I am sure we will co-operate as best as we all can in a comradely manner. So first question is from Councillor Cutkelvin please.

**Councillor Cutkelvin:** Thank you Chair. "Can the City Mayor please outline the progress made in the early stages of the consultation on the Local Plan?"

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I welcome this opportunity actually to bring Members up to date with where we are at with consultation in what is a major engagement of the community of the city and indeed beyond the city in shaping the future of our own area. We are currently more than half way through the consultation on this section of the consultation on the local plan. The emerging options stage and I do encourage all Councillors in as far as they have already been able to do so, to in turn encourage their constituents to engage fully in what is a very important document indeed. I do thank those Councillors who have already met with me and made contributions on a range of Ward and constituency meetings we have held to date and I do hope that there will be further opportunities and I intend to do my best to make sure there are similar consultations make sure that we do in turn get the message about consultation and encourage the wider community to take part. We have sent out consultation material across the whole of the city and indeed beyond it and we will be using social media, holding exhibitions, local

discussions raising awareness and encouraging participation. Obviously there are some very challenging policy choices contained in the consultation material and hopefully it will engage this use of potential development space such as a in a question a bit later in the agenda. I am able to report that as of last week we will see over 470 responses from the various exhibitions and engagements that have taken place but that figure will increase significantly as we continue the consultation towards the end of October. I have some more detailed breakdown of responses made to date and some indication of the sort of issues that people are raising with us and I do intend to make a fuller presentation to the next meeting of the Economic Development, Transport and Tourism Scrutiny meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> October. Can I thank Members who have engaged in this and I very much welcome their contributions and again encourage them to continue to engage themselves but also to encourage their constituents to do so as well.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. A supplementary please?

**Councillor Cutkelvin:** Yes, thank you Chair. I have seen the initial presentation and consultation a number of times, either as a member of Planning, a member of OSC or alongside residents in the Saffron Ward. It is clearly an absolutely massive piece of work that has been undertaken and the length of time that the consultation is running actually reflects the complexity of the work. I just want to seek assurance from the City Mayor that he will seize this opportunity that this consultation provides to take a number of difficult decisions around new policy. From what I have heard officers very regularly tell us that it is very difficult to do X, it is very difficult to do Y, and I know it is going to need some strong political leadership to frame the policy of the city.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Yes I am aware that as I touched upon in my original reply that there are a lot of quite difficult issues involved in it and there is a tremendous amount of material. I would just first of all stress to Members of course that this is still, although we are half way through this consultation, at the beginning of the process we will take us through engagement through to the end of next year so there will be lots of opportunity for us to revisit those elements that are particularly weighty and to ensure that we and the public engage in that. But I am also aware and this is perhaps implied in the supplementary question that there are particular issues that have come out of the deliberations of the planning development committee that do suggest that the way in which the policies are framed at the end of this could be very helpful in enabling them to be more robust, as they sometimes wish to be, with the developers and clearer with developers than there are at the moment. of the plan of course is the space standards in the development of flats and apartments where I know that the absence of a clearly adopted local policy has been used as a reason for not refusing applications for developments that are clearly...

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. As I said earlier about the 30 second rule, naturally this is an experimental process and having heard Councillor Cutkelvin's supplementary I decided to extend the time limit to a full minute rather than 30 seconds. So thank you. So I hope that will be reasonable amount of time for Members to ask a supplementary question. Question number 2 from Councillor Singh.

**Councillor Singh:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I note that in a recent police operation in the city centre to move beggars, street drinkers and rough sleepers

under the Crime and Policing Act 2014, section 35, dispersal orders which I am sure was a welcome step by all concerned. Could the Assistant Mayor for Housing inform Council Members if there is a connection between these categories of vulnerable people and issues with homelessness and what steps can the Council take to support them?"

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Connelly please.

**Councillor Connelly:** Thank you Mayor. In respect of the recent police operation the Council's Outreach Team worked with the police during that operation. There were 75 encounters, I love that word 'encounters', 75 encounters with individuals of which 12 were identified as being homeless and support was offered to those 12 individuals through the Dawn Centre and the offer of accommodation either at other hostels which a number took that opportunity, but as always unfortunately there were some who refused that opportunity for our support.

**Lord Mayor:** A supplementary?

**Councillor Singh:** Yes my Lord Mayor. Thank you for that answer Assistant Mayor. I welcome the collaborative approach in such operations. I think it is important that police enforcement should be seen to be quite innovative and it is important that Council officers are on hand particularly to offer their services of support. Can I request the City Mayor, the Assistant Mayor rather, to do some kind of follow up exercise and continuing with that follow up exercise to ensure that those that come into contact with the City Council who may need some support in relation to homelessness that we continue to offer that but I believe this Outreach work actually needs repeating since we have their details that would be most welcome.

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

**Councillor Connelly:** Just in respect of the recent police operation. It was led by the police following a request from, particularly from businesses within the city centre. Our Outreach Team are out there every day, every morning, Monday to Friday and we now have 2 Outreach workers who work in the evening to try to help and obviously try and support them back into accommodation whether that be through the Dawn Centre as I say or through permanent accommodation. We remain committed to reducing the number of rough sleepers in our city, one rough sleeper is one too many.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Question number 3, Councillor Willmott.

**Councillor Willmott:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. "Please would the Assistant Mayors who recently visited Soar Valley College to discuss the relocation of Rushey Mead Library there, update Council on the progress of this alternative plan?"

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

**Councillor Master:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Both myself and Councillor Clair at the invite of the Leicester East MP visited Soar Valley School on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September but I have to report there were no alternative plans or progress on any plans to relocate Rushey Mead Library.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. A supplementary question Councillor Willmott?

**Councillor Willmott:** Yes my Lord Mayor. I think it would be courteous of Assistant Mayors when visiting Wards on issues of great local concerns to at least inform the Ward Councillors and I would be grateful for an assurance of that. I wonder if Councillor Master - clearly he is exploring with Councillor Clair alternative options. In fact I have a letter from the Principal of Soar Valley College confirming that even though he has not actually said that to me. Would he actually not bother wasting time and causing problems in the local community which clearly he has done in this visit and just allocate £22,000 from the £7.4m underspend to keep Rushey Mead Library open. It would be a lot simpler and it would cause a lot less disruption in those communities if he were to do that. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Master.

**Councillor Master:** Thank you Lord Mayor. As I previously stated it was not my visit. It was arranged by your local MP and one of your Ward Councillors was present with me on the visit, so to inform the Ward Councillors I thought would have been gone through the channels that already exist. In regards to causing trouble with the relocation of the library; this decision was taken in January 2017 earlier this year and is still ongoing. I have not received a single alternative proposal from anybody in this chamber or any member of the community or community groups ... about how best to do what you are proposing. I am always available to speak to the community groups, always available to speak to any individuals about the proposal going forward and that offer still stands my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Question number 4, Councillor Willmott.

**Councillor Willmott:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. "Please would the City Mayor give Council the list of projects to be funded by the £7.4m underspend, that has been allocated to the economic action plan?"

**Lord Mayor.** City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. The economic action plan is of course not a new approach, has been very successful over recent years in creating inward investment in the city and creating jobs in the city. I have been very grateful for the support of Members of this chamber and elsewhere for the investment that has been made possible by that plan. It funds a range of projects, investment schemes, the market development, King Richard III Visitor Centre, the Haymarket bus station, and of course we are in the midst of one of the largest developments in the city centre and its environs which is of course the Waterside Development and of course the economic action plan will be an important part of making sure that the connectivity within the city centre across the inner ring road to that development is possible and I am very pleased to be able to inform Councillor Willmott and other Members of the Council that the Compulsory Purchase Order for that development has been confirmed today and that we will be able now to go ahead but that may change ... city centre and economic action plan is to take place in a way that benefits the rest of the city.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. A supplementary Councillor Willmott?

**Councillor Willmott:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I think that was a no – I did not get a list of projects despite the fact that we have asked several times what this £7.4m is going to be spent on. Given, my Lord Mayor that the economic action plans has so far swallowed up £115m of council resources, would the City Mayor not agree with me that to allocate at least £900,000 to the youth service incentive to

prevent it being cut by 50% would be good and effective use of the investment in the future of this city as an investment in our children. This would still leave him with over £6.5m for the economic action plan. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** No my Lord Mayor I do not agree with Councillor Willmott and neither do the majority of Members on this side of the Chamber.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Question number 5, Councillor Willmott again please.

**Councillor Willmott:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. "Would Councillor Dempster in her new role just appointed tell Council how many ramps to help disabled people have been funded /provided by the Council in each of the last 5 years?" This was something of an ongoing issue I had with her predecessor so he may or may not have briefed her about it, so I will await the answer. Thank you.

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

**Councillor Dempster:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Yes in 2012 there were 112; in 2013 – 169; in 2014 – 175; in 2015 – 192; and in 2016 – 109. So I mean it is pretty obvious that there was quite a dip in 2016 and that I've been told, advised that's to do with greater use of physiotherapy because clearly that then improves people's capacity throughout the day, throughout the week, wherever they are not just where the ramps actually were installed. Thank you.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Dempster. A supplementary Councillor Willmott?

**Councillor Willmott:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Whilst I appreciate and respect that Councillor Dempster is very new to this role, she will understand that I share my scepticism about the explanation for the sudden dip of nearly 90 ramps to be installed in 2016, there seemed to be less in 2017. I would ask her to at least keep a sceptical eye on what the officers provided her and if she will pursue an enquiry on behalf of my constituent, Mrs. S, who has been refused a ramp on more than one occasion despite letters from the NHS, the nurse, doctors supporting the need for a ramp to enable her to get out of the house safely and unaided. I think this is because my view that we lack the money available and I appreciate that Councillor Dempster in her new role would investigate that matter and I will provide her obviously with the details, I don't want to name the constituent this evening. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Dempster please.

**Councillor Dempster:** Thank you. Yes obviously I will not want to talk about the individual case at full Council meeting. I am aware that the decision as to whether or not a ramp is installed is an OT decision. An Occupational Therapist makes the assessment and then decides what is actually going to be the best solution going forward for that person. And clearly that person's difficulties because we all know that sometimes we might want something but actually in the long term our needs would be better met by something else. That is a decision for a professional but I am clearly, I am always happy to be looking at the issue, but I do think that we have to be really clear about the importance and I mean I know more than most people just after my recent experience with my leg, this issue about mobility and mobility and physiotherapy and keeping that muscle tone is so important. So there is wider

issues here than simply a ramp, but I will be more than happy to continue to keep a clear eye on this. Thank you.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Dempster. Question 6, Councillor Kitterick please.

**Councillor Kitterick:** Thank you very much for allowing me to ask my question Lord Mayor. "How much did the new lift for New Walk Museum cost and how long did it take to deliver?"

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

**Councillor Connelly:** The installation of the new lift at New Walk Museum was part of a wide scheme of work at the Museum. It cost £81,287 and it took approximately three months.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Connelly. A supplementary question please?

**Councillor Kitterick:** Thank you very much Lord Mayor. I shall participate in this experiment Spanish style democracy. Can I congratulate the Council on delivering that lift in a listed building which must have been difficult, there must have been difficulties with it, can I congratulate them on delivering that in such a timely manner my Lord Mayor. That was ...

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. That is very kind of you. Any response from that... that's fine. Question 7 then Councillor Kitterick.

**Councillor Kitterick:** Lord Mayor. "How much is the Phoenix House lift refurbishment due to cost and how long is it due to take to deliver?"

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

**Councillor Connelly:** The Phoenix House lift will cost nothing and will take no time because we are not replacing it.

**Lord Mayor:** A supplementary?

**Councillor Kitterick:** Lord Mayor there is about £150,000 in the budget for mechanical works in Phoenix House that usually does apply to lift work. I would hope that I am quite happy to be corrected but I imagine that there is £150,000 of work in Phoenix House due to be done on mechanical works and that is due to be delivered within the financial year.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Connelly.

**Councillor Connelly:** Councillor Kitterick has found my slush fund obviously. I am sure my officers have no intention to actually replace the lift and I accept that there will be mechanical works to the present lift but there is no intention to replace the present lift.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Connelly. Question number 8, Councillor Kitterick again please.

**Councillor Kitterick:** Lord Mayor. "How much is the St. Leonard's Court lift works due to cost, how long has it been waiting for delivery and when is it due to be



delivered?"

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

**Councillor Connelly:** The original ... just over two years ago Councillor Kitterick approached me and wrote a reference to the lifts - the lift at St. Leonard's Court. We agreed to install a second lift and originally at that time we believed it would cost around £100,000. The cost now, the officers are now saying the cost will be approximately £195,000. We have got the money. We will continue to fund the replacement lift. In respect of timescales it has been an extremely frustrating period in respect of St. Leonard's court lift. We are hoping now the issues with the leaseholders have been resolved we are hoping to commence work in January and officers assure me it should be finished by May and I will say 2018.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Connelly. A supplementary Councillor Kitterick please?

**Councillor Kitterick:** Thank you very much Lord Mayor. I believe they call it in modern management fulfilment of this request. Can I say I partly look forward to the work commencing in January and Lord Mayor if I can recommend it keeping asking questions may actually get something done. Thank you very much.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Question 9 then Councillor Kitterick.

**Councillor Kitterick:** Lord Mayor. "What progress has been made with plans to install sprinkler systems in Leicester City Council's residential tower blocks?"

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

**Councillor Connelly:** Following the tragedy at Grenfell Tower, we - I met with .officers and we determined that we believed that we should fit sprinklers in our tower blocks; not as a result of recommendation from the Fire Service but to give further reassurance to our tenants. In respect of the sprinklers we keep getting contrary advice – some say they should be dry sprinklers, wet sprinklers, whether we should install them purely in the flats or purely in the communal areas or both areas, and we certainly sought advice from the Fire Service and I have actually also received emails saying we are wasting our money installing sprinklers. But we are continuing discussions and our intentions are still there to put sprinklers in. We are seeking some expert advice and once we have received that expert advice we will commence implementing the sprinkler systems and we will begin with Mansfield House which is being refurbished and then we will retrofit in the other tower blocks.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Connelly. A supplementary question please?

**Councillor Kitterick:** Lord Mayor. Anybody who has dealt with City Council Housing Department will know that sometimes, sometimes, there are delays even when works are scheduled. We have no schedule of work here, we have some good intentions but good intentions aren't going to make those tower blocks any safer. Can I ask Councillor Connelly and if I can have the indulgence of the Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Committee to bring a report to the Housing Scrutiny Committee I ask it as a Member who has got one of these tower blocks in his Ward, can I ask that Councillor Connelly attend a meeting of Housing Scrutiny and that the plans in progress are put on full Scrutiny and that they take more than a minute to consider this matter.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Connelly please.

**Councillor Connelly:** It is obviously not for me to instruct the Chair of Housing Scrutiny on what she wants on her agenda but certainly I have no objections to Housing Scrutiny requesting a report on this issue and I can assure this chamber that I attend all Housing Scrutiny Commission meetings without fail.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Kitterick question number 10 please.

**Councillor Kitterick:** Lord Mayor. “How many rough sleepers does the Cabinet Member for Housing believe there are in the city of Leicester – I would say at the current time?”

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

**Councillor Connelly:** At the current time I believe there is a minimum, and I use the word minimum, of 70 rough sleepers in the city but this is a minimum figure.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. A supplementary please?

**Councillor Kitterick:** Lord Mayor can I ask the Cabinet Member who may have done this before, can I ask him again whether he would meet with various stakeholder groups that deal and help and rough sleepers themselves to actually see whether we can bottom out a figure that takes in a more broader base of evidence of how many rough sleepers there are in the city. I have often have people who have queried that number and on top of that, whilst we are meeting with Councillor Connelly look to engage in discussion about the many, many issues that rough sleepers may have which may mean that they do not accept help from the Dawn Centre or other statutory centres in the joint endeavour and I am sure that Councillor Cank would be happy to join Councillor Connelly in eradicating rough sleeping in the city.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Connelly to reply please.

**Councillor Connelly:** I do meet regularly. We have a homeless residents group which meets regularly which involves all our partners: NHS, police, voluntary sector where we discuss obviously a wide range of issues and in respect of homelessness. The issue about the actual number, we are all working in partnership with De Montfort University, in particular Action Homeless, and there will be what we would call a street count on the 7<sup>th</sup> November between 11pm and 3am so we can do a more extensive trawl, for want of a better term, to identify how many rough sleepers we have got in the city to give us the starting point to obviously begin to address some of the issues that Councillor Kitterick has raised.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Connelly. Question number 11, Councillor Rae Bhatia please.

**Councillor Bhatia:** Thank you Lord Mayor. “I want to raise my concern and that of the residents that there are a growing number of cases of violent crime in my Ward and across the city. What measures are being taken in conjunction with the police and intelligence units to tackle them beforehand where possible and how can we give reassurance to the public that Leicester is safe?”

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Sood to reply.

**Councillor Sood:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Out of 15 comparator cities, Leicester has the 6<sup>th</sup> lowest crime rate. Whilst there has been increases in crime, Beaumont Leys according to the Police, has shown one of the lowest increases in the whole city. Between 2015/16 and 2016/17 Police data shows that crime rose by 5%. As part of multi-agency work, Leicester City Council officers and Police officers are working together to proactively identify trends and issues prior to them occurring; this is done through sharing information and data. Crime prevention is at the heart of all the agencies. As part of this there has recently been introduced a monthly tactical and tasking meeting involving senior officers of Leicester City Council and senior police colleagues to further target resources at the most harmful crime types which includes violent crime. Beyond this operational work an overview report is produced annually where crime information is shared with the partner organisations in order to support more strategic work for example the Safer Leicester Partnership. Using all of this information partners are aware of the type of crime specific geographic areas face and therefore plan initiatives and use resources accordingly across all wards.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Sood. Supplementary Councillor Bhatia?

**Councillor Bhatia:** Yes Lord Mayor. Given the festive season coming up and festivals Diwali and Christmas what reassurance can we give that enough measures are in place for those events to pass peacefully and safely without any problems.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Sood please.

**Councillor Sood:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Police manage their work in order to be at religious and at community events and Councillor Govind, Councillor Corral and Councillor Osman and myself we are on the Police and Crime Commissioner Panel. We have had a meeting and said that a festival is coming and we need more police presence and we have been assured that they will be there and this is the same for all the big festivals in the city, the council works in partnership with the police. I am working with local schools to share the information and council officers with the police are very happy to come to the Ward Community meeting to give more information and to talk to the residents.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you, thank you Councillor Sood. Question 12, Councillor Aqbany please.

**Councillor Aqbany:** Thank you Lord Mayor. "As our city will have a roll out of universal credit coming March 2018 can we have an update on where we are as an authority on this subject in light of the adverse media reports?"

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Master to reply please.

**Councillor Master:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Thank you Councillor Aqbany for your timely question on the law around universal credit. I think you echo many concerns of our colleagues across the Chamber. The Department for Works and Pensions aim for universal credit to smooth the transition between the welfare and work as part of the system that tackles poverty, worklessness and welfare dependency, at the same time as promoting financial, digital inclusion. Universal credit will replace the six existing work age benefits. The government on the 26<sup>th</sup> September so just recently reaffirmed their position that we as an authority will be rolling out our universal credit in January sorry in March of 2017. From sharing some of our experiences or learning with what is happening across other local authorities we

have been talking to people and it has not been going as well as the government had been alluding to. So we will share those challenges I guess as it rolls forward. The implementation of the universal credit - we are looking at dealing with them. We have put together an implementation plan, a communication plan and a comprehensive equalities impact assessment which I would be happy to share once it comes through.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Master. A supplementary question Councillor Aqbany?

**Councillor Aqbany:** Thanks Lord Mayor. I think the supplemental will be as to how meet it when this sort of thing are not appear mainly the situation where someone is claiming universal credit does not get it because as a Council tenant or whatever. What measures have been put in place to mitigate that. Thank you.

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

**Councillor Master:** I think just to answer the claimants is down to the DWP and not us as an authority so you know we will try and deal with the issues that arise from volume and transferring all of this over but there will be setting up in the new year information around the process and there will be Members training on this as well and a booklet. There are additional concerns in and around I would be happy to take those to try and deal with them in the best way possible.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Question 13, Councillor Aqbany please.

**Councillor Aqbany:** Thank you Lord Mayor. "With the government having placed enhanced discount for Council houses, do we know how many properties have left our portfolio under the "right to buy" in the last two years?"

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Connelly to reply please.

**Councillor Connelly:** Thank you Mayor. Thank you Councillor Aqbany for the question. In the last two years since April 2015, 815 of our properties have been purchased by the tenants under the Right to Buy scheme. 815 too many.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. A supplementary question Councillor Aqbany?

**Councillor Aqbany:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Could the Assistant Mayor also give us the figure of how much we raised from those 815 and how that money will be used. Thank you.

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

**Councillor Connelly:** We raised £33m as a result of Right to Buy. 70% of those receipts have to be repaid back to central government. We only keep 30% and the reality is building enhanced costs over £100,000. We have very limited land in the city and when we use right to buy money we have still got to find a debt of £70,000 to fund each new council house so although we keep right to buy receipts it is very difficult for us to reinvest it in new council properties.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Connelly. Question 14, Councillor Aqbany please.

**Councillor Aqbany:** Thank you Lord Mayor. "As a member of the Ward with the

highest number of tower blocks do we know what we must expect and when, for improvements after the London tragedy?" Thank you.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Connelly to reply please.

**Councillor Connelly:** Obviously following the Grenfell Tower tragedy two things - first thing to say is that none of our tower blocks have the cladding that was clearly quite a significant element in how the fire spread so quickly and as a result so many people lost their lives. We don't have gas fired tower blocks like Grenfell Tower and this clearly was an issue. Obviously as Councillor Aqbany will be aware we refurbished a number of the tower blocks to the highest standard, we continue to consult with the Fire Service, we take on board any recommendations, any maintenance, the Fire Service are happy with the co-operation they get from Housing and obviously we are looking to install sprinkler systems as soon as possible.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Aqbany for your supplementary please?

**Councillor Aqbany:** No thank you.

**Lord Mayor:** No thank you. We will move on to question 15, Councillor Chaplin please.

**Councillor Chaplin:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I appreciate there have been a lot of questions asked about homelessness but hopefully you'll see this is slightly different. "How many homeless people and rough sleepers are moved out of the city centre each day by the police and what support / accommodation is available for these people to go to?"

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Chaplin. Councillor Connelly to reply.

**Councillor Connelly:** Outside of the recent police operation I am not aware that the police moving any homeless people out of the city centre. That is clearly not part of their day to day role. It was a Police operation which is now finished so I am not aware as I say of the police moving any genuinely homeless people out of the city centre on a daily basis.

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

**Councillor Chaplin:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Thank you Councillor Connelly. That is not what I have been told. I have been on a recent visit to the Dawn Centre which obviously is in the Ward and the police are obviously spending money on this operation and we don't know how much because when questions have been asked of them they won't say. At yesterday's Health Scrutiny meeting the LPT which runs mental health services in the city said that they had just started discussions with various partners including Housing Association and the Council in terms of addressing the issue of key mental illness and homelessness. What I would like to ask is would the Assistant Mayor along with his colleagues in the Executive be making sure that this issue rests with both the police and with the health services with the funding that they have available and obviously with the £7.4m underspend it would be great if the Council and partner agencies could look to replicating provision which I know that they started to discuss at Hope Garden in London and I know that there has been some move forward but I think we need to be very solid in our progress on this because so many of the people are not able to go to hostels

because of their complex mental health needs.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Thank you Councillor Chaplin. Councillor Connelly please.

**Councillor Connelly:** I thank Councillor for the supplementary. In respect of the issue of the police moving homeless people out of the city centre they won't move somebody out of the city centre because they are homeless, what they may well be doing is moving people out who are claiming to be homeless and are begging and clearly there is a differential there. Quite often people always assume that the beggars in the city centre are homeless and that it not always indeed the case. They may well have tenancies and we know of a number of our clients at the Dawn Centre that leave the Dawn Centre begging in the city centre and it will be probably those individuals the police may well move out but they won't move them out because they are homeless they will move them out because they are begging and particularly for begging aggressively. In respect of the Hope Project, Councillor we are going to explore that with officers and am very keen to see how that works. It appears to be very successful. Just to say we do have a homelessness mental health service headed up by Phil Jarvinson and there are sessions every day at the Dawn Centre from 9 o'clock to 12 o'clock for those unfortunate individuals who find themselves homeless, have got mental health problems. As I say there are drop in sessions that they can utilise and my understanding is it is a well-regarded service within the homeless, community is perhaps not the right word, but by homeless people.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Question 16 Councillor Chaplin please.

**Councillor Chaplin:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. "Is it enough for the Council just to meet the minimum standards in all Council housing and does the Council ask the Fire and Rescue Service the minimum standards in terms of fire safety, sorry. Does the Council ask the Fire and Rescue Service to meet tenants to give advice on fire prevention and safety?"

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor to reply please.

**City Mayor:** The short answer is that it is not enough to meet the minimum standards in our own housing and that it has not been necessary actually to ask the Fire and Rescue Service to meet tenants to give advice about renting because they have been out there proactively doing just that. By coincidence there was a meeting this morning here at City Hall initiated by the Fire Service that was also done very much in partnership with our own officers talking with key stakeholders about fire safety precautions particularly in high rise buildings across the city and the county, and I do know that with regard to our own properties, Councillor Connelly has indicated we do very continuously seek to ensure that the fire standards and fire safety are being met, not just the minimum ones but ones that we feel are sufficient to ensure the safety of our residents. I think it is fair to say that following the Grenfell fire that there has been very considerable concern amongst residents in general, and particularly those in tower blocks, but I do commend the work of our officers and the Leicester, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service in ensuring compliance with regulation and where appropriate reassurance and guidance to residents. But I do know that they are very aware that they have a very heavy responsibility and they have in Leicester the necessary statutory powers to enforce standards in building owners to ensure that people are kept safe. I do know that of course this work of talking with residents and reassuring them is ongoing and as I say I was particularly impressed by the meeting that was held

today and the way in which they approached it and the recognition of their responsibilities in showing that the people of the city and indeed the county are kept safe as well.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. A supplementary question Councillor Chaplin?

**Councillor Chaplin:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. There has been a huge spotlight on the tower blocks and certainly some of the questions today have highlighted that as well. But I don't think we should forget low rise buildings, homes and may be large houses where they have been converted into flats. Particularly I think that it would be helpful, I think if the Council could give more information to those residents in those buildings about getting in touch with the Fire Service and having help planning an escape route, certainly in some conversations that I have had, but moreover where there are buildings that have been made into flats and as previously pointed out over years parts of those flats have been sold off and some of them may still be in our control, where there have been amendments to those blocks .

**Lord Mayor:** Question please...

**Councillor Chaplin:** Yes my Lord Mayor, for instance where there is a fire escape that has been removed and not replaced it does actually change the nature of the flat that has been purchased and I wondered if there would be something that could be done to approach residents who are in those lower rise blocks of flats so that they could also get some reassurance about fire safety. I do apologise my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I do entirely understand the concerns Councillor Chaplin has expressed and I would want to reassure her that the situations that the Fire and Rescue Service address and the advice they give is not confined to those who are in tower blocks. It is known more generally and indeed they do have statutory powers to seek to intervene to make sure that appropriate fire safety is enforced in those blocks. I would be happy my Lord Mayor given Councillor Chaplin's interests and concerns about this to make contact with the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer to ensure that they brief more fully on the work that they do more generally in providing advice and in monitoring the standards, and should she wish to I would be very happy indeed to contact the Fire and Rescue Officer to address those concerns and to ensure that, so that reassurance can be given.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor for your reply. Councillor Chaplin for question 17 please.

**Councillor Chaplin:** Thank you. On a slightly lighter note "How many historical information boards have been installed across the city and how can local groups apply for one to be considered in their area?"

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

**Councillor Clair:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. About 110 heritage information panels have been installed in city centre and in the historic village of Leicester and

the project was planned and delivered in three phases starting approximately five years ago. Some of which like the King Richard III, walking trail are very popular. The final selection was made from a large group of potential sites that were considered and there was considerable period of consultation before selection process was made. Since the finished set of panel represent a curated, complete group it was not intended to make further additions. There are no plans for a further fourth stage as we feel it has achieved its objective. The process of delivery and confirming the sites, the research planning, installation are very time consuming and really technical. Officers have done really exceptional job to provide such a good quality of those panels. However, if any organisation wishes consideration to be given to a particular proposal, I would encourage them to write to me.

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

**Councillor Chaplin:** I do my Lord Mayor. It is such a shame that the scheme seems to have finished before other groups have been able to apply so the recently formed Evington Footpath Conservation Area Society in Stoneygate Ward is indeed discovering some gems about some of the buildings in their area and it might be that if the scheme was ever brought to life again then could the Council consider helping to support some of those groups because indeed you are right the research is quite onerous and it does take time, but the Council has many more resources than individual groups and certainly working with the groups might help the officer's time. So if that is to be reconsidered could it be reconsidered in that way in terms of partnership working otherwise some of the local history of other parts of the city that aren't historic villages and aren't in the city centre may not be able to be part of that scheme which has been so well received.

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

**Councillor Clair:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. As I said before this was a considerable project which took nearly five years. There was ample opportunity during those periods for any other organisation to put their idea forward. As I mentioned it was important of many history groups and many individuals and art organisations who work with City Council very closely and as I said they can write to me or he the Art Department. We are happy to consider but at this moment in time there is no such plans that we will receive for next phase four.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Clair. Question number 18, Councillor Grant please.

**Councillor Grant:** Thank you Lord Mayor. "As the Assistant Mayor knows, as she assisted me in eventually getting through, I was recently on hold for over 22 minutes to the children's service duty and advice service whilst there was a problem with the phone system; how many times has this system glitch occurred, for how long has each incident lasted, how many inbound calls were affected, were any inbound calls lost, and were we able to contact anyone who could not get through and did we do so?"

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Grant. Councillor Russell please.

**Councillor Russell:** Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Grant both for the question and for contacting me when he had the issue which meant that we were able to resolve it. In terms of the specific issue that occurred with Councillor



Grant's call we have not got examples of that happening again. It looks like it was routed to an individual rather than the team for reasons that the IT department are unable to identify, but we have checked that it has not happened unawares. We have had some issues with partners being routed to individual members of staff who have previously been engaged around child or family rather than to the whole team and we have now put systems in place to address this. We do monitor all of our calls and wait times available to them so on the day in question when Councillor Grant called his was the longest by some significant distance in terms of the call wait. There were three calls on that day that had a wait of over eight minutes which was just down to call volume and numbers of people on the team and we do try and have admin staff available to take messages to try and prevent this wherever we can. Our performance information does consist of blind data, it is overseen by the team manager who can come in and check so when Councillor Grant got hold of me to say that there had been an issue she was then able to go in and say straight away that there are at least three members of staff who were not on a call so she was able to understand there was a different issue than all the staff being busy. On average 90% of our calls for duty and advice are answered in under a minute. On average there are approximately three abandoned calls a day, most of these are abandoned in under a minute and they are usually from an anonymous sources. So it is not that we are in a position to be able to call them back. There are times when we have upgrades to the system when police know in advance we make sure there are alternative numbers communicated to partners and through our website to try and make sure that we have full continuity of service and prevent calls being lost. Thank you Lord Mayor.

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

**Councillor Grant:** Yes Lord Mayor. It is reassuring that the number of calls is relatively low but obviously I know Members will be concerned because we can all speculate as to why some people have been ringing such a vital service, why they keep their number anonymous and the consequences if we are not able to answer the calls. I was told that this particular glitch happened once before but it appeared that the officers were unable to tell those problems were occurring until I contacted Councillor Russell. Have we now been able to put in place a process where this can be noticed and that alarm can be raised where the system can you know be re-routed or sorted out. I have also been told by somebody else that the main problem is the number of people on the calls and the main issue is that there are only two people answering calls and can Councillor Russell comment on whether that is the case or not.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Russell please.

**Councillor Russell:** Thank you Lord Mayor. I will start from the back and work backwards. No it is not the case and if Councillor Grant or any other Member would like to come and visit the duty and assessment service and see how it works that invitation is always open and we are happy to facilitate that. In terms of the calls that are not picked up, a number of our partners would appear as anonymous numbers coming in because the police system for instance does not register where the number comes from nor do many of the health numbers. So it isn't necessarily that they are being abandoned and not calling back, it may be that somebody can't get through straight away and decides to do it later on in their duty. In terms of the checking whether there is an issue occurring the team manager has got a full dashboard of how long people have been on for and whether there are calls waiting on a particular number and is monitoring this to try and make sure that the issue

that occurred with Councillor Grant does not happen again and if it does that we can take swift action to resolve it.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Russell on your reply. Question number 19, Councillor Alfonso please.

**Councillor Alfonso:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. “Do you think due to the government changes being made to the pension taxation annual allowance and the lifetime allowance, should we be informing our employees that this is happening?”

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor can I begin by thanking Councillor Alfonso for drawing my attention to this issue. It wasn't one that I was aware of, I think it is one that is related to the reduction in both the annual and lifetime pension allowances that have been happening since 2014. Having looked at this in the light of the question I think it is about the impact of these changes and the potential impact on individual's personal tax situations which are inevitably quite complex and I don't think I have any particular expertise in it from the discussion I had I understand that as an employer there is nothing we can do other than sign post where employees can find the additional information. There are potential adverse implications as a result of these changes and of course for Members here the scheme is largely academic since we are being removed from it. We nonetheless have responsibility as employers and I did take the opportunity Lord Mayor to talk to some of our employees who might in other respects be informed about these sort of matters and I was struck by the fact that quite a number did not realise this could be something that adversely affected them. And while we can't ourselves give financial advice to everybody I am exploring ways in which we can actually signpost our employees to those who can give them appropriate advice should they need it. This as I say was something I was not aware of but as a result of this question I am now aware of and we will do our best to make sure that our employees get appropriate information and advice.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Supplementary please Councillor Alfonso?

**Councillor Alfonso:** Yes I have. I was aware it was a lot people weren't aware of it even the financial advisers that is why I brought it here. Just to clear that up. Right employees, one of the things that I was concerned about that employees that have pensions for many years, do not now necessarily be high earners to fall into this category. It is quite a complicated document and I am aware of that. Now I am sure some if not many do not fully understand the implications this might mean for them. So if this is the case should we also be strongly advising them to seek their own independent financial advice around pension taxation and that was the only conclusion I had sort of had.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Alfonso. City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I think that we ought to do just that and as I say we are not in a position to give financial advice ourselves but what we can do is to indicate to employees that they might be affected by this and tell them where they could seek their own advice independent and qualified to give it and on the back of this I will look at ways to get that message across to those employees that might be affected.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Question number 20, Councillor Dr. Moore

please.

**Councillor Moore:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. “Is the City Mayor aware that a delegate addressed a recent Party conference and by implication attacked the City Council for implementing and managing Tory cuts. Would he care to comment?”

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** I think the answer to that my Lord Mayor is I am now. I did miss that bit of the conference. I did not obviously watch every minute of the conference and that is the one bit that I missed. But the message of the impact of government cuts on local authorities like Leicester is one that perhaps we in this chamber are very familiar with and we know that those cuts, we know the way in which they have adversely affected the more disadvantaged communities up and down the land and cities that have the greatest disadvantage are those who have been hit most hard by the cuts. But I think we have to acknowledge that it is not necessarily a message that is fully understood by those out in the city more generally or even those who one might expect to be quite well informed as members of the parties. It does reinforce the point that I have been making on a number of occasions recently that we do need to redouble our efforts to get that message across to people and I am aware that responsibility for the very savage and unprecedented cuts the government is making in public services where the responsibility lies and what we as a Labour administration are doing in very difficult circumstances to protect the services that the Council requires.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Moore your supplementary please?

**Councillor Moore:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I will try and keep it to 30 seconds, 30 minutes sorry

**Lord Mayor:** 60 minutes, 60 seconds, seconds, seconds.

**Councillor Moore:** I thank the City Mayor for that reply and I would like to just give him an opportunity really to come down to some specifics. So would he confirm to this Council and to the watching public that his actions as City Mayor have always been motivated by a wish to protect the vulnerable in our city and attract investment to create the jobs which generate revenues, that he has always given opportunity for discussion about his actions, that he recognises that he is accountable to the citizens of Leicester and that this attack is a slur on hard working Councillors who constantly strive to explain to constituents the actions of the Council in avoiding a deficit budget and maintaining essential services to avoid a Tory takeover. Thank you my Lord Mayor.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you, spot on. City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** Very well timed in every respect my Lord Mayor. As I say I don't know what was said on this occasion but I have to say as I did in my original question that I think it is perhaps not surprising that members of the public and lead members of the political parties don't necessarily understand the full scale of what the Tory government is doing to cities such as Leicester and to the services we rely on. Members here will be familiar with the fact that if you look across the decade 2010 to 2020 and set aside the growing expenditure that we have had to make in adult and children services social care, every other aspect of our revenue spend has now been reduced by two thirds; that is by two thirds not to two thirds, but by two thirds,

and that is directly and only attributable to the cuts that the government is making in the support that used to be given to areas such as Leicester which has such deprivation and as I said in my initial response, I think perhaps what this does remind us of is the need for us to redouble our efforts to get the message across to the people of Leicester about where the responsibility for those cuts lies and what we as a Labour administration are doing to seek in so far as we are able to cushion the impact of those cuts. But the salient point is the reality in which there is no escape, there is no panacea, there is no council up and down the land that has found a way to avoid the fact that if the money is not there the services are not being provided. But what we can do as a Labour administration is to seek to ensure that our priorities, the priorities that we were elected to deliver to the people of the city are reflected in the services that remain to the citizens that remain.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Question 21, Councillor Dr. Moore please.

**Councillor Moore:** Thank you Lord Mayor. "A year ago I asked the Assistant Mayor about any plans to organise street closures over the summer to encourage children to enjoy some outdoor play and she assured me that this was in progress. Can she tell me how many such events were organised this year and how they were advertised?"

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Russell please.

**Councillor Russell:** Thank you Lord Mayor and thank you for the question. We had 31 outdoor play events over the course of the year and they were advertised through the children and young people family centres, Facebook, posters on lampposts, leaflets through people's doors and Ward Councillors whose Wards they were in were also notified in advance.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Russell. A supplementary please?

**Councillor Moore:** Yes please my Lord Mayor. Could Councillor Russell confirm that we are going to do it next year. Thank you.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Russell please.

**Councillor Russell:** We would definitely like to. I think it has been a real success. I think it is probably also important to say that these are only events that were organised directly without a play worker. Also there were many events that are organised through the parks services and through sports and leisure services for young people across the city in our parks to make sure that there is a broad range of things for young people to do across, not only the summer but throughout the year.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Russell. Question number 22, Councillor Grant please.

**Councillor Grant:** Lord Mayor if you could just indulge me a second. In the interests of fairness as his questions immediately follow my next three would you like to repeat the new rules about supplementary questions as Councillor Porter will have missed them.

**Lord Mayor:** Mr. Kamal Adatia has explained the procedures to Councillor Porter and he is fully aware.

**Councillor Porter:** I would like to thank Councillor Grant for his help and raise the matter when I was invited...

**Lord Mayor:** You have been informed already. Thank you.

**Councillor Grant:** I did not want him to be even less informed than the rest of Council about the new information. "When someone receives an automated penalty ticket and calls the automated system to pay, what happens when the system rejects their reference number twice and hangs up on them?"

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Grant. Councillor Master to reply please.

**Councillor Master:** Thank you Lord Mayor. Thank you Councillor Grant. If it was me I'd like to think that the ticket disappeared and I'd got away without paying but unfortunately it does not work like that. We have an automated system that has been operational in the Council since 2006 and you have three opportunities to input the reference number correctly. If you don't at that point then the system will tell you to try again or call back to a call number. I am not sure why it just automatically cut off I will have to check that in a bit more detail but the process behind the scenario as you asked the question is that after three occasions it will automatically go into an alternative option.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. A supplementary please?

**Councillor Grant:** Yes this issue was raised with me by a constituent who is retired and who is technically savvy and he had driven inadvertently into one of our new bus lanes and received the ticket. He was concerned that he was not going to receive his 50% reduction and was also concerned about being open to the public he may not be able to find an alternative way of paying it. He was also frustrated about the fact that our own system would not accept our reference and he could not find a way. Can Councillor Master tell me what is the easiest way to direct somebody to actually speak to a person rather than just keep going through the loop of the automated system.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Master please.

**Councillor Master:** Thank you Lord Mayor. The easiest way would be to go to the Customer Service Centre and give the reference and pay directly. There are alternative ways you can obviously call the operator directly, you can go into the Customer Service Centre, you can also do it on line via the website. But if this particular individual in your constituency is genuinely been having trouble and is concerned about not receiving the 50% reduction I would be happy to take that up for you and I will speak to you outside afterwards.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Question number 23, Councillor Grant.

**Councillor Grant:** Thank you. "Does the Council have any powers to ban cars which are legally parked from idling their engines outside school entrances?"

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Grant. Councillor Clarke please.

**Councillor Clarke:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. Thank you Councillor Grant for the question. The short answer is we do under contravention 63 of the Road Traffic Vehicle Emissions Fixed Penalty England Regulations 2002, however, the enforceability of that is the issue. So if a driver fails to turn their engine off after

being spoken to there can be a fixed penalty notice put against them and a £20 fine can be issued. But that is difficult in practice and I have looked around and I have seen that Camden Council have tried to implement the enforcement scheme or campaign but found it very difficult because of those issues of asking the driver and then obviously not being able to then affix the ticket to the vehicle beyond that. So it is possible but it is very, very difficult.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Clarke. A supplementary please?

**Councillor Grant:** With there being serious widespread concerns about asthma and respiratory diseases in children masking later, with strong links to air quality and acknowledging that the Council is doing a great deal of effort around schools and their entrances to encourage walking. Is there any way we can incorporate at least signage for drivers at the same time as we are undertaking this other work to minimise any additional cost?

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you.

**Councillor Clarke:** Thank you Lord Mayor. It is a very, very helpful supplementary and it gives me an opportunity to inform Councillor Grant that we do through our air quality action plan have an area where we talk about anti-idling campaigns and looking at ways to promote anti-idling as it were, working with taxi operators and bus companies as well. But particularly outside schools through our school parking work that Councillor Master has led on as well. So throughout next year we will be looking at anti-idling outside schools specifically but also a wider anti-idling campaign under the Healthier Leicestershire banner and if there are any specific issues around any schools in your Ward that you want me to discuss with you, maybe in terms of piloting, I am more than happy to discuss that with you.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Clarke. Question number 24, Councillor Grant please.

**Councillor Grant:** “Has the City Mayor found out the development land value of the closed Western Park golf course?”

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor, Councillor Grant’s question prompted me to look at the definition of value and it is that the value of something is the highest price a willing buyer would pay and a willing seller would accept both being fully informed and the property being exposed for sale for a reasonable period of time. That is pretty important because actually it has not been exposed for sale and certainly not exposed to sale for a reasonable period of time. The reason being of course that we have not identified what we might sell or when we might sell it. So the short answer to Councillor Grant is no.

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

**Councillor Grant:** Yes. When we come to sell the asset presumably sometime after the adoption of the next local plan, what will the City Mayor expect as the value.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor as I have indicated it actually is a serious one. It is

very , very difficult indeed to anticipate the value of any asset, very considerable distance into the future and I think that it will be very dependent on the outcomes of the local plan, the way in which land was allocated within the local plan, particularly types of use; some might be for housing the balance between those two, the extent to which other land is reserved for open space, there are so many imponderables that I am sure Members will understand it is just not possible at this stage with any realistic figure on the likely receipt for the City Council.

**My Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Welcome Councillor Porter and I believe you have been briefed about the one minute rule to ask your supplementary question which I hope you fully understand and will you please ask your question number 25 please.

**Councillor Porter:** Thank you, thank you Lord Mayor. I heard what you said but I don't particularly accept it and I think most people won't be surprised at all to hear that Councillor Grant has bent over backwards to support the Labour Council regarding the supplementary questions.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Porter your questions, order, your question. This is the reason why I have done this.

**Councillor Porter:** What I am trying to say Lord Mayor is that has been sprung on me. I will voice my concerns. There are just two opposition Councillors on this council, we rarely get an opportunity to scrutinise the Members of Sir Peter Soulsby's cabinet, and to restrict the democratic the democracy of the city is completely unfair so I am putting you on record that I am objecting, quite strongly.

**Lord Mayor:** You have to adhere to one minute question time.

**Councillor Porter:** So my first question to the City Council is that "Now that the Council have closed down the Lansdowne Centre what is going to actually happen with the property?"

**City Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Russell please.

**Councillor Russell:** Thank you my Lord Mayor and thank you Councillor Porter for the question. We are in the process of arranging for this building along with others that we have sadly had to come out of as a result of government cuts to be offered to lease to interested parties through a competitive process. Because they are children's buildings, we are very, very keen on them continuing to be used for young people in the area. The terms of the lease will include that leaseholders must demonstrate that they will be able to provide at least two out of the five services for children aged 5 and under and their families for approximately 60% of the time that the building is open. These services include parenting support access to child care and by direct delivery or signposting information and advice, health services, supporting young children to be ready for school, supporting children who are identified as vulnerable and needing additional family support services. Details of these will be advertised through all the appropriate mechanisms and school buildings.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Russell. A supplementary question please Councillor Porter?

**Councillor Porter:** Yes and thank you for the answer and continuing on the theme

of ineffective Councillors I am really, really sorry but my co-councillor was unable to assist to keep this building open. I am sure if Councillor Russell would have been in her Ward again would have tried flat out to keep this building open. So I am pleased to hear....

**Lord Mayor:** Question please Councillor Porter.

**Councillor Porter:** I am pleased to hear you have actually got some proposals so when do you estimate that the building will actually be let for the plans you have got in mind. You see I am not even on the amber light yet!

**Lord Mayor:** Very good, I am very impressed. Well done, you get a star. Councillor Russell please.

**Councillor Russell:** We hoped to start this process before the end of the year. We want the tenants to be able to move in as soon as possible. Just in terms of the building in my own ward - actually that children's centre which was the reason I got involved in politics in the city, I got involved in setting it up long before I became a Councillor, is one of the ones that we are having to close. It is not something that I have been parochial about, even something that any of us have been able to be parochial about. What we have had to do is recognise where the greatest need is, where we can make sure that the biggest number of families can access children's centres around our city that the services are available for as many people as possible. So it isn't straight forward it is not about one Councillor wants something, one Councillor wants something else, it is about looking at the evidence which was presented throughout the review of children's centres which I think somehow this missed Councillor Porter by but we have had all the evidence and we are absolutely committed to trying to make sure that the buildings are used for children and families in the city.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Russell. Question 26, Councillor Porter please.

**Councillor Porter:** Thank you Lord Mayor. My question is "Is ex-Councillor Palmer going to or has he received a golden handshake?"

**City Mayor:** City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** No

**Lord Mayor:** Supplementary please?

**Councillor Porter:** I am delighted to hear that because certainly the Council needs to save as much money as possible. The supplementary relates to this current, I think he is now employing three deputies. If any of those go will he give us an assurance now that none of those will receive any sort of golden handshake.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** The answer is yes.

**Lord Mayor:** Question 27, Councillor Porter please.

**Councillor Porter:** I was just wondering if Sir Peter's legs are still working because he did not seem to get up for that last one. "Since 2011 how much has the Council



invested, in inverted commas, in the food industry?"

**City Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. The question from Councillor Porter is really very broad because of course the food industry wants different things. Food suppliers and catering, food services, food processing food, food research development, safety regulations, advertising, marketing and distribution all that could be said to be part of the food industry. We have invested, quite significantly, in what is a major part of the city's economy and am very pleased to have been supported in that investment by the LLEP, , by the enterprise partnership who also see food as one of the major areas not just in the economy of the city but in the economy of the city's future.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Your supplementary?

**Councillor Porter:** Yes thank you. It is basically it is not an investment this is a subsidy for the chosen few. We all know that subsidies just increase waste and they discourage creativity. Can the City Mayor name one company that has been profitable and sustainable through Mayor Soulsby's subsidies. He might be thinking of his investment in the Cultural Quarter but I will come to that later. What actually creates jobs and improves the lives of people in the city is a level playing field and a competitive market. This Council has not, as far as I am aware, done anything really to try and create a level playing field or a competitive market. So the question to the City Mayor is what evidence is there that needs subsidies to be placed to selected businesses actually creates a sustainable business and real jobs.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor as I have indicated the food industry and the sector is very wide ranging indeed and what we certainly are not able to do as an organisation is subsidise industry in a way that Councillor Porter implies. I genuinely find myself very puzzled by his supplementary question as I was by the original one.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Question number 28 from Councillor Porter please.

**Councillor Porter:** Thank you Lord Mayor. I was surprised he was confused by the question because he said that the investment in the food industry was the flagship led the Council since he got involved in 2011. Anyway question 28 actually. I would like to say how delighted I am that my question has prompted the Council for once to get the data up to date on the website. I did raise this a year ago.

**Lord Mayor:** Can you just ask the question please.

**Councillor Porter:** I did raise this a year ago so I don't actually need to ask the question.

**Lord Mayor:** Shall I move on to question 29.

**Councillor Porter:** No, no, no because there is still a question about the data, I would like to ask a supplementary question.

**City Mayor:** Councillor Clarke please.

**Councillor Clarke:** Thank you for saying you are not going to ask the first question.

**Lord Mayor:** So your supplementary please?

**Councillor Porter:** Yes, the supplementary question relates to the fact that since the orange bag scheme was introduced in October 2011 rather than increasing the rate of recycling in the city as can now be shown from the data because it is on the Council's website, recycling has actually fallen by almost 7%. I mean this is actually quite disastrous. At the time when Council funding is being slashed by central government and I think in July the Council, Councillor Clarke would know this, would deny had to pay may be hundreds of thousands of pounds for the landfill tax. So does the Council's recycling, composting and rubbish spokesperson accept that the orange bag scheme has failed and when people write in to the Leicester Mercury saying they have not got any orange bags why doesn't he write back to them and say there is no point in recycling, stick it in your black bin because it will all get put in the ball mill.

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

**Councillor Clarke:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. I don't accept that it has failed; it is one of the most popular schemes that we have in our city and I congratulate Biffa and particularly congratulate our Council officers. We do recognise that recycling is an incredibly important part of our work and continue to promote it. We are currently above our contractual rate of 38.6% we just above the national 40% mark in terms of recycling and composting, but Councillor Porter talks about failure. It is a failure not to turn up to a Ward Community meeting and not send apologies. It is a failure that probably the most important Ward Community meeting of the next 15 years arguably, where we discuss the local plan Councillor Porter who has talked a lot about the local plan previously just does not show. But actually the Police failed to show as well; I was talking to the police, they were attending an incident I don't know where Councillor Porter was.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Question 29, Councillor Porter please.

**Councillor Porter:** Yes before I move on I would just like to point out.

**Lord Mayor:** Question Councillor Porter.

**Councillor Porter:** Because Councillor Clarke did not want to have a Ward meeting before the end of the consultation.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Porter will you please ask your question.

**Councillor Porter:** Question 29 is "How much are the fees charged on the Council's "pooled investments"?"

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. The Council invests in two money market funds run by Invesco Aim and by Blackrock. We are constantly investment opportunities and are considering investing in other funds including property funds on an ongoing basis. These two funds are not long term investments, they are alternatives to banking deposits and we have immediate access to our money as a result of that. We use them to diversify so as not to have all our eggs in one basket

and all our funding in one institution. These are deducted from interest paid by the fund. The annual fees of Invesco Aim are 0.12% of the money invested; Blackrock charge 0.12.5%. The Council currently has £20m invested in each fund. Of course as Members will be aware obviously on a number of occasions we have talked about this, this money can be used to be set on one side to pay debt and appears in our accounts as such. I did ask officers what this amounted to in cash terms paid to this organisation and at these levels the fees by Invesco are £24,000 a year and for Blackrock £25,000.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. A supplementary please Councillor Porter?

**Councillor Porter:** Yes thank you to the City Mayor for giving that level of detail. It is actually quite important because at the end of the day we as the tax payers and residents of this city, it is our money which is taken from us through council tax and through government grants which is also taxation and then it goes to be invested into these speculative markets. I would just like to point out to the City Mayor that diversification although you may think it is the answer to keeping these investments safe, it only means that you could possibly lose all your money in a large number of investments and why does he believe that diversification so you are putting money into probably your fourth, fifth or sixth best investment idea is going to be any better than your first.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor as I explained in my answer to the question I don't think Councillor Porter can have been listening carefully. These are the equivalent of putting money in the bank. It is not termed to that in what we do on the advice of what is done in the day to day course of events and it is not something I concern myself with because we have some very expert people who handle this on a day to day basis but what we have done on their advice, is to ensure that the cash that is at any one time is with us is held in a number of places so that we reduce our risk. It seems to me the sensible thing to do so I think any casual person, casual lay person would probably think the same but I have to acknowledge that in this respect I most certainly am a lay person.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Question number 30, Councillor Porter please.

**Councillor Porter:** Yes thank you again Lord Mayor. So the question is "Who manages these "pooled investments" – I am actually talking about the property pooled investments?" Thank you.

**City Mayor:** City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** I think I have answered that question my Lord Mayor. Again I think again perhaps Councillor Porter was not listening.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. A supplementary please Councillor Porter?

**Councillor Porter:** He mentioned about Blackrock Invesco and Aim as investment companies. So just to clarify there are no other companies are managing the Council's proposed or current pooled property investments. It was within the report which said they are going to deliver a return of between 4 and 4.5% but this is the important thing, the investment could be at risk.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** I suspect Councillor Porter may be even more confused than usual. I answered the question he asked fully and gave him the information that I was briefed on fully and to the best of my knowledge it is a rateable return of the ones I have described them there and the fees are as I described them there. It may be that Councillor Porter might wish to.

**Councillor Porter:** Reports Peter

**City Mayor:** Councillor Porter might wish to take advice directly from our finance officers and I know that sometimes it needs to be explained to him quite a number of times before he actually understands. I am sure they will explain it slowly and carefully for him.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. Question number 31, Councillor Porter please.

**Councillor Porter:** Just to pick up on that because I think he is trying to make out that I have misunderstood the this but I think he probably he needs to read his own report because it is clearly in there it says full property investments which will deliver a return of 4.5%.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Porter question number 31 please.

**Councillor Porter:** Read the reports. 31. Yes. This is quite an important question and it has not been done as far as I am aware. "Can the authority improve their website to make it as easy as possible to find details of Council spending over £500?" The reason I am asking this is I used to be able to put it in put spending over £500 and it instantly came up now it is almost impossible to find it.

**City Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor to reply.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor our transparency directory is accessible by our data protection and freedom of information page on the website and to the best of my knowledge has not been significantly altered over recent times which is not to say it is the most useful and accessible format. It was set up to meet transparency regulations rather than the perspective of what might actually help those who want to get data about what the Council is doing and it is for that reason that in fact he have sent out to bids and have recently selected Open Data site as a supplier for a new portal which will improve our publishing of both transparency data and we are working with them to translate across to it the existing information. This is one that has now been adopted by this particular company via some other countries and if Councillor Porter and other Members do want to see an example of their work it is actually one that is used by Bristol and the way they have done it. We did look at a number of options for it and this should ensure that not only is it there but it is accessible and in easy format.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Do you have a supplementary please?

**Councillor Porter:** Yes I am glad to hear from that prompting he is actually doing something to improve transparency within this Labour controlled Council. But just to clarify, I have tried and I have always tried to put in payments over £500 or spending over £500 and you used to be able to put it in the search and then it would come up instantly. That is all that really needs to be done. So my question to the City Mayor is how long are you going to have to wait until he gets this new whatever

it is, this new gizmo set up. Can he get it set up by next week please.

**Lord Mayor:** City Mayor.

**City Mayor:** As I indicated this transfer across to this particular supplier is nothing whatsoever to do with any question that Councillor Porter has asked for on this occasion. It is actually just to do with the recognition that the way in which it was stored was not very accessible and user friendly as it needs to be. I will certainly check the timetables for doing this but I understand it is not something that is going to take a long time but that is not something that is going to be done by next week, we are talking about an awful lot of data and it does need to be put in a new format. My Lord Mayor I think Members will understand that an awful lot of data it takes some time to get it properly transferred across. I will though check over what period it is and to be best of my recollection, it is over the next two or three months.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. Councillor Porter, question number 32 please.

**Councillor Porter:** Thank you Lord Mayor. The question relates again to this report that we have got later on in the Council meeting and it is "What is the rate of return, obviously I know the rate of return for the property fund because I've just been told this is 4.5%; this is on the other Council's "pooled investments"?"

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor that is the question I answered earlier on but I will remind Members and Councillor Porter that the current return is 0.2% for Invesco and 0.15% for Blackrock.

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

**Councillor Porter:** Well it is actually 0.2% return is actually quite pathetic. I think you would probably get better if you just put it into a current account or a savings account. 20% of 1% is a good return, it is absolute rubbish. Question to Sir Peter as he oversees these investments is – could he just give Members of the Council and obviously people of the city, council tax payers, a little bit of insight into why it is such a good idea to have liquid investments.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you. City Mayor please.

**City Mayor:** My Lord Mayor I think honestly Councillor Porter was not listening when I told him earlier that was what we are talking about here is the equivalent of a current account, savings account and he will know I am sure from his own experience you are lucky to get any greater returns at all on those accounts and the reason as explained in this chamber and elsewhere on a number of occasions the reason we set this money on one side is because we are obliged to hold sufficient reserves to pay our debts when they become due, but because of the way in which the economy is at the moment we are penalised if we actually pay them off before time. So the money has to be set on one side in effectively a current account during the period until the debt becomes due. It cannot be used either to subsidise the services or because of the penalties we set upon to pay debt what we do consequently is to set them on one side in this way and seek to use it more creatively when we can to ensure that it improves the economy of the city.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you City Mayor. At the request of the Member, I accept the

following as a late question. Councillor Corral please number 33.

**Councillor Corral:** Thank you my Lord Mayor for accepting the question. “Does the City Mayor agree with Braunstone Councillors and the residents of Braunstone and the wider communities that the much needed and well utilised childcare provision at Braunstone Leisure Centre must take precedence over any dance classes?”

**City Mayor:** Thank you. Councillor Clair please.

**Councillor Clair:** Thank you my Lord Mayor. As announced to a previous question from a member of the public, the consultation currently underway about plans to invest in city’s leisure centres is intended to make sure that we have viable, vibrant, financially stable leisure services across the city. Braunstone Leisure Centre is an important part of this and we believe that investment in this centre will have a positive impact on health and wellbeing on people not only in Braunstone but in other areas of the city who may use Braunstone Leisure Centre.

However, it is also important that we have good access to childcare in Braunstone and the impact of any changes in the leisure centre will be taken into consideration before we make any final decision. We are currently consulting on the proposal and any member of the public, service users can feed their views on what we should be doing and absolutely Councillor Cole I met with yourself along you’re your Co-Councillor Mr. Johal and Councillor Halford and also education officers and sports department. They were all there. I have seen that place for myself on site and I have asked the officer from education that they should inform me the views of the consultation process, of the effect if this proceeds forward but I can assure you that all those comments will be taken on board and you will be fully briefed before any final decision is made.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Clair. Councillor Cole do you have a supplementary?

**Councillor Corral :** Yes I do my Lord Mayor. Can I thank Councillor Clair for his holding response but does he realise that by closing just part of this nursery it misplaces hundreds of children and makes the nursery unviable and will force many staff to lose their jobs, put out their parents who are working due to a lack of child care and I believe such short sighted action my Lord Mayor will possibly increase the cost to the state of people who need to claim state benefit rather than paying income tax back into the system when they are working.

**Lord Mayor:** Councillor Clair please.

**Councillor Clair:** I asked officers from education section. They are actually working on that, on two year old places and in particular the impact it may have on 3 year place and some special care on one year and two year child which we have seen in that room. For my part, all those issues which you have reflected and discussed with me on behalf of service users and local constituents I can assure you that every effort will be made and all those responses will be fully analysed before any decision is made.

**Lord Mayor:** Thank you Councillor Clair. That concludes the questions from Councillors.

## **MATTERS RESERVED TO COUNCIL**

### **7.1 SERVICE PLAN FOR FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT**

A report was considered which presented the service plan together with details of the work of the Food Safety Team and how the obligations on the Council are to be met in the period.

Moved by Councillor Clair seconded by Councillor Gugnani and carried:

14. That the Service Plan for Food Law Enforcement 2017/2018 be approved.

### **7.2 TREASURY STRATEGY – INVESTMENTS**

A report was considered which proposed amendments to the investment strategy which sat within the Treasury Strategy that governs the way the Council manages borrowing and investments.

Moved by the City Mayor, seconded by Councillor Clair and carried:

15. That the revised investment strategy laid out within the report be approved.

### **7.3 EMPLOYEE APPEALS AGAINST DISMISSAL**

Under Council Procedure Rule 15f the motion below was moved and voted upon without debate.

Moved by Councillor Westley, seconded by Councillor Alfonso and carried:-

16. That the report be withdrawn.

## **CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISION – YOUTH SERVICE REMODELLING**

Following a request by the proposer and seconder of the call-in the Monitoring Officer accepted its withdrawal.

With the withdrawal of the call-in the Lord Mayor noted that the item would not now be considered.

## **EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES**

The City Mayor informed Council of the changes to his executive and to the membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

### **NOTICE OF MOTION**

Moved by the City Mayor, seconded by Councillor Clair Deputy City Mayor and carried.

17. That:
  - On average, across the country, National Joint Council (NJC) basic pay has fallen by 21% in real terms since 2010

- NJC workers had a three-year pay freeze from 2010-2012 and have received only 1% pay increase annually since then
- NJC pay is the lowest in the public sector
- Differentials in pay grades are being squeezed and distorted by bottom-loaded NJC pay settlements needed to reflect the increase Statutory National Living Wage
- Leicester City Council began paying our staff the Living Wage Foundation living wage in March 2013 and formally signed the licence with the Foundation to include services the council contract with in September 2015. We are committed to providing those on lower wage rates with a fair and decent rate of pay
- The likelihood of rising inflation following the vote to leave the European Union will worsen the current public sector pay inequality.

This council therefore supports the NJC pay claim for 2018, submitted by UNISON, GMB and Unite on behalf of council and school workers and calls for the immediate end of public sector pay restraint. NJC pay cannot be allowed to fall further behind other parts of the public sector.

The 2018 claim is for the deletion of NJC pay points SCP 6-9 to reach the Foundation Living Wage of £8.45 (UK) and £9.75 (London) and a 5% increase on all NJC pay points.

This council also welcomes the joint review of the NJC pay spine to remedy the turbulence caused by bottom-loaded pay settlements.

Council further notes the drastic ongoing cuts to local government funding and calls on the Government to provide additional resources to ensure local authorities can fund a decent pay rise for NJC employees and the pay spine review.

This council resolves to:

- Write to the LGA asking it to make urgent representations to Government to fund the NJC claim and the pay spine review;
- Write to the Prime Minister and Chancellor supporting the NJC pay claim and seeking additional resources to fund a decent pay rise and the pay spine review;
- Write to local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim and the pay spine review.

#### **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

There being no items of urgent business identified the Lord Mayor declared the meeting closed at 7.47pm.



