DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Held on

Wednesday, 20 April 2011

at

County Hall
Matlock
Derbyshire

In the Chair:

COUNCILLOR G D WHARMBY
(Chairman, Derbyshire County Council)

Verbatim Report of Proceedings

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DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 20 APRIL 2011

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1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

MR McELVANEY (Director of Legal Services): Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. It is 2 o'clock. Welcome to the meeting of the County Council. It falls to me to open the meeting this afternoon because the Chairman of the County Council, Councillor Robin Baldry, is attending his mother-in-law’s funeral so he sends his apologies.

The first item on the agenda is the appointment of the Chairman of the Council for the year 2011/12. Are there any nominations?

CLLR TWIGG: It gives me great pleasure to nominate George Wharmby as Chairman of the Derbyshire County Council. He has been a County Councillor for six years. I have known him all that time. I have found out if he ever does anything he does it and finishes it off properly. I am sure with the help of Jean, his wife, they will make an excellent Chairman and consort of the county.

MR McELVANEY: Is that seconded?

CLLR R A PARKINSON: I can second the nomination of George Wharmby as Chairman of the Derbyshire County Council. He has been a County Councillor for six years. I have known him all that time. I have found out if he ever does anything he does it and finishes it off properly. I am sure with the help of Jean, his wife, they will make an excellent Chairman and consort of the county.

MR McELVANEY: Is that seconded?

CLLR R A PARKINSON: Can I second the nomination of George Wharmby as Chairman of the County Council. Obviously George as Vice-Chairman over the last two years has done an excellent job in supporting Robin Baldry. I have on numerous occasions, wearing another hat as Mayor of Erewash, met George on his official duties. I know he will ably carry out the role of Chairman. He certainly will be ably supported by Jean, herself a former Mayor of High Peak. Thank you.

MR McELVANEY: Thank you. In the absence of any other nominations Councillor Wharmby is elected to the position of Chairman of the Council and it is my responsibility to pass the chain of office to him. (Applause)

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. The second item on the agenda is to appoint the Vice-Chairman of the Council. I invite nominations from the floor.

CLLR J WHARMBY: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I would like to propose Councillor Chris Jackson for the position of Vice-Chairman of Derbyshire County Council. It has been my great pleasure to work with Chris during the past two years and I know he will make an excellent Vice-Chairman and offer his help and support to my husband, the Chairman. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Have we a seconder for that proposition? Councillor Murray.

CLLR MURRAY: Yes Chairman, I have great pleasure in seconding Councillor Chris Jackson as Vice-Chair of this Council. I know he will put in a great deal of effort and will be
excellent support to you on all occasions.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Are there any further nominations? (No response) Then Chris Jackson is Vice-Chairman of the Council. (Applause)

CLLR JACKSON: Mr Chairman, I would like to thank my proposers for the nomination. I would like to confirm to you that I will support you in any task; uphold the dignity and respect of this Council and the office to which this chain applies. I would also like to thank the Leader for putting his faith in me and putting me forward for election. Thank you. (Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: First I would like to thank my nominees for their kind words. I hope I can live up to their expectations. Thank you both.

I have already enjoyed an active and rewarding two years as Vice-Chairman of the Council and I am looking forward to an equally active year as Chairman. I would like to reassure everyone here that I will continue to do my best to represent and to promote this Council.

Over the next few months I have no doubt that my duties will bring me into contact with many people from Derbyshire, our neighbouring authorities, as well as those from further afield.

Firstly, a word about our previous Chairman, Councillor Robin Baldry. Robin took every opportunity to thank and highlight the enormous contribution so many individuals and organisations made to Derbyshire life. I too am keen to continue to recognise the help, care and commitment of our many voluntary and charitable organisations in making life so much better for all of us. During my time as Chairman I intend to further strengthen the links Robin has established with the military, the British Legion, and the Scouts and Guides’ Associations.

As is customary at our annual meeting I would like to take a few minutes to reflect on our achievements over the past year and to look forward to the next twelve months.

Last year was a big year for us. We promised to provide value for money, to cut red tape and bureaucracy, and to make our services even more efficient. We have delivered on them. To start us off we set the lowest ever increase in Council Tax since Council Tax began and we have done even better for 2011/12 and accepted the Government’s deal of a 0% increase. Our staff numbers have reduced, and that is before the recent search for early retirements and voluntary redundancies. We have cut the number of administrative centres we use saving almost £400,000 in running costs so far, and to date we have raised £1.1 million to invest in our remaining building stock.

We made Derbyshire’s roads a key priority twelve months ago and they are still a big issue for us. You will not be surprised to hear our plans have been hampered and our roads seriously damaged by the worst possible winter weather for the last two years.

However, we have had major successes with our pothole busting – “You report it. We’ll sort it” service. Our teams responded to more than 9,000 urgent calls from local people. We dealt with many of them within 24 hours, but we know we can do better. That is why we are really pleased the Government has given us £3.6 million in extra Highways grant. It will go a long way to helping us tackle the pothole backlog and speed up our target response time.
We also invested more than £27 million in repairing and improving our roads, along with important safety and improvement schemes. The good news is we will be doing more of the same this year. You will be aware of our new £20 million plan. It demonstrates our commitment to ensure that services are spread fairly across Derbyshire and where they are needed most.

We are great believers in high quality, flexible care for elderly and vulnerable people and we have delivered it. Over the last twelve months we have provided services and support to more than 32,000 people so they can live at home, another 3,650 people were supported in residential care, and we have helped more than 2,000 arrange their own services through direct payments, asking people to help meet some of the cost of their care from the benefits they get. It has been the subject of much debate but the results of our widespread consultation showed that the majority who took part thought it was fair. Those on very low incomes will not pay and for most people it will be just under £25 a week. We pick up the rest of the bill. It is worth mentioning too that our charges are still way below most other Councils in the country. We were clear about our intention to let local people have the choice and control over the care they receive and who they get it from. We think we have come up with the fairest and best solution to protect the future of home care services in Derbyshire.

Excellent teaching and discipline are the keys to success. It is good news that our children are doing better than ever at school. Exam and test results continue to improve and fewer pupils are missing out on their education. Also, education starts early in Derbyshire. I am pleased to say that we now have a 98% take-up of free education and child care places for three and four year olds. However, we still have much to do. Young people are our future and we need to look after them. We need to make sure they are safe, happy and occupied. It is our aim to work closely with schools and academies supporting them where we can so that every child gets the best chance in life. Our recent reorganisation of Children’s Services means that we will be based right in the heart of our communities – on hand to help children and their families right from the start.

I am sure we can all agree that cutting crime is vital to protecting our safe and happy communities. We have made a significant impact. The number of young people offending for the first time has been cut by more than 50% to 460 youngsters in 2010/11. Re-offending rates have also dropped – by 38% among prolific offenders.

We said antisocial behaviour – the scourge of many town centres – must stop. Our intervention projects have paid off and we are working with the police to tackle part of the problem at its source: underage sales in pubs, clubs and shops. Our work to reclaim our town centres will continue, so tackling binge drinking and underage drinking will remain urgent priorities for us.

We see the benefits too of active, healthy and vibrant communities. Almost all our schools have “Healthy Schools” status. More than 6,000 people are attending our free learning activities in our libraries and almost 7,000 joined in our Derbyshire Literature Festival activities. Thousands of people are flocking to our walking, jogging and return-to-sport projects.

I must mention too the role of colleagues in the many voluntary and charitable organisations across the county. They are an important and valuable part of Derbyshire life. We all benefit from the thousands of people who offer their time and skills to make a difference in our communities. I am pleased that we continue to recognise the contribution they make through our Excellence in the Community awards. This year we will be acknowledging many
more at our event in October.

We all know Derbyshire is a safe and beautiful place to live, work and relax. We must protect and cherish it. We are doing just that. Our recycling figures are better than the national average and we are winning the battle to make more and more people adopt ‘greener’ lifestyles.

Our Discovery Days’ programme has attracted thousands of visitors to the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, and our innovative Blue Plaque Award Scheme has put some very deserving and leading Derbyshire figures on the map. I hope our current call for nominations will be as popular with local people as it was last year.

We said there would be changes at the Council (not for changes sake but because we believe they are needed). It is important that we start by putting our own house in order. Introducing Single Status was a big part of that. It had been a very long time in coming and had been delayed and put off for many reasons, but it has happened and from 1 April 2010 we have had a fair and equal pay structure and a new and modern set of terms and conditions: The Derbyshire Package.

At the same time the Council switched on our new finance and HR systems. There is nothing like heaping on the pressure! There were teething problems and we are very sorry for them. Throughout we have done our best to put things right where they have gone wrong. It is worth remembering that what we had before were systems with their own share of problems and which were in desperate need of replacement. Nevertheless, it is still a massive achievement and the Chief Executive and his team of staff should feel very proud.

To show just how massive a project it was – and still is – it is worth mentioning the scale of what the team had to contend with: a monthly payroll of 60,000 people, including pensioners. This year more than 32,000 orders have been processed. 650,000 invoices totalling £710 million in payments to suppliers have been cleared and 28,000 invoices for our services valued at £121 million have been raised. It is mind boggling stuff and should put the minor problems we have had with the system into perspective. Nevertheless, we do acknowledge that it has been difficult for those people who have been directly affected by mistakes in their pay.

I think we can claim an excellent year of achievement in an extremely difficult financial climate. Much of our success is due to the excellent working partnerships we have here and particularly from our greatest asset – our employees.

Local government employees receive more than their fair share of criticism. We need to put the record straight. They are not overpaid. The average full-time salary at Derbyshire County Council is around £20,000 and the average pension is £3,700 a year – not so gold plated. Our staff work hard, continue to deliver high quality services and to find innovative and more efficient ways of operating to give even better value for money. I am sure you will all join me in congratulating and passing on our thanks to the m.

I shall not go on for much longer but I would like to mention a few of our ideas for the future, and I think the future is bright.

We all know there is a huge debt crisis. The Government has faced up to the stark moral choice: to stop spending money we do not have or reckless borrowing to carry on overspending and leave our children or our children’s children to pick up the bill. We too have not put off the tough decisions but we have ensured that our services are delivered fairly and that we make the Council as efficient as we can.
Yes, we are making cuts, tightening our belts and our services are changing, but we are still a billion pound organisation that is delivering services and supporting thousands and thousands of people. We don’t have to do it all. There are many individuals and organisations that are already doing their bit. They are doing excellent work and are making our communities all the richer for it.

We believe there are many more people who would like to get involved. We want to help them do that, to get involved and take part. It is called the Big Society. We are going to do our best to support and grow the Big Society in Derbyshire. We understand its value. We are looking to protect the overall amount of cash we give to voluntary groups and organisations. What is more, we intend to set aside extra cash for Big Society grants to small groups with big ideas for their local communities.

Young people are our future. We intend to offer 500 apprenticeships over the next four years. This will be exciting and worthwhile opportunities to ensure a positive future for some of our youngsters, and we will be looking to persuade local businesses to match our numbers so that the next generation is not lost.

We will also be helping communities bid for BT cash to secure faster broadband connections. We want to make sure Derbyshire homes and businesses get the full benefit of the internet and communications technology. We will look to build up our popular Trusted Trader directory by offering a free first year to all new businesses. Not only is the directory good for business, it gives local people peace of mind too.

We are set to help local communities deal with that common and unpleasant problem – dog fouling. We will relaunch our YUK! Campaign and offer a texting service for people to report the problem as well as free signs and posters.

We will continue to work closely with Parish Councils and to support them in delivering very local services. Many have already agreed to provide snow patrols during the winter months and we will be looking to sign up more parishes. In return we will be offering equipment and grants to help them add to our extensive winter maintenance activities. We will also be looking to recruit between 40 and 50 farmers and other contractors to clear side roads off our gritting routes.

We are also committed to helping people grow their own. Those of us with gardens know the benefits of cultivating fresh fruit and vegetables. We want to help more people enjoy it too. We will be looking to make pockets of unused Council land available for allotments. We will also aim to offset some of our carbon footprint by offering free trees to schools and communities to create community woodlands.

Our new Vice-Chairman, Chris Jackson, will be our Countryside Ambassador over the next two years. He is keen to forge stronger links with those who work, live and cherish our special Derbyshire countryside. I understand Chris’s particular priorities will be the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site and the Chesterfield and Cromford canals.

With public health set to come back to us we are keen to step up our plans to help local people live safe and healthy lives, so we will look to offer home health checks to vulnerable people and families. As well as making sure their homes are safe from fire and accidents and secure from theft, we will offer extra advice and support on insulation, recycling, and money saving tips. We will be looking to offer grant aid to local sports’ groups and clubs to encourage
the young and not so young to get on the move, as well as new measures to help with school sports.

I am sure you will agree it is a pretty exciting agenda and it comes on top of our day-to-day business. I think it demonstrates just how closely we listen to local people and how committed we are to helping the communities improve their communities. Thank you for your indulgence and now for the business of the day. (Applause)

3 CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Item 3 on the agenda is Chairman’s announcements.

(a) It is with deep regret that I report the deaths of former County Councillors Frank Revell, William (known as Bill) Lythgoe, John Fildes and Francis Bulkeley-Kirkham.

Frank Revell served on the Council from 1974 to 1989 representing the Scarcliffe Division.

Bill Lythgoe served from 1981 to 1985 representing the Chellaston Division.

John Fildes served from 1970 to 1997 representing the West Hallam Division.

Francis Bulkeley-Kirkham (I think better known as BK) served from 1997 to 2005 representing the Alport Division.

I would like to ask members to observe a minute’s silence and then invite members to pay tribute.

(Members stood in silent tribute)

Thank you. Councillor Parkinson, I believe you wish to say a few words?

CLLR R A PARKINSON: Thank you, Chairman. I would like to make reference to former Councillor John Fildes.

John was born on the 27 January 1928 and died on the 10 March 2011 at the age of 83. John was born in 1928 in Derby where he spent his early childhood. The family moved to Glasgow early in the war. Whilst in Glasgow John almost became a professional footballer when Celtic asked him to sign a contract after he had been on youth trials with them. Unfortunately, because of his age, he needed his father to sign the contract but his father refused to sign on the grounds that it “wasn’t a proper job”. I do not know whether they would do that these days! The family returned to Derby in 1945.

Shortly after returning John got an apprenticeship at Rolls Royce and progressed into the drawing office. An old work colleague has relayed stories of what a joker John was and how he was behind most practical jokes that went off in the office.

John apparently loved to dance and he reckoned that he was one of the best, if not the best dancer he had ever met. It was at a dance that he met his wife Flo and, in September 1954, they married at St George’s Church in Derby.

They moved to a house in Alvaston, forging friendships with many people in the
community and raising their three daughters and son, Simon, to whom I am indebted for some of these notes.

In 1965 the family moved to a house in West Hallam with a sub-post office attached, which Flo ran for 25 years.

Soon John started on the road to local politics, becoming a West Hallam Parish councillor. He represented the West Hallam Electoral Division on the County Council for some 30 years from 1970 to, in my notes, 2001, at one time being the Opposition spokesman for Highways. He served on Erewash Borough Council from 1974 to 2009 when illness led to his resignation. He was Mayor of Erewash in 1990 to 1991.

As a Catholic, John was involved with the Knights of St Columba in Ilkeston where he held the office of Provincial Grand Knight, amongst others. He was heavily involved in the work of St Thomas’s Church in Ilkeston and was a governor of two Catholic schools.

John carried on with his Council, church and charity work until December 2009 when he started to become ill and was diagnosed with vascular dementia. This illness was probably the worst illness that John could have suffered. It took almost everything with which he prided himself: his quick thinking mind, his ability to communicate, his sharp tongue, but it never took his sense of humour.

Mr Chairman, John Fildes was a beloved husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather and a pillar of his local community. He leaves a gap which can never be filled. Thank you.


CLLR LUCAS: Thank you, Chair. If I may also speak with regard to the late John Fildes.

I first knew John when I was elected on to the Erewash Borough Council. He was a sitting councillor at that time. I think it would be fair to say that myself and John hit it off because Robert has made a reference to his wit. He did like a joke, a practical joke, some of them that could be repeated in here and I can assure you some of them that could not, but he had a wonderful sense of humour.

As Robert said, he and his wife kept for quite a number of years a Post Office which was like a wooden annexe to the property that they lived in at West Hallam. Occasionally he would refer to that as his “surgery”. When people were in there collecting their pension he would also pick up problems for the local community and he was a committed community councillor. There was no question about that. I think also with his sense of humour people appreciated that in times of trial and trouble John was quite an expert in lifting their spirits.

He was involved with Highways at Derbyshire County Council and I know when I was the Chair of Highways and we met at Erewash he asked how things were. He made reference about Joe Murphy – no more said – and Joe would make reference about John. They were good friends and I know they had equal respect for each other, but John pulled no punches when it was necessary. He fought his corner and he fought it extremely well and eloquently but at the end of it what I term now as “old politics”, you could still have a drink with him at the end of whatever argument or debate you had with him.
All in all he will be sadly missed. He had a very very soft spot for wife, family and grandchildren, who were always being brought up in conversation when you were having a natter with John. I agree, Robert, he will sadly missed and sadly missed by the community. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any further tributes? Councillor Flitter.

CLLR FLITTER: Yes Chair, I am not really in a position to talk about any individual member because apart from BK as you say who I met briefly in the early days of being a councillor on this Authority just crossing the floor to talk to him, but the other people you have mentioned were names that I associate with Derbyshire County Council over the past and I think it would be rather remiss of me not to add the Liberal Democrat heartfelt condolences to the families along with the rest of this Council. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Macdonald.

CLLR MACDONALD: I have been asked to say a few words about BK. Mr Chairman, Francis Bulkeley-Kirkham (who everyone knows liked to be called BK, in fact we were instructed to call him BK) hit Heanor like a whirlwind, especially the Conservative Party in Heanor who did not know what had hit them when he first arrived, bought a big house on Mansfield Road and in true military fashion turned it into a spotless well run and well respected nursing home within Derbyshire.

Very quickly he assimilated himself into the local community with his wife Ruth, was often seen at the local church and eventually became the President of Heanor Conservative Club.

He moved to Pentrich when he retired from the nursing home and again worked for the local church and for many charitable causes in the area.

He was also the Chairman, I think, of Crich British Legion. He was very fond of his British Legion affiliation and worked hard with the members there.

He was then elected to Amber Valley Borough Council where I met and worked with him and a more conscientious member you could not have wished to find. He eventually became Deputy Mayor and before that he also became a member of Derbyshire County Council where he served for a number of years until 2005 when the latest boundary reviews came and changed the Alport Division, which disappeared.

BK was very popular. He was a very popular fun loving character whose commitment to the people he was proud to serve was always 110%. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Wilcox.

CLLR WILCOX: Chair, thank you. I would like to pay tribute to two colleagues, to Frank Revell and to Bill Lythgoe who both served on this Authority, as you have said, one from 1974 and the other from 1981.

Frank Revell was a very powerful figure in the early 1980s. He was the Chair of the Education Committee at that time. His openness, his friendliness, is something that will always stay with me and certainly personally he helped me a great deal in my very very early days.
He was tormented for six months by Annette Noskwith who was unforgiving in the attacks which she made on him and being a new Chair (there are one or two new Chairs here who might experience this today or at other times) there is often somebody opposite you who knows a lot more than you when you first start. Annette certainly put him through it. However, he maintained and retained a good relationship with her, recognised when she was making valid points, started to learn, started to acquire significantly more knowledge, and with a team of young Turks which he had had recruited to his Vice-Chair squad over a period of time I think started to move into the ascendancy. He voluntarily stood back in 1989 and the last time I saw him, he did not see me, he was zooming past on his bike. He was in his 70s then. I just think it was a man who had decided he had done enough in politics, he had done enough with the NUM and he was out to have an enjoyable time.

He will be greatly missed, as will Bill Lythgoe who joined the Authority in 1981. He was for a short time during his period of office, which was only four years, Secretary of our Labour Group, which is a very revered position within the Labour Group, but more than anything Bill was a train man. You would see him if you travelled regularly on the Midland Mainline, or East Midlands Trains as it is now, there would be Bill Lythgoe sitting on the train, on a laptop doing some calculations about how you could make trains go faster, longer, stretch them, bridges. He knew every type of train there was, every gauge, every whatever about trains. Interestingly when he retired he then set about doing a PhD on trains and three years before his untimely death he actually did attain his doctorate. This was a man who was a lifelong learner and continued to make a vital contribution to a very difficult industry. I think he will live on in terms of the legacy that he has left for improved train networks within this region and perhaps in the UK as well.

Most of all, though, Bill was a political activist. He remained phenomenally political. Although he would have a dialogue with anyone he knew where he stood on absolutely everything and his political family, as well as his biological family, will miss him greatly because he was such a challenging friend and he was a family man politically as well as being a family man in the sense which we normally refer to a “family man”. Both those comrades will be greatly missed by all of us.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Wilcox. Councillor Harrison.

CLLR HARRISON: Thank you, Chairman. I would just like to pay tribute to BK and also Bill Lythgoe.

In the case of BK if I could just add to what Greg Macdonald has said, the hallmark of BK was service, service in the military as a commissioned officer in the Royal Signals, in the Royal Worcesters (now affectionately as we all know the Mercians) and also the Military Police where he rose to the rank of Major and was awarded the territorial decoration for his services in the Territorial Army by Princess Anne in 1977. That was a real red letter day for BK.

He graduated with a degree, Bachelor of Education, and made it his business to serve the deaf people in his community and ended up as the headmaster of a special school for deaf children. When that closed, as has already been said, he turned his attention to residential nursing and always prefaced by a prejudicial interest commented frequently in this Chamber on the disparities in the payments made to private residential nursing homes as opposed to those nursing homes owned by the Council.

In addition he ran the ring at the County Show until recent years and in fact he was
President of the Heanor Branch of the Royal British Legion right up until the time of his death.

He was a wonderful chap, great company, and we send, I am sure, our condolences to his wife Ruth, daughter and grandchildren.

Moving on to Bill Lythgoe. I first met Bill when he was a South Derbyshire District Councillor for the Melbourne Ward in 1999 and I was his opponent. On a recount I won. At the time he was Chairman of the influential Finance and Management Committee but from the moment that result was announced, apart from his obvious disappointment, there began a growing friendship between us.

We fought each other again once at District level for the Melbourne Ward and three times at County level where I was always fortunate to come out on top, but where always the fights were clean between us and we had great admiration and respect for each other.

As David said he was a train man and above all he was a friendly charming personality with a deep analytical mind which he brought to bear in everything he did.

A great loss to his family and to his partner Irene and I suspect ourselves when we come to address the route for HS2 for our county.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Councillor Harrison.

(b) Presentation of Award to apprentice Daniel Brierley of the Environmental Services Department.

Now a pleasant duty to perform. This is the presentation of award to apprentice Daniel Brierley of the Environmental Services Department.

Daniel was recently nominated by his manager for the Association of Public Service Excellence, Apprentice of the Year awards. He successfully made it to the final stage and was presented with this wonderful trophy.

Daniel lives in Tintwistle and started his job as Apprentice Road Worker in September 2009. He is based at Chapel-en-le-Frith Highways depot and works as part of a team completing a large variety of different highways’ related construction and maintenance works.

Daniel currently attends The Manchester College where he is taking a Level 2 Diploma in General Construction Operations and a Level 2 NVQ in Street Masonry. Next year he will take NVQ Level 2 in Kerb Laying, Carriageway Construction and Excavation.

Daniel is also hoping to do the Edexcel ONC in Civil Engineering Bridging Course. He intends to complete this in his own time.

Daniel was responsible for the winter maintenance podcast that was posted on DNet and has currently had 4,500 hits. This gave a very good insight into what it is like driving a gritter in snowy conditions during this last winter.

I am now going to hand over to Councillor Chris Jackson who is going to present Daniel with his award.

CLLR JACKSON: Thank you, Chair. I think it is important I say this, Environmental
Services have a proud record of training apprentices and Daniel is a fine example of a partnership the Department has with the young people who are keen to develop themselves and support the County Council. Young apprentices like Daniel are the lifeblood of our organisation and we must continue to support their training and development throughout their career.

We have an example of a former apprentice who has recently completed an Honours Degree in Contraction Management (although Daniel in the early part of his training there will still be a lot to go for). As the Chairman has said, Daniel recently turned his hand to film producing when he videoed the winter maintenance programme and a podcast for the DNet. Who knows, he may end up as a road worker or indeed a famous film director!

His parents are here with him today rightly proud of his achievements. We are likewise very proud of him and all our young apprentices, but in particular Daniel for winning this prestigious award.

Daniel, I would like to invite you to come down and receive your well deserved award. (Applause) (A presentation was made)

(c) Councillor Bill Camm

THE CHAIRMAN: As members may be aware, Councillor Bill Camm is in very poor health at present and I am sure that the Council would wish to send him their best wishes. (Hear, hear) In addition, and in keeping with previous practice, I would like to propose that Councillor Camm’s non-attendance at meetings should be approved in order that the normal six months’ rule does not apply.

CLLR JACKSON: Seconded.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are there any objections to this rule? (No objection) Thank you.

CLLR WESTERN: Chair, before you move on if I may. Could I suggest it is an appropriate time for this Council to send a message of sympathy and support to the people of Japan. This is the first Council meeting we have had since the earthquake and tsunami and I think given the county’s links with Japan through Toyota and so on it would be an appropriate thing for us to do.

The second point, Chair, I would just like to place on record from the Labour Group our thanks to a former colleague, Steve Pickering, who as you know has had to stand down. He represented very well the people of Eckington from 2008 following the death of Derek Featherstone until recently when because of a work situation he had to cease to be a councillor. Thank you, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewer.

CLLR LEWER: Just to reassure Councillor Western that the Chairman and the Leader and the Chief Executive have sent our sympathies to our twinning colleagues, so very happy to endorse those sentiments, and also to thank Councillor Pickering for his service to the County Council. Although he was not here very long he was a very intelligent colleague, I always felt, and he will be missed in the county. Thank you.
4 SCHEDULE OF APPOINTMENTS

THE CHAIRMAN: Item 4, Schedule of Appointments. The Cabinet appointments, portfolio responsibilities and Committee membership and appointments to outside bodies have been circulated. These reflect the proposed new Improvement and Scrutiny Committee arrangements. Are there any amendments to these appointments?

CLLR WESTERN: Chair, could I just raise a point of order? We are considering now, as you said, the Cabinet appointments and so on reflecting the proposed new Improvement and Scrutiny arrangements in advance of agreeing the new arrangements. It seems to me that that is the wrong order and that we ought to be considering the constitutional change first before we appoint people to the new Committee because we have not actually agreed it yet.

MR McELVANEY: Thank you, Chairman, Councillor Western. It is a point we thought about and that is why we have said we are not wanting to make assumptions about how the Council will make its decisions, but we have stuck with the order of business that is set out in the constitution and so the suggestion that the appointments are subject to that debate and decision making. If a different decision is made we can always come back and amend the arrangements. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is everybody happy with that point of order? Councillor Western.

CLLR WESTERN: Thank you, Chair. Thank you for the explanation, although I do not think I am much wiser.

Just a couple of points on this. Could we have further explanation about the role of the Countryside Ambassador because that is a new role and it would be nice to know quite what is encompassed in that?

Secondly, on page 13 of the document I note in terms of Cabinet support members there are two members now who will be fulfilling two roles and that is a departure from previous practice. I wonder if we could have an explanation why that is? Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewer.

CLLR LEWER: Thank you, Chairman. The appointment of Cabinet support members and positions is only really in keeping with other people having multiple jobs in the Council before and the decision has been taken that those particular members are particularly effective in those roles and therefore can execute both of them correctly.

The Countryside Ambassador role is not an executive function it is really part of Councillor Jackson’s civic role, it is something he wishes to put time and effort into. It will not therefore carry SRAs or executive functions, which will continue to reside with the Cabinet member for Highways and Transport, but it does provide him with an opportunity to define his role, to meet some new people and to help promote the interests of the county. Thank you.

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

THE CHAIRMAN: Agenda Item 5, declarations of interest. I invite members to declare any interests, whether personal or prejudicial, on the business before the Council today.

CLLR GILLOTT: Chair, can I declare with regards to Item 18, Motion 2, that I am a
governor at Tupton Hall School.

CLLR RIGGOTT: Chair, Vice-Chair.

CLLR FLITTER: Yes Chair, I declare an interest in Item 19(d) due to the media interest this week. I shall actually leave the room while you are having that discussion.

6 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

THE CHAIRMAN: Item 6, public questions. There are none.

7 COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS

THE CHAIRMAN: Item 7, Councillor Questions. A list of questions is supplied in your documents. These questions have several bullet points and they will be taken as one question per questioner, not the bullet points as well, or response. Councillor Western.

CLLR WESTERN: Thank you, Chair. This is a question to Councillor John Harrison, Cabinet Member for Finance and Management.

We are now a year on from the introduction of the SAP system. Would the Cabinet Member update us on:

1. What is being done to resolve the problems that are still occurring with the system, particularly with the Workplace and Orderpoint functions?

2. How much has been spent on consultancy fees during the first year of operation and how much is currently being paid to consultants?

3. Has any work been done to quantify the cost of DCC staff time lost through having to deal with these problems and errors eg re-inputting data, correcting payroll errors, waiting to log into the system?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Harrison.

CLLR HARRISON: Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Anne, for those questions.

What I would say by way of response is right from the outset I do not come today to bury SAP but to praise it. It is a wonderful piece of equipment and your administration was extremely wise in your decision of choosing that it be implemented during your final days of office in 2009.

As you would expect from a system of such complexity and where what it meets when it arrives varies from place to place (which means you cannot always check with other Authorities who have introduced it before you to find out the bugs they discovered because every place has its own bugs) the bugs here were in certain areas of the Authority. Amazingly there were people with contracts of employment, not just one job, not five, not ten but 15 and even more contracts of employment which to varying degree they discharged in the course of a month. Attaching to that a different rate of pay, different allowances, is it surprising that SAP with all its computer power met its match? That convoluted Byzantine system of employing people should have been dealt with by your administration years ago. Had that been done then we would not have had the problems we have today.
You have heard from the Chairman in his opening speech of the wonderful job it is now doing in terms of the invoices processed; the orders; the invoicing; half-a-million remuneration payments to staff and pensioners; 28,000 customer invoices and, in addition to that, managers have additional functions allowing them to approve leave and other absences; approve overtime or other additional hours; approve expenses’ claims; complete on-line forms for starters and leavers and employee contract changes; view management reports and various other processes. That is helping us improve the efficiency of the Council and to provide better value for money. Can we start stopping SAP or zapping SAP because it is doing a good job. In addition in relation to Orderpoint, coupled with the SAP vendor invoice management, the system has provided the opportunity to increase the amount of electronic ordering, it saves time and costs and reduces and eventually removes together paper order books. Again greater automation, greater efficiency, greater value for money.

Now that we have completed our first year and gained valuable operational experience it is intended to work on reducing the period of time the workplace is closed for data entry. It must be borne in mind that business critical operations carried out by back office staff are not affected during the workplace closure period.

As for the level of consultancy fees I have the figures here. In year 1, that was 2009/10, the period of preparation for implementation, the total for that year amounted to £2.8 million. In year 2, the first year of operation starting in April 2010, that figure reduced to £1.6 million. For the next financial year, in fact it is now the current financial year of 2011/12, we are estimating that the consultancy fees will have dropped to just £142,000, although this latter figure may be adjusted in the light of any further additions which it is decided to add to the system. All these figures over the whole of that period are within planned funding for the project as approved by Council on the 24 February 2009, if you remember that far back, when you were still in power.

As for quantifying the cost of staff time lost through having to deal with these problems and errors I am afraid I have to tell you, but with no apology, the answer is no, we have not done any work on that. However, the overall position is that staffing has not increased as a result of introducing the SAP system even though the transition from the mainframe to SAP required one full year of parallel running with many of the old systems.

We are making progress month by month and I remain confident that we have made a sound investment. It was a good basic decision you made in the first place and it will provide the services we needed to improve the Council’s efficiency and value for money which are the hallmarks of our administration.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Western, would you like to ask a supplementary question?

CLLR WESTERN: Yes Chair. I am really pleased to hear that you still support the decision we made, it is reassuring for me. One of the reasons we keep asking these questions is to just check back and make sure it was a sound decision in the first place. I think some of the issues are, you mentioned the number of employees and so on, the number of transactions, but the previous systems managed to cope with those complications even though the current one seems to struggle with it.

We do quite regularly see Cabinet reports and so on that make reference to IT systems but saying “We are not going to do that because SAP can’t cope with it”. I will just point to the
Car Allowance Scheme as one that came to Cabinet yesterday. It does seem strange though that we have a system where we are supposed to be making progress and reducing bureaucracy, we have a system where for three or four days every month the whole workforce system closes down and the staff of this Authority have to resort to recording their time on a piece of paper. That surely was not what was anticipated at the outset when we bought into the system.

What I would like to see, Chair, and this is my question, now we have had a year of operation is it not time to do a full review that members can be part of, whether it is through Scrutiny or some other mechanism so we can look at where the glitches have been, see what we can do to improve things in the future? I think it was regrettable really that in George’s speech he referred to “minor problems of payroll”. These are not “minor problems” for the people involved. Can we as part of that review look at better communication with the workforce in terms of where the problems lie and the timescale for sorting those problems out and the timescale in which we will start to see some of the benefits of the system coming through?

CLLR HARRISON: Thank you. I repeat, many and most of the benefits of the system have already come through and we are taking advantage of them. It is only in a minority of areas that we continue to have problems.

The Chairman in his opening address repeated the apologies which have been given to those unfortunate members of staff who did not receive the correct pay when they should have done, whether it was either too little or too much. Apologies have been given throughout the year and again today. I am confident that we will get there very very soon.

The reason why we close down for three or five days a month is in order to ensure that we minimise the risk of getting the pay of our employees wrong. I am sure you will agree with me that is the absolute priority, that people deserve to be paid the correct amount of pay on time, and in order to ensure with the minimum of risk that that happens that is why there is that closure just for three, four, or at the most five days a month.

THE CHAIRMAN: Question 2. This is for Councillor Mike Longden, Cabinet Member for Education from Councillor Alan Charles. Councillor Charles.

CLLR CHARLES: Thank you, Chair.

Can the Cabinet Member for Education tell me:

1. How long the Derbyshire Net for Learning has been off-line?

2. Why it has been off-line?

3. What action is being taken to get this essential service back on-line?

4. When Derbyshire schools can expect service to be resumed?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Longden.

CLLR LONGDEN: Thank you, Chair. I will answer in that order, the four parts, Alan.

“How long has it been off-line?” Well the answer is since early February of this year. That is some two-and-a-half months.
“Why has it been off-line?” Well we were alerted to a security concern on the 3 February and as a result decommissioned the site with immediate effect.

“What action is being taken to get this essential service back on-line?” Well a new solution is currently under construction and in the interim a temporary solution has been developed which ensures that the schools receive information via e-mail for non-sensitive information, while sensitive information is stored on a secure website portal which is available to the schools.

The fourth part of your question: “When Derbyshire schools can expect service to be resumed?” The new solution is being built by the corporate web team. It is scheduled to be in place in June of this year. Access to SAM, which is the schools admissions, is now fully restored. I think that has answered your questions, Alan.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Charles, would you like to ask a supplementary on that?

CLLR CHARLES: Rather a comment, Chair. Just to thank Mike for those answers. I know he appreciates how important this service is to schools to actually have those communications in-line and I hope there is something back up and running for June. Thank you.


CLLR STOCKDALE: Thank you. I would like to ask the Cabinet member for Highways and Transport two questions regarding the Robin Hood line.

1. The Robin Hood Line provides a vital transport link to the eastern part of Derbyshire to employment centres in Worksop, Mansfield and Nottingham, as well as encouraging visitors to our area. Does the Cabinet Member agree with me that the existing Sunday service for this line is woefully inadequate and acts as a disincentive to train users to use the service?

2. Furthermore, would it not be more sensible to trial the Sunday service properly with hourly trains so that true demand can be measured rather than scrap the service, because there has been no public consultation on the proposed closure at all?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Spencer.

CLLR SPENCER: Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Councillor Stockdale, for the question. In my short time as the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, the ten minutes I have been here, I will do my best to answer the question.

It is my understanding that my predecessor, Councillor Jackson, in consultation with your Shadow Cabinet Member, chose to defer this item for further consultation and more information before any decision was made.

You will find when you return to your office this afternoon a press release has been sent out by myself to start the consultation process on this particular issue and until that consultation process has been carried through I have no further information to add at this moment in time.
THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Stockdale, would you like to ask a supplementary?

CLLR STOCKDALE: More a comment than anything, Chair. The areas this affects are high deprivation areas and with the Big Society the Prime Minister has pledged support for high deprivation areas. Is it at all possible to take into consideration that with Creswell Crags being considered possibly for World Heritage Status (this is an important means to tourism which is dependent very heavily on a volunteer force at Creswell Crags and the subsidies that we actually put in place when we were in power only targeted £12,500 per year) the removal of the service obviously would isolate these communities greatly. They have no Sunday service as regards public transport with buses, they have very low car usage, and it really really would isolate these communities. I would like to think that you would take all this into consideration. Thank you.

CLLR SPENCER: Thank you, Chairman. Councillor Stockdale, I could not agree with you more that tourism plays an integral part to the economy of our county. Your colleagues will have heard me say that on many occasions in the last two years as the Cabinet Member for Regeneration.

What I will say to you is you have the mechanisms through your Shadow Cabinet Member to make those representations, also through the public consultation process, and I can assure you those views will be taken into account.

CLLR STOCKDALE: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Question 4, Council Question to Councillor Mike Longden, Cabinet Member for Education from Councillor Alan Charles. Councillor Charles.

CLLR CHARLES: Thank you, Chair.

1. Was the Cabinet Member for Education consulted on the specific issue of the withdrawal of 73 school bus services that provide dedicated, subsidised transport for students living under the prescribed distance that would qualify them for free transport that was agreed by Cabinet on 29 March?

2. If he was consulted what was his consultation response?

3. If he wasn’t consulted what representations has he made on both the non-consultation and on the problems that the students using these services will now endure?

4. What impact does the Cabinet Member think the withdrawal of these bus services will have on the education opportunities of the students that are affected, and on their parents?

5. Is the Cabinet Member aware of what the cost will be to provide alternative arrangements that will be made for the ‘entitled passengers’ (that is those living over 3 miles, or in the case of under 8s or those who are entitled to a free school meal, more than 2 miles) and which budget will these costs come from?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Longden.
CLLR LONGDEN: Thank you, Chairman. Five parts to the question, Alan. I will deal with them in order.

In relation to whether I was consulted on the specific issue of the withdrawal of the 73 services, well you know Alan as well as I do that as a Cabinet Member you are consulted about everything within your portfolio, so not unnaturally I have been consulted all the way along in relation to this issue. I was involved in making the decision on the 1 October last year to consult on a variety of proposals for change to public transport services and subsidies.

In relation to if I was consulted, well I have said I was consulted. What was my response? Well fundamentally I support the decision to address the substantial and longstanding inequality that is caused by providing around 2,200 under distance children in Derbyshire with subsidised school transport, a benefit that is not enjoyed, by my calculation, by around 90,000 students in Derbyshire with similar circumstances.

However, I am obviously fully aware of the consequences of withdrawing 73 bus services in April 2012. Despite consultation having already taken place in preparation of the Cabinet report on the 29 March, the Paper that went to Cabinet on that date stated “It will be necessary to consult with individual schools, students, parents, carers and any other interested parties in order to endeavour to find alternative arrangements for those pupils from April 2012.” It is clearly essential that we do explore avenues to attempt to find alternative arrangements for those pupils who currently use that service.

Councillor Western will recall I made a specific comment in the Cabinet meeting when the Paper was presented, that as the withdrawal of the service is not until April 2012 there was sufficient time for proper consultation to be undertaken to help overcome any issues that arise. That process is now being undertaken.

The third part of the question is if I was not consulted. Well I was, so that is not applicable.

Part 4 is “What impact does the Cabinet Member think the withdrawal of these bus services will have on the education opportunities of the students that are affected, and on their parents?” Well the likely impact on the educational opportunities for these particular children, who are under distance, will depend on two things: first of all the choice of those who will become responsible for their transport arrangements for travel to and from school, in other words the parents. That is in the legislation. Secondly, through the consultation that I have already mentioned whether any suitable alternative arrangements can be made to help replace any problems arising from terminating the 73 services. Until those two things are clarified, which will not be for some time, it is difficult for me to state whether there will be any, if any, adverse effect on the education of these particular students.

In relation to the parents specifically, well I refer to the legislation. Parents and carers remain responsible for arranging and paying for transport to school unless, as you have already quoted Alan, the school is over two miles for children under 8 and over three miles for children over 8 years of age or where the bus pick up point is over a mile from their home.

Dealing with part 5, the final part of your question: “Is the Cabinet Member aware of what the cost will be to provide alternative arrangements that will be made for the ‘entitled passengers’… and which budget will these costs come from?”

Well for those students entitled to free transport at the moment, as you know CAYA
already contributes towards that cost, has a responsibility for that cost. After April 2012 alternative transport arrangements will have to be made for those entitled students, that is accepted. Just exactly what that is going to be and consequently how much that is going to cost will depend on the outcome of the consultation and what we put in place as a structure for the future after April 2012, or whatever structure is put in place. In relation to where those costs come from, well the answer is for entitled students they will continue to come from CAYA’s Home to School transport budget.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Charles, would you like to ask a supplementary question?

CLLR CHARLES: Yes, I would Chair, thank you.

I totally agree with you that the responsibility for getting children to school if they live underneath, if you use the three mile, for secondary age children is with parents and carers. However, I think you will agree that parents and carers take a decision on where they want to send their children to school based on the information they have at that time and at that time when they will have decided to send their children to School A or B that transport network was in place.

Now in the consultation document that went out my recollection and understanding is, and I hope you will correct us on this if we are wrong, only consulted on increasing the fares for those children and reducing the subsidy, it did not consult on actually removing the services, so on that part that was not within the consultation that people were asked to respond on. You are aware, because you will have had many letters about this, that this is causing a great deal of difficulty for a lot of people.

The point in question 5 is if the costs are not known of providing the alternative transport for those entitled children then the decision has been taken without being properly costed, without knowing what those costs are going to be, because you may well find to transport the few children who are entitled to a free pass to school, transport wise, is going to cost as much as it is saving in withdrawing that subsidy.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Longden.

CLLR LONGDEN: In terms of correspondence, while you mention it, interestingly the correspondence from parents and generally from the schools affected has been actually very constructive and very helpful. That is the first thing to say.

The second thing is in terms of overall cost of this issue we are talking about a million pounds, a lot of money for very few students. Whatever consultation went on before I can assure you that the consultation that is now taking place, and will continue, will take account of all the issues that arise on the termination of these services and we will try and help those responsible to overcome them.

THE CHAIRMAN: Question 5, question to Councillor Mike Longden, Cabinet Member for Education from Councillor Alan Charles. Councillor Charles.

CLLR CHARLES: Thank you, Chair.

Whilst it is a complicated situation this year in relation to education budgets due to the alignment of many Standards Funds and Grants into the Dedicated
Schools Grant (DSG), can the Cabinet Member for Education tell me:

1. What is the ‘cash’ shortfall of the total Derbyshire DSG for 2011/12 compared to 2010/11?

2. What figure has been calculated to meet the inflationary costs that schools will have to meet this financial year?

3. How much has the Cabinet Member calculated the Government’s recent decision to change the way Standards Funds Grants are paid will cost Derbyshire’s schools?

CLLR LONGDEN: Chairman, only three parts this time.

CLLR CHARLES: I will try harder next time!

CLLR LONGDEN: No, please.

First of all what is the cash shortfall in total for Derbyshire for 2011 compared with the previous year? Well the Authority’s baseline funding, that is the DSG plus a range of former specific grants for the year 2010/11, last year was £499.04 million. The equivalent DSG for 2011/12, the year we are now in, is currently estimated, and to be confirmed next month, at a figure of £492.96 million. If that estimate of this current year is correct then the year on year cash reduction, which is the question you are asking, is £6.08 million which represents around a 1.2 reduction year on year.

Explaining this gap two broad issues. First of all a large amount of that shortfall, that gap of £6 million is because of the perceived reduction, the estimated reduction in the number of pupils of around 1,000 in the county next year in 2011/12, each of which would have attracted £4,765 per pupil, so that equates to a loss of around £4.6 million on reduced pupil numbers. The balance of around £1.5 million is due to a change in the methodology of the funding for Early Years flexible entitlement, so the figure, the gap is £6.08 million.

Second part of the question: “What figure has been calculated to meet the inflationary costs that schools will have to meet this financial year?” The anticipated inflationary element relating to the school based funding will equate to around £5.5 million, which represents around 1.1% of their DSG settlement, which as I have already said is £492 million for 2011/12. That inflationary element is driven by first of all the third year of a three year teachers’ pay award, an element of the increase in National Insurance, employers’ National Insurance, and a few other non-pay related elements. Clearly the teachers’ pay element has a substantial impact because the school based budgets contain over 70% in relation to teachers’ pay.

As you know this matter of inflation proofing or lack of inflation proofing in the school based budgets was an issue that we heard debates on in the school forum and it was agreed in that forum against a backcloth of reduced DSG generally that schools should absorb this inflation hit at a local level by making their own savings and choices of how to spend their money during 2011/12.

I just mention that anecdotal evidence, what I picked up from area Heads at conferences, forums, is that individual settlements have been generally well received given the financial climate that we are operating in.
The final part of your question deals with the Standards Funds Grants, how much have I calculated the Government’s recent decision to change the way Standards Funds Grants are paid will cost Derbyshire’s schools? Well at this point in time there will be no loss.

The crux of this issue is that the DfE wrote to local authorities on the 22 March arguing that around 5% of our 2010/11 Standards Fund was in effect included in the DSG allocation for 2011/12. That represented around £2 million for Derbyshire. The Authority’s view is that the £2 million owed from 2010/11 should be paid separately and was not part of a consolidated 2011/12 settlement. That concern was also voiced nationally, particularly amongst the F40 Group, and representations were made to Ministers.

The latest information is that the DfE have considered the position and while advising that the allocation received in April will include allocation relating to 2010/11, they have also committed to repeat the exercise in 2012/13 and I think 2013/14, therefore the interpretation by the officers is that currently there will be no loss involved.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Charles, do you wish to ask a supplementary?

CLLR CHARLES: I do, yes. I am a bit confused by that last one because the information I have is there is a £2 million loss. Perhaps you are telling us that has changed now? It is certainly not the view of the F40 group. As far as they are concerned that loss still stands.

The point of the question is you have given us a figure of £6.08 million, which bears out with the figure I have, but of course on top of that there are other non-inflationary pressures this year that have to be found from the DSG which brings that shortfall up to £7.288 million and that is included in the minutes that we will look at later today. You have to add to that the £5.5 million which gives you around £12.3 million shortfall in cash this year for Derbyshire schools compared to last year.

Now it is a simple question I think: do you think David Cameron and Michael Gove are right to say that they are maintaining spending in education as it was under the previous Government?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Longden.

CLLR LONGDEN: Thank you, Chair. In terms of what David Cameron and Michael Gove say, in relation to amount per pupil that cash payment is the same as year on year, and in addition to that there is a £430 premium, pupil premium that is in addition to that.

Your figures are correct that in relation to what we discussed in the school forum there are some more pressures that were added to the £6.08 million gap in the DSG, but as you recall the forum accepted a number of initiatives to cover that amount.

In relation to the inflationary amounts, the £5.5 million, the greater majority of that is in relation to a three year teachers’ settlement that was made, as it says, three years ago, but sits very uncomfortably with the times we have financially paying for the teachers’ award. Nevertheless we were committed to it, it was the last year of a three year award, we are committed to it. I think also it was right that the forum chose to decide that the schools should deal with that inflationary pressure at a local level. I hope that answers your question.

In relation to what I said in regards to the Standards Fund I will provide you with more
THE CHAIRMAN: Question 6, Council Question to Councillor Charles Jones, Cabinet Member for Adult Care from Councillor Dave Allen. Councillor Allen.

CLLR ALLEN: Thank you, Chair.

The regrettable decision by your Government not to fund the PFI credits to develop the Community Care Centres will potentially lead to a decline in the services for people with dementia. What action do you intend to take?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Jones.

CLLR JONES: Thank you, Chair.

May I say at the outset it is very disappointing that we were not given the PFI credits which would have supported the development of a further six Community and Care Centres in Derbyshire.

With regard to the specific question from Councillor Allen I would refer him back to the outline business case which we submitted to the Department of Health back in April 2010 where we set out our strategy for the provision of specialist care and support for people with dementia. This involved appropriate service models, fit for purpose buildings and well trained competent staff to deliver the service model in a range of settings. The business case also refers to a “parallel development” of delivering 600 units of Extra Care housing across Derbyshire.

Our business case fully anticipated the revised National Dementia Strategy and our Joint Commissioning Strategy for people with dementia, signed off by what was then the Health and Well Being Partnership, incorporates a comprehensive dementia pathway consistent with the national strategy. We were one of the first areas to sign off a customised pathway which reflects our local needs.

Within the pathway there is a strong focus on the development of a social model of dementia which is being shaped in our new Staveley Centre which will be extended into the new centre in Swadlincote. This involves a reduction in reliance on anti-psychotic drugs and the development of personal centred care which engages with each individual’s personality. This also involves extensive training which is ongoing at our new Staveley Centre and which is applied elsewhere around the new service model.

The model which we are developing will also be used to commission care in the independent sector and we, along with our partners in the PCT, should be submitting a research proposal for the Department of Health funding, focused on the development of a social model for dementia care in the rural community.

During the next two months we shall be appraising our options for taking forward our strategy for dementia support and care, including how we build on to the centres at Staveley and Swadlincote. Our current dialogue with potential developers for Extra Care housing will be an important element in that service review.

Having an appropriate range of accommodation and care facilities is an important element in our strategy for the ageing population, a significant number of whom are likely to develop dementia. The service model and competent staff are equally, if not more important,
and I am determined that we should continue to be at the forefront of developing these for the coming period.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Allen, would you like to ask a supplementary?

CLLR ALLEN: To add to it. I do not disagree with a lot of what was said, I think that is positive. We have not got a very clear picture of what will happen in the future, but certainly as regards Extra Care then I think Councillor Jones knows I have been in argument and have been very supportive of the development of that facility but it still leaves a sadness, and I think it is accepted the schemes in their current form cannot go ahead at this present time. I regret that and I think that is felt by everybody. I understand from Councillor Jones that is probably similar to how he feels. Thank you, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Question 7 – very popular today Mike – to Councillor Mike Longden, Cabinet Member for Education from Councillor Clive Moesby. Clive.

CLLR MOESBY: Yes, thank you, Chair.

1. In light of the Cabinet decision of 29 March 2011 to install four temporary classrooms on the Tibshelf School site, will there now be a lower priority given to the rebuilding of the new Tibshelf School?

2. Would the Cabinet Member for Education give me an update as to where this Authority is with the proposed plans to build the new Tibshelf School and is he still confident that the project will go ahead?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Longden.

CLLR LONGDEN: Thank you, Chairman. Thank you Clive for your question. I know as the Council’s representative in the Tibshelf community how important the school and the proposals are to you and the community.

Let me say somewhat belatedly congratulations to the school on a recent Ofsted report recognising the good work that is going on at Tibshelf in circumstances that the inspectors recognise as being very very difficult.

Turning to your specific question. To answer the first part of your question I will repeat my reply to Councillor Western’s identical question to me at Cabinet on 29 March when I presented the first part of my capital programme for approval. What I said then was that the decision to install four temporary classrooms on the Tibshelf site is to address an immediate problem arising from the imminent closure of the North Wingfield Deincourt School annexe. That decision does not lower the priority given to the building of a new school at Tibshelf.

With regard to the second part of your question, I can inform you that meaningful discussion is ongoing and I remain confident that a project will go ahead.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Moesby.

CLLR MOESBY: Yes, just a bit of a supplementary. As we were in Cabinet yesterday morning we did have a presentation from SCAPE I think it was at the end of the day. I particularly noticed that you did ask them a question as regards secondary school buildings and the way they could be constructed, the costs and the timescales of that. Previously I have
always asked you the question: “Have you had a Plan B Mike?” The answer has been “No Plan B”. I just wondered is this a Plan B that you might now be looking at?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Longden.

CLLR LONGDEN: No Clive, there is no Plan B, there is only Plan A. SCAPE was interesting. I asked the question in relation to Tibshelf in case you thought I did not show an interest for Tibshelf, but there are other discussions going on and other options being looked at. Thank you, John.


CLLR STEVENSON: Thank you, Chair. I hope I get a better response.

Having asked questions previously regarding a member of the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Shadow Board, what democratic process is this Council putting in place to appoint a Derbyshire representative to the full Board of the Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire Local Enterprise Partnership?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewer.

CLLR LEWER: Thank you, Chairman. Having answered questions previously on this subject I can only add it is the LEP Board’s responsibility and not a process of this Council. The democratic process has been followed in that a democratically elected Government asked a democratically elected upper tier Council to work with businesses to set up LEPs, which we have done, and that all four democratically elected upper tier Council Leaders for the D2N2 area sit on that Board.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Stevenson, would you like a supplementary?

CLLR STEVENSON: Yes, I think I would like to make some comment, Chair, and possibly a question. (Laughter) There might be one or two questions, let us face the issue.

It seems to me, and people on this side of the Chamber, that the Derbyshire/Notts LEPs are an organisation being run something like a carry on film. We feel that nothing is being done to regenerate growth in Derbyshire other than having twice met the Board at the last shadow Board meeting decided to become a full Board themselves. That is regeneration but it is only regeneration for themselves.

Again I ask what democratically accountable process was gone through to select these business representatives? The Nolan principle, which I asked previously, how do LEPs report back to this particular Council? The Manchester LEP positions, business reps were advertised and they had to apply for those positions. This is openness and it is transparency. There is no scope in the Notts/Derby LEPs to integrate colleagues as well from District level which would give a solid foundation in moving forward collectively on regeneration. In fact Bolsover, North East Derbyshire District Council and Chesterfield have felt fit to join the Sheffield City Region Board alongside four other South Yorkshire reps. This has given them part of the Board and a say. Whether they get anything from it they have input into it to regenerate those particular areas.

Everyone in this country, and in Derbyshire in particular, are being penalised for bailing
out the banks. That caused this mess. Having austerity measures pronounced by a coalition Government…

THE CHAIRMAN: Have you got a question, Councillor Stevenson?

CLLR STEVENSON: …and we are devoid of growth.

We have in Derbyshire great potential with industrial sites, a Labour market wanting to work and all we are getting here is stagnation. What we want on these benches is growth and everyone working together to get the best for Derbyshire people. Derbyshire should be the central hope of Britain for employment and growth which is the only way forward…

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Stevenson, you are only allowed one supplementary question. ( Interruption in the Chamber)

CLLR STEVENSON: Can you on the LEPs Board get Derbyshire to be stated or do we just carry on regardless?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewer.

CLLR LEWER: Thank you, Chairman. The punch line took a while to arrive but I am glad it did in the end.

I do welcome Councillor Stevenson’s interest in the LEP but I have to say to him I do think the processes that have been followed have been much more open than he seems to think and we are just going to have to disagree about whether they are sufficiently democratic or not. I maintain that they are and I stand by them. The democracy, the mandate comes from the Councils that were given the responsibility for setting the LEPs up and if those running the Council are different in two or six or ten years’ time then they can go about it in a different way.

LEP minutes and agendas are to be circulated to all members of the Derbyshire Economic Partnership upon which all District Councils, all District Councils sit, together with the voluntary sector, colleges, and a good range of private business figures as well. They are going to see LEP papers before LEP meetings take place and they will be able to fill in views. I will be present at those meetings, the Duke of Devonshire will be present, Professor Coyne will be present, Richard Horsley will be present, all four of whom sit on the LEP. All LEP Board members have agreed to abide by Nolan principles and now that those arrangements to fully involve partners are in place the Board has moved to that fuller status.

You asked me specifically about how those can be accessible to you and to other elected members. DEP minutes, which will contain LEP minutes, will be available to all elected members of this Council either on request or as part of the background Derbyshire Partnership Forum papers that periodically come to Cabinet.

All the relevant partners are in place. The work that we are doing continues. We are aware of the financial constraints that we now have to operate under. I do not want to particularly go into why, it may come up later, but you know what that situation is. It is my view that we are well placed and well structured and most neutral and objective observers nationally feel that is the case as well. (Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: Question 9, Council questions to Councillor Andrew Lewer,

CLLR DIXON: Actually, Chair, they are questions on two separate issues. It actually says “questions”.

THE CHAIRMAN: I clearly stated before the beginning of the questions that they would only be treated as one question.

CLLR DIXON: Okay Chair. Well placed and well structured.

1. Would the Leader of the Council like to explain how it was decided that the former Boots’ site in Nottingham would be the nominated Enterprise Zone for the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership rather than the Markham Vale site?

2. Given that only one Regional Growth Fund bid out of 38 from the area covered by the Derbyshire/Nottinghamshire LEP was successful, and that was in Nottingham City, does the Leader think that the self-acclaimed “lean and mean” structure of the LEP is delivering for the people of Derbyshire?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewer.

CLLR LEWER: Thank you, Chairman.

The former Boots’ site was decided upon by Government, principally the Treasury, and I understand that core cities were chosen as the basis for the sites nominated for the first round. No approach was made to the LEPs for this first round of enterprise zones. Once the decision to choose the Boots’ site was announced all the partner areas in the D2N2 LEP expressed their satisfaction that the area, unlike many other LEP areas, did at least receive an enterprise zone and that is called ‘working in partnership’.

Invitations for the second round of enterprise zones have now opened and the D2N2 LEP has unanimously endorsed Markham Vale as its preferred choice having already given its wholehearted endorsement in the first round of RGF, strongly backed, of course, by us at DCC and will do so I am sure in future.

The first round of RGF decisions has left large areas of the country without many, or in some cases any funding awards and that includes D2N2. Naturally that is a disappointment but it is worth remembering that RGF has had much less money than RDAs had and there will be quite significantly different political views as to why that is, although I am clear why it is. This was just the first round of the RGF, early days, with a second round now open and with a specific reference in that round to more of a role for LEPs. LEPs are not RDAs, those days are over, but within the new structures we have the D2N2 LEP is well structured and it is well placed for the challenges ahead.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Dixon, would you like to ask a supplementary on that question?

CLLR DIXON: Yes, thank you. I think in the case of the enterprise zones we have been stitched up both by Nottinghamshire and your own Conservative Government because when the enterprise zones were announced 21 were announced for England.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is this a question or a statement?
CLLR DIXON: Four out of the eleven LEPs were told where the enterprise zone should be. Sheffield City Region can choose, with its partners, where the LEP can be. My understanding is if you read the guidance from BIZ there is only going to be one enterprise zone per LEP. We are fortunate in the fact that Bolsover, North East Derbyshire and Chesterfield were wise enough to join the Sheffield LEP so at least we have a chance.

I want to know from the Chair, given that we have lost our chance of enterprise zones because it was decided before the LEP even did anything, are you actually doing anything about the enterprise zones because you have met in March and you are not meeting till June? You have a big problem in Derbyshire.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewer.

CLLR LEWER: Thank you, Chairman. It was all going so well, wasn’t it! Some intelligent questions and some intelligent answers. It is unfortunate the question period has to end with that sort of performance.

CLLR DIXON: Yes, because you would not let me ask a question.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Dixon, Councillor Lewer is speaking.

CLLR LEWER: The LEP is a partnership and the attitudes displayed by members opposite indicate why they are not very good at partnerships. (Applause) They indicate why when it requires working together having a common cause, trying to do things together, having an enterprise zone, getting an endorsement for an enterprise zone at our side it is all “No, this is mine, that is yours” and it can’t possibly work. This idea that if Bolsover had its own little LEP with David Cameron coming in and dropping million pound golden eggs on it everything would be all right just does not wash. Neither does it wash that only certain members feel they can speak effectively for Markham Vale. It is a specific responsibility of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration. Councillor Spencer has put an immense amount of effort into it, as I am sure Councillor Parkinson will as well. I have just agreed in fact a new programme of works for the Markham Vale site that will put lighting and road layouts in. We are very committed to Markham Vale both through LEP structures and through our in-house provision because we believe that Markham Vale can fly and be successful and does not for the rest of time have to rely on Government handouts. We will try hard in every effort to get enterprise zone status for Markham Vale but it is only one way of promoting the site. We will try for the second round of RGF funding for Markham Vale but it is only one way of taking the site forward. We have a lot of time for Markham Vale, we have invested heavily in it, we will continue to be so.

It is not the case that whoever is the most theatrical person within this Council cares the most about one particular area or another. Really those sort of style of performances, to use the term loosely, might play well to some members of the Labour Group but it does not do justice to Markham Vale and it does not do justice to the fact that, despite perhaps what you would have liked for us to turn our back on it and mothball it because it is not “in our area” in your terms, we think it is because our area is Derbyshire and we are going to deliver for it. (Applause)

8 QUESTIONS ON THE FUNCTIONS OF DERBYSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY AND DERBYSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

THE CHAIRMAN: Agenda Item 8, questions on the function of Derbyshire Police
Authority and Derbyshire Fire Authority. None were received.

9 COUNCIL MINUTES

THE CHAIRMAN: Item 9, Council minutes. I would like to move that the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 2 February 2011 be approved as a correct record.

CLLR JACKSON: I will second that, Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. These are for accuracy only. Page 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39. That is it.

10 CABINET

THE CHAIRMAN: Item 10 on the agenda is Cabinet reports for Cabinet meetings held on the 25 January, the 15 February, the 7 and 29 March and the 11 April received on a separate sheet.

CLLR LEWER: I will move those, Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

CLLR SPENCER: I second, Chair.


28/11 PUBLIC HEALTH WHITE PAPER

CLLR ALLEN: 8 Chair, if I could ask a question. I know the comment was that the proposal was “strongly welcomed” and I presume that is mainly to do with public health coming to the County Council, but it also makes note in item (3) that the consultation on the commissioning routes is also. This was back in January and I am going to mention this later in the resolution I have so I will not go into that, but I wonder if you have any different views on that? The point I am going to raise on this is about the health and wellbeing forged. I wonder if anybody can tell me what is the current position on this and has the make-up been agreed or whether this is going forward? Thank you, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewer.

CLLR LEWER: Thank you, Chairman. The make-up of the Health and Wellbeing Board will be the subject of some discussion at a workshop session being held tomorrow and then will be the subject of further detailed discussions in the June Derbyshire Partnership Forum and has already been dialogue with GPs, the PCT and our District and Borough Council partners. Thank you.


CLLR FLITTER: Yes Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Flitter.
CONSULTATION ON COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES

CLLR FLITTER: If I could just ask, Chair, at the budget meeting I did ask, and share my concern, on the eligibility of social care personal budgets. I know it is early days yet but I wonder whether any assessment has been made as to how many people have been affected by the change of this criteria, if not when we shall see that, and how are we going to deal with these unfortunate people who are no longer going to fall within our remit?

CLLR ALLEN: Chair, it is actually on page 10. Will you allow me to ask the question on page 10 which also relates to the same point?

THE CHAIRMAN: You want to make the same point and then…

CLLR ALLEN: It is in order, Chair. I was going to mention on page 10 where it talks about charging for the service. I recently attended a meeting at Bolsover Woodland, a project which is very well supported and liked. It is people with learning difficulties who do work. They were very concerned at that time they would be charged for attending that service. I understand that has been resolved to a certain extent and that they won’t be, other similar projects around the county will not be charged, but I was also in contact with quite a few people who go to Day Centres. Their feeling is for what they receive they are not happy about being charged this extra money. I wonder if this is an issue which the Cabinet member is aware of and is taking any action along those lines to try and alleviate some of the difficulty that people are finding with that? Thank you, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Jones.

CLLR JONES: Thank you. The answer to the question from Councillor Flitter is no, at the moment, nobody is having a problem.

The first part of your question, David, as you said it has been resolved, there is not a problem. We now know that they are having separate assessments and it is part of training. The other part is that we are aware, we are in discussion, we have had comments. It is ongoing for an assessment period but they will be able, with their personal budgets, to purchase their own provision as we roll out the new centres.


WILLINGTON COUNTRYSIDE CAR PARK

CLLR LUCAS: Thank you, Chair. It is 52/11 on the Willington Car Park. At the Scrutiny Sub-Committee meetings that we had when we reviewed the car parking provision some, not all, were affected by our Countryside Service’s car parks. I was extremely supportive in the way it was moving forward and what I feel are reasonable charges being made for people to park securely in those allotted areas.

I am still very concerned, though, regarding the Willington Countryside car park because we had quite a lengthy discussion at one or two meetings, as Councillor Twigg can verify regarding this, because we did see it as being a little bit different to the others by the nature of the people who were using it for other transport purposes.

The reason given here is there would be a fear people would not use the car park if the
charges were made, that they would park on-street. It is not a reason I can accept. I know it is a sensitive issue in South Derbyshire, particularly at this moment in time, but I do feel that we have available to us now adequate methods of not forcing, but people who want to use that car park ensuring they do so we do not clutter up the neighbouring streets with vehicles who are, let us say, a little bit too cautious in wanting to put their hand in their pocket and park where they have got to pay a bob or two. If you come from my neck of the woods it is known as being “tight”.

I honestly feel, Chair, that this one should be looked at again because whilst we without hesitation can make charges at our countryside car parking provisions for many people throughout Derbyshire this one we did look at sensitively, we did look at and feel these charges should be made. I honestly feel, Chair, that this one should be revisited for a car parking charge provision at the Willington Countryside car park. Thank you, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Spencer.

CLLR SPENCER: Thank you, Chairman. Well it is now five minutes since I have been in place, Brian, so I will do my best to answer the question.

CLLR LUCAS: That is long enough.

CLLR SPENCER: It is long enough.

I was not privy to the conversations that took place at Scrutiny so I cannot possibly comment on the conclusions that you came up with in your delivery just, but what I can say is I do consider this particular site to be a unique site in many ways, as you have already rightly said, and there are issues with regard to the National Rail network, there are issues with regard to the local business who may be affected by any actions this Council chooses to take.

It is my understanding, and it was agreed in the report, that this report would be reviewed annually. My view is that that is sufficient enough to overcome the concerns you may or may not have. I believe it is quite right that the Council, the following decision has been made supporting the rail infrastructure and the threat of possible removal of that service to continue in the way we have moving forward. It will be reviewed in twelve months’ time and obviously you will have your chance to have a say at that moment in time.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 16.

54/11  HOLIDAY LODGE FOR DISABLED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE – LEA GREEN

CLLR ROGERS: Yes Mr Chairman, 54/11. We welcome the progress but sadly strongly regret the missed opportunity by the previous Labour administration to provide respite care for parents with autistic children.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewis.

CLLR LEWIS: Thank you. Sorry, I missed the first part of your question?

CLLR ROGERS: We welcome the progress but strongly regret the missed opportunity by the previous Labour administration to provide respite care for parents with autistic children. The reason why I did not go on any further is because the question is quite obvious: hopefully
you will actually take the matter on and overcome the lack of consideration that was shown by the previous administration.

CLLR LEWIS: Thank you very much indeed for those kind comments. Yes, we will be doing some work around that very issue.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Western.

CLLR WESTERN: A question on that same minute, 54/11, about holiday lodge provision at Lea Green. Would the Cabinet member like to confirm that the money for that project was approved during the Labour administration’s term of office so that Councillor Rogers should be congratulating us for that? Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewis…

CLLR ROGERS: Mr Chairman, could I just say it is not a question of the money it is the way it is used. (Interruption)

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewis.

CLLR LEWIS: That may be the case, Councillor Western, but his comment remains valid.


CLLR LUCAS: Yes Chair, on the same minute, could I just ask for some clarification really from the Liberal Democrat member, mainly should I say from their Leader, because in looking at reports about how much time he spends briefing his members he is not doing a very good job.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think these minutes are Cabinet minutes and they are for Cabinet members to comment on. 18.

CLLR FLITTER: Sorry Chair, 17, I was wanting to come in. I was still on page 17.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Flitter.

56/11 COUNTY COUNCIL POLICY FOR PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

CLLR FLITTER: I am just dismissing the last comments as political rhetoric.

On 56/11, County Council Policy for Physical Intervention, we have here a duty of care and it is a very important document in my view. I just wondered since the adoption of this policy have we actually circulated this policy to members that need this, members of staff that need this, and have any training and briefing sessions been scheduled in to make people aware? What we do not want to see is a policy of this nature put in a back drawer and forgotten. It is a living document and it does need to be out there in the community.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Longden.

CLLR LONGDEN: Thank you, Chair. Of course I endorse Steve’s comments that this was essential. It consolidates individual policies around the Council into one overarching
policy that promotes a consistent approach.

In relation to whether we have now circulated that policy I cannot answer that but we will provide you with an answer after the meeting.

In relation to training, the need for training and the commitment to training that is contained in the report. Whether it has actually commenced yet I do not know but again I will find out.


Cabinet papers for the 29 March, number 30, 31.

CLLR LUCAS: Chair, on page 31 I take it when we get further on in the agenda regarding Departmental Service Plans we will have the opportunity to debate them more fully?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, that is quite correct.

CLLR LUCAS: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: 32, 33.

96/11  CHANGING THE WAY DERBYSHIRE WORKS ACCOMMODATION PROJECT

CLLR TAYLOR: Chair, 96/11, Changing The Way Derbyshire Works Accommodation Project. I very much welcome the progress that has been made on this accommodation project. It has the potential to save a very great deal of money. I hope it proceeds as fast as possible. It is just a pity it did not happen a great deal sooner, it seems to me.

However, it does refer to the basis being “9 clusters”. Reading this document it seems to refer to “10 clusters”. It may be there is an extra comma that has crept in or an “and” but if clarification could be provided that would be helpful?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Harrison.

CLLR HARRISON: First of all, Chairman, thank you very much Barrie for those kind compliments about the progress we are making. Whether it is nine or ten I cannot count these up quickly enough to give you a prompt answer.

THE CHAIRMAN: 34, 35, 36, 37, 38.

105/11  DERBYSHIRE SECOND HOMES COUNCIL TAX

CLLR ROGERS: Yes, Mr Chairman, 105/11. We support the second homes’ programme of investment but feel that legislation on second homes should be changed. Anyone acquiring a home secondary to the one they live in should be required to apply to the Local Planning Authority for change of use because obviously it is a change of use from what it was originally granted for. These homes were granted planning permission because they were meant to be homes 52 weeks of the year. I would hope that the present administration would think seriously about applying to the Government to enable us to change the legislation?
THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Harrison.

CLLR HARRISON: I agree with the underlying statement that you have made and we will certainly look into it further.

THE CHAIRMAN: 39.

CLLR STONE: Chair, I wonder if you would let me quickly, before I ask a question of Councillor Longden, just say a thank you to Chris Jackson and his staff in his previous post because when we had the unfortunate accident at Barrow Hill recently where a TM bus went under a low bridge, his staff responded very quickly and gave up-to-date bulletins. The staff were very very good in the way they responded. Thank you very much for that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your comments.

CLLR STONE: I speak as an ex-St Mary’s pupil as well.

106/11 REVIEW OF SUPPORTED BUS NETWORK AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT SUBSIDY

Chair, earlier on when we were on questions from Councillor Charles, when Mike Longden answered the questions about school buses – I am on Minute 106/11 – he said he would take into consideration all issues.

I wonder if I could quickly ask him if some of these issues would be where there are no pavements; where there are canals to walk over; where there are railway bridges; where there are main trunk roads to cross; where there is a low private car usage, and where there is limited or no bus transport, will these be some of the issues he will take into consideration? Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Longden.

CLLR LONGDEN: Thank you, Chair. Well yes, absolutely right. Just taking as an example the first few you mentioned, canals, dangerous roads, they are dealt with under the legislation by the dangerous routes’ process so if some of these routes are deemed to be dangerous then it would either be that free transport would be arranged or we would deal with the dangerous element of the route that was identified, so yes, of course all those issues will be taken into account.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 40, 41.

CLLR LUCAS: Page 39. I know it is difficult for you to look to the left from a Right Wing Party but we are over here. Thank you, Chair.

106/11 Review of Supported Bus Network and Public Transport Subsidy. The document that was presented at Cabinet was a detailed document but its details are within there and one of the questions has already been asked by the Liberal Democrat on safety issues, this is to Simon. When you go through this document, and particularly the questionnaire as well, it makes more questions, it makes more questions with the responses that have come forward and how much we are going to be taking notice of that, or how little notice has been taken of that by going through with the recommendations and bringing in what is stated in that document that
will have an effect on a huge number of people, and as it has been rightly identified, school children as well.

On page 7 of the report it says: “Respondents to the consultation are not necessarily representative of the Derbyshire population as a whole” and I will carry that through because it did say further on that people who let us say live in smaller areas, in villages, smaller towns and whatever where there will be an impact, that will have a different effect to people in larger towns where they have say regular non-subsidised bus services.

Really we are going to end up with an Authority now of a two tier service system for public transport. The areas that are mainly done by the bus companies – and done for profit – they will run ordinarily, and those that are being removed because of the bus subsidy that is being removed from Derbyshire County Council, they are being removed because we can’t afford it, as it states in here.

There is another impact to that as well because unless the commercial routes (which run to about 80% of bus services within Derbyshire) are profitable, there will be more removed. I think they are getting the message now it is really a waste of time coming to Derbyshire for any further subsidies because it ain’t going to be there. There are going to be a number of areas, number of communities now that are going to be without a bus service at particular times.

I will agree that some of the services in here with absolute minimal patronage needed to be examined and examined closely but within that also you have to examine the impact as to what that will mean in those communities to the schools and to the children. I am pleased to hear that the ongoing process for schools, a full consultation with schools/governors/parents is going to take place, but I fear at the end of the day what is written in this document will happen anyway purely led by finance.

The services that Derbyshire people have been used to they will now find it extremely difficult. It will also be putting more vehicles on the road when they have to use them. I am talking now collectively over the two areas that has been affected. There will be more vehicles on the road, more CO2 emissions, more cost to the people in some of these areas who cannot afford more to use their car for particular journeys they were being used on a bus, and so whilst now Councillor Spencer has indicated on the previous one for a review on impact, this should also be part of a review lock stock and barrel on impact for these subsidised routes. You do not have to wait twelve months to find out what impact that is going to have in these communities.

It is really a sad day for a number of these routes, a number of these communities and a number of these school children who will be affected in future because of this document. I will finish off saying the determination of the outcome of this was made the minute the figures were put forward. Thank you, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Western, did you want to ask something along the same lines?

CLLR WESTERN: It is the same minute, Chair, 106/11. It sort of picks up where Brian left off really about the process. I would like to ask this particularly in relation to young people. When this was being presented before it went out to consultation in relation to the school bus services the consultation was framed around reducing the subsidy which Mike referred to as being about £1 million and saying we could not sustain that, that is fine, but it was around reducing the level of subsidy to nothing more than 50% of its current level. That was to be done by charging increased fares to the children who were using those buses that
were not eligible to a free ride, if you like. The consultation went out on the basis of we would be looking to increase the fares for children on those buses, not that we would be taking those buses out of commission. I think the consultation seems to be flawed and the responses that came in were around increased fares rather than there is no bus at all. There is an issue there that needs to be looked back on. I am concerned about the cumulative effect on young people because there are a large number of young people who will be affected if these buses are withdrawn. We have also got a reduction in the subsidy. There is a question coming, if you just wait a minute…

CLLR CHARLES: This is about debate not questions.

CLLR WESTERN: It is about democracy.

CLLR CHARLES: No, it is not about questions it is about debate, constitution right.

CLLR WESTERN: There is a reduction in the b_line subsidy which again impacts on young people, that on top of the removal of the Education Maintenance Allowance that has already happened. Has anything been done to investigate what the cumulative impact on that will be in terms of young people staying on at school and going to college? I think we will find in years to come that this saving here has had a detrimental effect on a lot of young people’s futures. We will see young people leaving school because they cannot afford transport to get there. There is not the job market there and I just worry very much about the future of young people and I wonder if that has been taken into account?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Spencer.

CLLR SPENCER: Well Chairman, you can safely say that is quite a comprehensive question that has taken probably 15 minutes to deliver. I have the greatest respect Brian for you. I will say this: you suggest this Authority should be addressing this issue with a level of common sense, which I believe this particular proposal does.

One of the questions that has been asked, and I will try and pick them all up as I go along, was which section of the community is going to be affected. Well it is inevitable that young and old will be affected more than the other sectors in our community because they are the prevalent bus users within our county, as you full know.

I will also say that with regard to the EMA situation a full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out, an extensive Equality Impact Assessment on this proposal which did take into account the EMA which is actually mentioned in the report. Don’t ask me what page it is on, but it is in there because I have read it.

What we also need to take into account is the purpose of this process. One thing this process will do is it seeks to maintain the commercial bus routes by making sure they continue to be competitive and commercially viable. It prioritises essential services and everyday facilities and it takes into account not to adversely affect purely one section of our community.

It has been a difficult decision, it has been well debated, and there has been extensive consultation in this process. Councillor Longden has already pointed out to you with regard to the - and you will have to forgive me for darting around here because this is a comprehensive report that covers many sectors and school travel is one of them - Councillor Longden has already pointed out there are just over 2,000 young people affected by these proposals out of a school population of over 100,000 people. I would say to you as a Labour Party I have to
question whether you would accept the inequalities of delivering a service to 2% of our young people and not to 100% of our young people? That is a question for you to consider moving forward.

We as an Authority find ourselves in this position as a consequence of – and you are going to have it again like you will get it at every full Council meeting – the incompetent behaviour of a Labour Government over 13 years (*interruption*) I actually enjoy the challenge of you asking me questions on comprehensive issues that have been damaged by proposals in the way in which the finances of this country have been managed over a 13 year period.

We as an Authority have a responsibility to deliver a balanced budget. This goes a small way to the £94 million worth of savings this Authority has to make as a consequence of your mismanagement of the national finances. I am not going to sit down. You don’t like it any more. I don’t like listening to you, you can listen to me now and I will stand here all day.

Councillor Lucas, I have the greatest respect for you and I believe you approach these things in a consistent way using a measure of common sense which you have traditionally done in the past, but in this particular instance I believe every effort has been made to consult widely and fully and will continue to do so until April 2012 when all the schools, all the parents will be consulted on the way forward and the provision in the future. Thank you, Chairman.

CLLR LUCAS: Chairman, point of order…

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Wilcox asked a question earlier and I could not understand what he said.

CLLR LUCAS: The Cabinet member did ask me a question about the Minority Group and I would like to answer. He did ask me a pointed question.

Can I just say up until the change two years ago this Labour Authority for the past 28 years had a proud record of providing services for Minority Groups even under a Conservative Government that starved this Authority of funds. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Wilcox, I did not quite catch what you were saying earlier?

CLLR WILCOX: Chair, I was indicating I wanted to make a contribution on this particular item, which is why I was sticking my hand up, because I was conscious that the Cabinet member was going to reply.

I wonder, I have a couple of questions and of course I would just remind those who think that this is just about questions, it is the only opportunity members of the Council get to comment on any of the decisions taken by Cabinet and it is legitimate to ask questions but we are not solely, we are not solely…

THE CHAIRMAN: Could you ask the questions then please, Councillor Wilcox?

CLLR WILCOX: Can I just get a ruling from the officers here in terms of what this Council Chamber is about then we clarify it?

MR McELVANEY: Chairman, it is right to say we have gone beyond members’
questions, we are now into motions on at the moment Cabinet minutes. It is not strictly speaking just question and answer it is a debate on the motion that the minutes be received.

CLLR WILCOX: Thank you, Chair. First of all I have a question and that is because there was recognition in the last Council meeting we had that the Authority had been short changed by Government in relation to the funding of the free bus pass for over-60s. There was agreement that representations would be made as a consequence of that underfunding and my question is - although I realise Simon is new and may not be able to answer this one at the time - but my question is what has happened in relation to those representations? I make that point because part of the difficulty we are facing here is that the Authority has been short changed in terms of its transport budgets and that is the reason why perhaps we are having to take more severe measures than might otherwise have been necessary.

The second point I would make, and I am rather fortunate that Simon came in and made the point which he regularly makes in terms of “We are all here because of Gordon Brown.” I was in the Republic of Ireland recently and Gordon Brown was never the Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland but I hope we never get ourselves into the position that they are in. The situation is the same in Portugal and Gordon Brown was not there. The situation is the same in Greece and Gordon Brown was not there, and Spain is looking pretty ropey as well. If your analysis of the problem is that Gordon Brown is the problem you will never get the right answer. You have to look at what banks were doing and Gordon Brown’s failure, together with the failure of many other national leaders, was that he did not sufficiently regulate the banks in Britain nor did others in other places. That is one of the reasons we are in the situation we are in at the moment.

We on this side would argue there are two reasons why this is on the agenda as it is. First of all you have been short changed and, secondly, you will have heard it before but we will keep repeating it, you are going too far too fast. You are trying to pay the mortgage off over four years and you should be taking some time longer to do it. That is the context in which we are discussing these things and raising items.

Now there is a question around process. I think there are some defects in this particular process that has been followed, particularly in relation to what has been consulted on in terms of school journeys. Councillor Ellis and other colleagues from his Group and myself recently did a walk from a school in Chapel-en-le-Frith to Whaley Bridge and the issue was the three mile limit. I think it would be fair to say that by the time Councillor Ellis and his colleagues got to the end of that walk they were convinced they were on a dangerous route. However, given that I had been around for a while I did suggest that maybe it seemed a bit dangerous because you were on the A6 and traffic was flying past, but if you designated that a dangerous route then I would find you another 100 dangerous routes in Derbyshire where the circumstances were similar and which you would also have to designate as dangerous routes.

In that context we did not define the route was a dangerous route but what we did is we said “If parents have chosen to send their children to school on the basis that this bus is running and is running free, those who have taken that decision on that basis should sustain that for the period of their children remaining at that school. Thereon after the decision kicks in and from this point onwards for any new children going to that school there will be no free provision provided to them.”

Now that seems to me to be an appropriate principle to apply to the people who at the moment are faced with a loss of the subsidy to the journey which they take at the present time. There are 2,000 of them. I recognise that is quite a big number but what you have to recognise
is most of those 2,000 are travelling on those routes at subsidised rates because at some stage this Authority closed some schools. One of the things it said to people when it closed a school is “We recognise you are just under the three mile limit, normally free travel would not apply. We cannot apply free travel but we will give you a concession.” That is the context in which that happened. There is some inconsistency but an inconsistency born of a consistency which has all Party support when it has been proposed in this Council Chamber that in light of the closure of a particular school we would subsidise the travel for those students because we had closed the school in their locality. I would suggest that should be the principle that applies in relation to the proposal on school bus routes.

Finally, I just want to say I know what consultation exercises are like. I have a route in my electoral division which has more bus journeys on it per year than you can fit spectators into Wembley Stadium. It has 120,000 passenger movements. They are the same passengers on many occasions. There was received here the biggest petition of any petitions that came to the County Council, and when it comes here it is simply waved through. I have to say some of my constituents expressed some scepticism to me as to whether this really was a consultation exercise or whether in fact the decision had already been taken and the Council was just going through the motions. I think that is a legitimate concern given the lack of responsiveness which we have seen in relation to the consultation and what has been proposed here. (Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Spencer.

CLLR SPENCER: Yes, thank you Chairman.

CLLR CHARLES: Sorry, can I come in?

CLLR SPENCER: Yes, you can Councillor Charles.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, Councillor Charles.

CLLR CHARLES: I just want to support what Dave Wilcox has said there because there is a precedent for this. In answer to your question, Councillor Spencer, about the 2,000 people getting an advantage it is a similar analogy to children getting free transport to Faith Schools which we addressed and you have carried on with. It is the same principle there. The principle we applied then and which you upheld, and I am pleased you did, was that parents who had already taken the decision to send their children to that school on the basis they were going to get free transport, that would continue throughout their life at the school and the charges would apply for new children coming into the school, I think it is actually from this year when they start applying. So there is a precedent for that. I think it is a good precedent and I think that would be a fair way round this problem. Our issue on this was in the initial place this was not in the consultation document. Mike has said you are going to consult on it now, that is fine, but if parents have taken the decisions on the information they had at the time I think we should actually honour that. I think that is a good compromise and good way through it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Spencer.

CLLR SPENCER: Thank you, Chairman. Where do I start? We will start with David Cameron and Gordon Brown, Councillor Wilcox, if we may.

Yes, you are quite right to raise the issues of the economic demise many European countries find themselves in but this country has managed to retain its triple A star rating,
which is unusual under the circumstances, and even America are under the cosh in threats of losing that triple A star rating. That is as a consequence of the action this Government has taken with regard to the debts that we face. That is the first point.

As far as the banks are concerned, Gordon Brown and you and your Party talked on many occasions vociferously about the banks causing the dilemma their country faces. I will say this: there has been a lot of debate about bankers’ bonuses but when you take out a loan from a bank - as many of us have to do in the course of our life on this planet - when you take out a loan from a bank they lay down the criteria of that loan. Alistair Darling gave the banks a loan and that is the time they should have negotiated with the banks as far as the bankers’ bonuses were concerned and that did not happen, so you cannot say it is the Government’s fault of today that that is a consequence of the bankers’ bonus issue.

Can I come back to buses and public transport if I may. I challenged Councillor Lucas, and I thank him for his answer, but I will say this: it is my understanding in 2008/09 this Authority had to review the contracts for the provision of these routes. That review took place and increased the cost by approximately 23% to the tune of £700,000. Unfortunately for the administration of that time that was just prior to the election and they chose not to address it. If the administration of that time had chosen to address that situation we may well have found ourselves in a less difficult position than we find ourselves in today because it is my view that if this was going to be carried on legitimately in the way it should, that issue should have been addressed when the issue arose and not be left for three years when a new administration comes into place and has to tackle it. That is an issue in its own right and I raise it for Brian’s observation because I am sure in future months that debate will come up and it may come up later on today, I suspect.

All I can say to the Opposition members is we will take into account the views of the public, the Opposition, and anybody else who wishes to make representations throughout the consultation period up until April 2012. Those views will be taken seriously and given due consideration as far as dangerous routes, how we address them etc are concerned. Thank you, Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 40, 41, 42, 43.

The Cabinet minutes for the 11 April, which are on a separate sheet. 1, 2, 3.

11 REGULATORY – LICENSING AND APPEALS COMMITTEE

THE CHAIRMAN: The next item is Regulatory – Licensing and Appeals. That the minutes of the Regulatory – Licensing and Appeals Committee held on the 28 March be received. Councillor Parkinson.

CLLR R A PARKINSON: I so move, Mr Chairman.

CLLR PATTEN: I second those, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53.

12 REGULATORY – PLANNING COMMITTEE

THE CHAIRMAN: Minutes of the Regulatory – Planning Committee, 31 January, the 21 February, 14 March and the 11 April, which is on a separate sheet.
CLLR FORD: Thank you, Chairman. I rise to move the minutes of the Planning Committee held on the 31 January, 21 February, 14 March and April 11 be received and adopted.

THE CHAIRMAN: Have we a seconder for that proposal?

CLLR LACEY: I second that, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Page 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66.

The Planning Committee minutes of the 21 February, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72.

Regulatory Planning on the 14 March, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78.

The minutes of the 11 April, page 1, page 2, page 3.

13  PENSIONS COMMITTEE

THE CHAIRMAN: The next item is the Pensions Committee. The minutes of the meetings held on the 28 February and 30 March. Councillor Makin.

CLLR MAKIN: Could I move those as both an Administrative Authority and an Employing Authority.

CLLR MACDONALD: Chairman, I second those.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Page 79, page 80, 81, 82. The 28 February, 83. The 30 March, 84.

14/11  LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME – ANNUAL BENEFIT STATEMENTS

CLLR LUCAS: Yes Chair. On 14/11, even though I do sit on this Committee I had a call yesterday from a friend of my late wife who has been – how she puts it – “forcibly made to retire” because of her age. She has only got a small job within the Education Department but she has received notification that her last day of service will be in May and she was asking when she would be getting a pension forecast as to what she should be receiving and entitled to. I have no idea. With it being last night I have not made any enquiries but I will take an answer from an officer if that is available? As I say she was someone – and I will explain how old she is, she is 70 – loved her job, loved working for Derbyshire County Council but she received this letter saying “Thank you very much, you finish on this date” but she is now asking about her pension. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Makin.

CLLR MAKIN: Yes Chair, could I do the matadorial work and side swipe this to the Chief Executive?

MR HODGSON (Chief Executive): You certainly can, thank you. I do not know any of the details Brian about it but I will find out. It seems very reasonable that we should be providing the pension statement, as we all get annually anyway, and I will make sure that
happens.

CLLR LUCAS: Thank you.


15/11 THE INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SERVICE PENSIONS COMMISSION FINAL REPORT – “HUTTON REPORT”

CLLR WILCOX: Chair, 85 please. I wonder if I could ask a question but reserve the right to speak depending on the response to the question? That is in the final paragraph, the last sentence before the “Resolved” on this item, it says increasing the public sector contribution “…which if implemented, could lead to mass opt out and a reduction in overall employee contributions, and therefore threaten the future of the LGPS.” That is a very significant sentence to me and I wonder if the Chair could first of all tell me what the Committee are doing or proposing to do about that?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Makin.

CLLR MAKIN: Thank you very much. First and foremost I was not quite sure whereabouts you were referring to, David?

CLLR WILCOX: It is the middle of page 86 just before the capital letters “Resolved” and it is the sentence before that in the paragraph above that.

CLLR MAKIN: I think I am going to have to ask for a written answer on this one, David.

CLLR SMITH: Is my pension safe?

CLLR MAKIN: Yours is, yes.

CLLR WILCOX: I then have to take that as a given because the seriousness of this cannot be underestimated. The Chancellor made an announcement that this 3% increase would happen and the difficulty is that we are in a situation now with the Local Government Pension Scheme where a lot of people at the moment who are contributors are taking early retirement or leaving employment and are no longer contributors but are recipients of Local Government Pension Scheme income, so we are having that transformation taking place. That is number 1.

Number 2 is we have a number of staff who we all have to recognise have not had a pay rise in the last year and we all understand why that is the case, indeed the last couple of years, and they are now being asked to pay an extra 3%. There must be a serious question in the present climate as to how many people retain their membership with the Local Government Pension Scheme. If they don’t retain their membership we have a real problem because the payment the pensions relies on, the investments which we have made - okay we are a funded scheme - but it also relies on the contributions which people make in order to sustain payments over a quite sustained period and this is a very serious issue for the Authority not only because the Authority could well find themselves, and its employees could find itself with some problems, but even more importantly there will be a statutory duty on us as employers to make good any deficit which there is in the Pension Scheme. The last cycle we want to be in is we are having to make additional contributions to the Pension Scheme, as a consequence of which we have to lay some more people off, as a consequence of which their contributions diminish...
and therefore we are in a downward spiral. It is in that context that I personally would have been looking for some evidence of some fairly strong representations being made on this particular issue because you are the guardians of the Pension Scheme.

Now can I declare an interest, I do not have to formally do that, but I am a subscriber to the Local Government Pension Scheme as an elected member I have checked out, it is not for personal gain it is to just raise the generic issue but I do think we need to be seen to be and be very proactive on this particular issue because it is one just in the background which could be highly problematic.

THE CHAIRMAN: Just before you speak: Councillor Western, is it on the same relevant point?

CLLR WESTERN: It is, yes Chair, perhaps to give Councillor Makin another go at it really. It does say within this report on page 86 within the minutes: “The next stage would therefore be to commence consultation.” The Government is about to commence consultation on this final report from Hutton.

As Dave has said and explained why, this is probably the most significant thing that is going to impact on Local Government pensions for quite some time. Could the Chair of the Committee just enlighten us about the nature of the debate that took place when this report came to the Committee, was there a debate and what was the outcome of that debate?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Makin.

CLLR MAKIN: I think it is fair to say it is a tremendously important subject. When we are talking about things that may or may not happen in the future it is very difficult to give an exact answer, and I do not think you would expect me to do so. It is a serious problem. It is one that we have started to look at because the option of doing nothing is not an option. We have had early discussions with our officers on this. I do not know if you would like to make any comment on this what we have done so far?

THE CHAIRMAN: Chief Exec.

MR HODGSON: Thank you. No, I think the difficulty with this is this is about public sector pensions and the LGPS is something quite different to the vast majority of public sector pension schemes. We are about to commence this consultation. I was talking to the Director of the Employers’ Association, part of the LGA end of last week, among a group of County Council Chief Execs. We are all agreed that we need to try and make the case that LGPS is different and needs different treatment. Perhaps we don’t have to find the sorts of resources that some of the other pension funds need to keep them viable and that is something we will work with the Committee on.

THE CHAIRMAN: 86. Pensions Committee of the 30 March.

14 INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

THE CHAIRMAN: The next item on the agenda is Investment Committee. The minutes of the meeting of the Investment Committee held on the 21 March. Councillor Ellis.

CLLR ELLIS: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I would like to move the minutes of the Investment Committee meeting held on the 21 March.
CLLR LACEY: I will second those, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 88, 89, 90, 91, 92.

15 STANDARDS COMMITTEE

THE CHAIRMAN: The next item on the agenda is the Standards Committee. Mr Purnell to move the minutes of the Standards Committee held on the 11 March. Mr Purnell.

MR PURNELL: I move that the minutes of the Standards Committee held on the 11 March be received.

(?) I second those minutes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Page 93 and 94.

16 AUDIT COMMITTEE

THE CHAIRMAN: Item 16 on the agenda is the Audit Committee. Councillor Bradford to move the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee.

CLLR BRADFORD: Thank you, Chairman. I move that the minutes of the Audit Committee held on the 22 March be received.

CLLR PURDY: Thank you, Chairman. I would like to second those.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Page 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103.

17a IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE

THE CHAIRMAN: Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Education and Young People. This is me. I would like to move that the minutes of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Education and Young People on the 9 March 2011 be received.

CLLR MAJOR: Seconded, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Page 104 and 105.

17b IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ADULT HEALTH AND CARE

THE CHAIRMAN: Item 17b, Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Adult Health and Care. Councillor Farrington.

CLLR FARRINGTON: Thank you, Chair. I would like to move that the minutes of the meeting of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Adult Health and Care held on the 10 March 2011 be received.

CLLR PURDY: Thank you, Chairman. I would like to second that but in doing so I would also like the record to be amended to record the fact that I was present at that meeting. I
am not recorded.


17c IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

THE CHAIRMAN: The minutes of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Communities, Culture and the Environment. Councillor Twigg.

CLLR TWIGG: I move the minutes of the Communities, Culture and the Environment on the 19 January and the 16 March be approved.

CLLR K L PARKINSON: I second the minutes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. 110, 111, 112, 113. For the 16 March, 114 and 115.

17d IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – FINANCE, MANAGEMENT AND REGENERATION

THE CHAIRMAN: The Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Finance, Management and Regeneration for the 26 January and the 24 March.

CLLR MURRAY: Yes, I would like to move those, Chairman, the minutes of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Finance, Management and Regeneration held on the 26 January and the 24 March 2011 be received.

CLLR MACDONALD: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I would like to second those minutes.


MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE DERBYSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY AND THE DERBYSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

THE CHAIRMAN: Item on the agenda, Derbyshire Police Authority is for information only.

The Derbyshire Fire Authority, these minutes are submitted for information only.

18 NOTICES OF MOTION

THE CHAIRMAN: Item 18, to consider the following Notices of Motion. Motion No 1 submitted by Councillor Ms A Western. Thank you, Councillor Western.

CLLR WESTERN: Thank you, Chair.

Last month, Local Government Secretary Eric Pickles announced a review of business rates which, if implemented, could lead to further cuts to Derbyshire’s budget of £38 million per year.

The motion is:
The Council opposes this further example of the Tory/Lib-Dem Government taking money away from Derbyshire people in favour of those in London and the South East, and calls upon the Cabinet to vigorously oppose these proposals.

Chair, just to explain the background to this: currently non-domestic rates, the business rates element of local government finance are collected locally, handed over to the Government and then redistributed to local authorities according to a formula which although not perfect does reflect population and levels of need, to some extent. What is being proposed is that Councils are allowed to retain the business rates that are generated in their area allowing some Authorities to become what Eric Pickles calls “grant free”.

Retention of business rates in this way would favour certain Authorities in London and the south east massively and would disadvantage almost everywhere else. Westminster Council is the Council that generally gets quoted in this context. The tax yield for Westminster alone is higher than that of Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Nottingham and Newcastle combined, so if Westminster is allowed to keep its business rates they would be massively to the good and everyone else would have to pay a significant price for that.

One civil servant – and this was quoted in the LGA publication First – one civil servant has been quoted as saying:

“Westminster would be able to hand out Christmas hampers while Councils in the North would no longer be able to bury their dead. The result would be a further penalising of Authorities north of Watford and total chaos.”

Eric Pickles wants this to be an incentive to encourage economic growth. We all want to encourage economic growth but I think we have to think about the best ways of doing that. Certainly you can foresee there is likely to be conflict in this regard if Councils are hell bent on encouraging economic growth in order to keep their revenue up, conflicts with that and planning policies, for instance, particularly when you think about neighbourhood involvement in planning, as there is to be in the future which could bring massive conflicts within the Authority.

Chair, I am raising this not as an attack on the Opposition here but just another example of a pattern that is emerging of this Government proposing ill-thought out changes and then having to backtrack in the face of opposition. I hope if there is a chance the Government will backtrack on this one as well then we ought to be making our representations strongly as a united Council to try and safeguard the future of Derbyshire’s budgets. I move the motion, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Have we a seconder for the motion?

CLLR WILCOX: Can I second but reserve the right to speak later in the debate, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: The motion has been put before the Council. It is now open for debate. Councillor Harrison.

CLLR HARRISON: Thank you, Chairman. Anne, with the greatest of respect your motion is premature and unadulterated and unnecessary scaremongering.

What the Government is trying to do is perfectly logical, perfectly sensible and
something which successive governments have considered and wrestled with over very many years.

In an ideal world I think we all agree that to make Councils more accountable ideally 100% of the funds which are required to run them should be raised locally, whether through business or from Council Tax payers. Why previous governments have backed off is because the consequential complexities of that, and also the floors and ceilings and the dampening process as between the various parts of the country, some of which are more prosperous, some of which are more deprived, is an extremely complicated exercise which would inevitably result in winners and losers so no one has had the guts to really get to grips with this in the past.

This Government seemingly is prepared to have a go and in particular is focusing attention on the non-domestic rates, in other words business rates, and we are at the stage where we are at consultation. In that consultation, the details of which were announced on the 17 March, there are a whole series of terms of reference referred to in that and I will single out in the interests of time just two.

“That the Authorities will have to consider how to fund Authorities where locally raised funding would be insufficient to meet budget requirements and control Council Tax levels.”

Also an important consideration, although you would not have thought so during the time of Labour’s 13 years when Council Tax at Band E in this Authority went up by a massive 93% having adjusted for the change in the Fire Service.

“In addition to that Councils who do not collect business rates, such as upper tier Authorities, and recognising that some parts of the country are currently more dependent on Government funding.”

In other words it is still envisaged that there will be ceilings and floors and an effective dampening process so that people will not as a result of not having much industry in their area suddenly find themselves with a massive bill of the £38 million which you mention, which is purely academic, based on 2009/10 which was the difference between what we received from Government as our share of NMDR and what it would be if it was just solely related to the yield within the county. That is just pure speculation, it is unlikely to happen, and finally there is the prospect of the Government being prepared to go further because one of the tenets in the appendix, the terms of reference is:

“To examine the scope for further financial freedoms for Local Authorities whilst standing up for, and protecting the interests of local taxpayers.”

I would add to that “and also the interests of businesses” because we do not want to use them as a soft option in order to fund Councils because that would be damaging to the social and economic welfare of those businesses if they were to be overloaded with excessive rates.

The next stage is for a consultative document to move on and that is proposed to take place in July of this year. In the meantime a Paper is going to be presented to the Cabinet of this Authority on the 10 May and within that Paper there will be proposals of our recommendation as to what the Government would do, or should do, in relation to this particular project which it has embarked upon. There would be an opportunity when all the facts are on the table as to the direction in which thought is going, have a discussion about that, at least in terms of asking a question to which you will get responses hopefully during the
course of that meeting. We have to wait, watch this space. I believe in the meantime, as I said at the outset, what you have put down as a motion is premature, is scaremongering and I absolutely and totally refute it and oppose it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Flitter.

CLLR FLITTER: Yes Chair, just to put a Lib-Dem perspective on this. It is sad really that we have motions in front of us today that are really divided into two sentences. The first sentence you can have some sympathy with but you read into the second sentence and you really can’t support it. If you are not careful you can get hoodwinked by the first sentence that tries to lure you into thinking that this is something sensible. I did check -(laughter) see what they are like, Andrew - I did check on the figure of £38 million which does cause some concern but after checking that figure, because we do not know where it was derived from, it does come from a reliable source and we are willing to accept that, but I did not like the way that Anne was blaming us through the back door, because although she says she is not blaming us locally she is blaming the Government.

I do agree, I do agree with John when he says this is premature. It is exactly what we have down here. It has yet to be decided. This is nothing any different, is it? In one guise or another hasn’t Derbyshire suffered at the hands of government for many many many many years now because - it is under the Labour Government as well, John. No, we have suffered under the Labour Government as well, Derbyshire has suffered by monies being directed from Derbyshire because we seem to be an affluent society, we have provided services and we have done it well. If you are doing something well it seems to me that you get penalised even further. It has happened for years and this is nothing any different to what we have suffered for the last 20 years that I know of. It is the language that is used here and the influence here. I would rather sit down and wait till a report comes and we can examine it in full.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Wilcox.

CLLR WILCOX: Thank you, Chairman. I thought I was going to hear a restatement of the principle of local income tax for a moment but that appears to have disappeared, strong principles but forgotten what they were.

I think it is absolutely right and appropriate for any Government to review the financing system for Local Government because no matter which Authority you go to anywhere in the country they will tell you that they get an unfair settlement, it is not reasonable, and somebody else somewhere else gets more money and something should be done about it. I think that is legitimate.

Were this a consultation exercise of the type that John Harrison was referring to and were I confident that that was the case then I would not be seconding this particular motion even though my Leader put it.

However, there is already a group established, and the Secretary of State requires a decision to be taken by that group and a recommendation to be made by the end of July in order to influence the next Local Government Settlement.

I am sorry, that does not sound to me like an extensive consultation/consideration or whatever process. It might reflect guts; it might be people taking bold decisions like “We will flog the forests off” or “We are going to start charging for school meals. Oh no we are not. Yes, we are. We can’t make our minds up. Let’s put Nick Clegg on” then pull the rug from
under him while he is on tele.

There is a process going on in governance terms which is particularly worrying. What most concerns me about this particular proposal is that the decision as to whether or not business rates are localised has already been taken. The question is how much and what is its impact? When John referred to the consultation document I think it was interesting the phrases he used. He used a phrase “Authorities that are currently more dependent”. “Dependent”. That is a leading word in terms of equalisation. “Authorities that are dependent and there will be a damping process.” Now a “damping process” does not sound to me like a consultation on whether something is going to happen or not, if you are putting dampers in you are saying, “Okay, we recognise there is a problem in the interim but we will put a damping process in to address that.”

My concern is that the capacity of local authorities to raise business rates varies hugely because of the investment that is already made in major affluent areas in the country. It is relatively easy for the south east to actually draw in business investment because of the know-how and because of the other things it has there. It is right and proper that the rest of the country aspire to improve their business activity, to extend that business activity and to generate the new jobs that are necessary but, but, the capacity to do that is hugely variable.

Even if this motion is voted down, which I anticipate it will be, I do think this Authority has to be particularly watchful in relation to what could be proposed and should be seeking to influence the process. It is entirely legitimate to have a system which encourages development which will bring in additional revenue to authorities which means you will be less dependent on resources coming in from elsewhere but it is a complicated issue and it is not one which you decide on the basis of having the guts to do it, it is one which you decide on once you have evaluated what the impact of your various proposals might be and chosen the best one. I personally am not convinced that that is the process which we are involved in at the moment, which is why I support this motion.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Western, would you like to sum up on your motion?

CLLR WESTERN: Thank you, Chair. It is quite touching really the amount of faith you have, John, in Eric Pickles and his Government colleagues really. Wait for it to be decided, I think. I remember similar confidence being expressed about the funding coming through for Tibshelf School. I remember the confidence that we all felt about the funding for the Residential and Community Care Centres. I remember the confidence about the funding for Buxton Crescent and we have been let down every time as a county on those things. I think you need to look at the reality of it.

Steve, it is not my intention or desire ever to “lure” you anywhere. You can rest easy on that one. (Laughter) I think we need to remind ourselves that we are here for Derbyshire, we are here for the people of Derbyshire, and if you are a bit touchy about your Government colleagues being criticised well I am sorry, you will have to get over it and put Derbyshire before that. We were not afraid to criticise our government when the occasion demanded it and I think this is a time. The pattern, as I said at the beginning, the pattern has been very speedy moves towards changing significant parts of the structure of this nation, whether it be the NHS, whether it be forests, and those things have only been halted because of the level of representation that has come from the public, from local government, and from other areas, the voluntary sector as well. This is an instance of that and I think if we don’t get in and make representations at this stage you will find that this thing, as Dave has said, is going to happen to us and Derbyshire will be very severely disadvantaged. No matter how hard we strive to
increase economic growth, no matter how much we push for that, we are a rural and semi-rural county, we will never be London, we will never be the overheated south east, so we will be disadvantaged by this and for those reasons – and I am sorry you are not able to support this, I think you will live to regret it – I move the motion Chair. Can we have a recorded vote?

CLLR MACDONALD: Environmentally friendly then!

THE CHAIRMAN: The motion has been put before the Council and a recorded vote has been requested. Thank you.

MR ACKRILL: Councillors are asked to indicate whether they wish to vote for, against, or abstain on the motion.

CLLR ALLEN: For.
CLLR J ALLSOP: Against.
CLLR S ALLSOP: Against.
CLLR ATKINS: Abstain.
CLLR BALDRY: (Absent).
CLLR BIRKIN: For.
CLLR BLAKE: Against.
CLLR BLANK: For.
CLLR BOOTH: For.
CLLR BOWLEY: Against.
CLLR BRADFORD: Against.
CLLR BURROWS: For.
CLLR CAMM: (Absent).
CLLR CHAPMAN: For.
CLLR CHARLES: For.
CLLR COX: For.
CLLR COYLE: For.
CLLR CRITCHLOW: Against.
CLLR DIXON: For.
CLLR ELLIS: Against.
CLLR FARRINGTON: Against.
CLLR FLITTER: (No response).
CLLR FORD: Against.
CLLR GILLOTT: For.
CLLR HARRISON: Against.
CLLR HART: Against.
CLLR HICKTON: Against.
CLLR HIGGINBOTTOM: (No response).
CLLR HOSKER: For.
CLLR JACKSON: Against.
CLLR JONES: Against.
CLLR LACEY: Against.
CLLR LEWER: Against.
CLLR LEWIS: Against.
CLLR LONGDEN: Against.
CLLR LUCAS: For.
CLLR MACDONALD: Against.
CLLR MAJOR: Against.
CLLR MAKIN: Against.
CLLR MOESBY: (Absent).
CLLR MORGAN: (Absent).
CLLR MURRAY: Against.
CLLR K L PARKINSON: Against.
CLLR R A PARKINSON: Against.
CLLR PATTEN: Against.
CLLR PURDY: Against.
CLLR REDDY: (Absent).

CLLR RIGGOTT: For.

CLLR ROGERS: Abstain.

CLLR RUSSELL: (Absent).

CLLR SMITH: For.

CLLR SPENCER: Against.

CLLR STEVENSON: For.

CLLR STOCKDALE: For.

CLLR STONE: Abstain.

CLLR TAYLOR: (No response).

CLLR TWIGG: Against.

CLLR WESTERN: For.

CLLR G WHARMBY: Against.

CLLR J WHARMBY: Against.

CLLR WILCOX: For.

CLLR WILLIAMS: For.

CLLR WILSON: Against.

MR FOYSTER: For the motion 20, against the motion 32, abstain 2.

THE CHAIRMAN: Greg.

CLLR MACDONALD: Chairman, can I make a plea to the Opposition to reconsider the necessity of recorded votes. I am for them when it is necessary but they only have to go to the back of this book and count out the number of rain forests they have actually put in there by consistently asking for recorded vote after recorded vote and they are supposed to be the environmentally friendly group. Huh.

CLLR WESTERN: Can I respond to that, Chair?

THE CHAIRMAN: The motion has FAILED.

CLLR WESTERN: Chair, can I respond to that comment? Two words really! (Laughter) Censored, censored. Transparency and accountability, Greg. If you want to cut down on the amount of paper can I suggest we look at a different format for recording the
recorded vote?


“This Council deplores the announcement made at the Cabinet Meeting on 29 March 2011 cutting both the public transport and school bus services. These cuts will have a profound impact on the Derbyshire public and upon those in education. Council believes that this Conservative Council has failed to appreciate the adverse impact these cuts will have on Derbyshire people and calls for a reversal of this policy.”

CLLR LUCAS: Thank you, Chair. We have heard in the debate previously the concerns of some of the members within this Council and I would certainly hope that some of those concerns that are mentioned within the report and the cuts that are taking place will also be concern for people on the Majority Group as well because it affects areas throughout Derbyshire and particularly on transport. Transport is something that this Authority has been particularly proud of over the years. It is, I hasten to add, to use the word that Councillor Spencer used, that of “affordability”. Affordability cuts both ways: the people who provide the service and the people who are dependent in using that service as well. There are a number within here who will find that difficult on affordability, looking for alternative transport arrangements.

It mentions within the document that “Some services are to be withdrawn from April while others delayed until October 2011 to allow for redesign.” Now I hope, as much as anyone else, that that “redesign” can be achieved because that will then hopefully give some form of lifeline back and I know it is the rural communities, I don’t come from a rural community, but as an Authority we have to look at all areas. It is like saying to someone who is in hospital who has suffered a fatal attack on something, “Right, well we will leave it there dead for a bit but hopefully we will look for something different later.” Later will be too late for some of this, I firmly believe. I firmly believe it will not happen because as I say unless subsidies are provided bus companies will not function.

Within the report also, and I will stick to the report I will not go out on to political meanderings like over there because that is the only backdrop you have got, to introduce a pound flat rate charge for Gold Card users on the dial-a-bus service. I have not got a problem with that. I have not got a problem with that at all, Chairman, but what I have got at the back of my mind is a capacity issue, whether community transport have that capacity for this initiative. People will be wanting them at particular times and in some of the – and I come back to it again – the rural areas a pound, will that cover the actual cost of that journey? What are going to be the costs to the community transport services now that are finely stretched with fuel increases and other overhead costs and something like this, particularly as I say in the rural areas, could push it to a service that may not be the desired service you are hoping for within this at a pound a time. The rail fare, well that has gone, that has gone.

The b_line, I know there will be at least one on the majority side who will be disappointed that any subsidy on that is taking place. There was a debate we had there and anything to do with leisure was put to one side, purely for educational purposes, but if we look at the cuts that are being made there are concerns coming in already from schools. I know the seconder of this motion will be putting out a real plea on what effect it will have in that area.

The children who will be affected by these cuts will find themselves if they are in
families having to walk and it is noted now by letters coming in from schools already the dangers what these children and students will have to go through. An experience they have never had before of now having to walk up to two miles or whatever on roads that are extremely busy, extremely busy. Safety, I have to say, is part of the mantle within the LTP programme. I think that really does put a question mark over the safety aspect as well for some of these students. You can shake your head, Mike, but it happens. I have been on some of these walks and the children who are being now told they will have to walk or find alternative arrangements to get to school have never been used to walking these routes. I would hope, because we have heard that alternatives are being looked at, that something like shared walkways, shared pavements can be looked at for cyclists and pedestrians where they are suitable. They are not always suitable because of width issues.

This was rushed through purely on cost and as it says in the motion, Chair, the impact it will have on the communities and the children of Derbyshire I feel will be dire. I know the seconder will wish to speak to this and I would like to speak also at the end because there have been a number of points raised prior to this motion that are applicable to this about the consultation, about the increase in fares and not taking the services away, why was that not addressed? It was misinformation that was going out.

At that point, Chair, I will sit down and put it open for debate. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Have you a seconder for this motion? Councillor Gillott.

CLLR GILLOTT: Yes Chair. As Brian has indicated I actually want to concentrate on the school side of it and much of what I was going to say has already been covered in earlier debate so I will be slightly briefer than I anticipated but I think some of it does deserve repetition.

Listening to Councillor Spencer and Councillor Longden you would think with regards to consultation process – and we have heard the deficiencies in the consultation process – you would think “What on earth is the problem, it sounds quite reasonable?” It is “Leave it with us, trust us, it will all work out right in the end. It does not really matter if we get the consultation wrong as long as we get the decision right.”

Well first of all I don’t trust you to get the decision right but the consultation process does count. I think for Councillor Spencer to say it only affects 2,000 plus kids it does not matter, what do they matter, I think is a disgraceful matter. They are kids, they do matter. They have families and the distress this process is causing is… My son starts secondary school in a few months’ time in September and we are already trying to put in place a package that will get him to school and home from school when we are working, so I know how families feel when they are having to deal with a situation such as this.

I think Brian is right, you have taken a decision, you are now trying to mask it by saying “We will consult” but we all know you are determined to save the money and if you change your policy on this you will have to find the money from somewhere else.

I know how much parents are getting concerned about this because my In Box on my e-mail is already beginning to fill up. I have had several already, predominantly not from my area because although Tupton Hall is in my patch most of the kids who go there come from neighbouring villages and of the 2,000 plus people who are affected by this 350 come from Tupton Hall. That is a school with about 1,800 pupils, just over, 1,400 Year 7-11 and another 400 sixth formers, plus over 100 staff, teachers and support staff, so there are 2,000 people
going into that school every day. 350, 20% of those kids are affected by this. I know the routes they are going to have to walk from Wingerworth, from Morton and from Pilsley. I certainly would not let my 11 year old son walk that, not in winter, not when it is raining.

The school itself is desperately worried about this. The effect upon the school is massive. We all know that pupil numbers are falling; parents are making choices and one of the factors that determined that choice is how you get your child to and from school safely. I already know parents who are beginning to wonder “Should I be moving my child to a different school?” Money follows the child. That will affect the education at Tupton Hall.

Tupton itself is a village of just over 3,000 people so every day a village of 3,000 people grows with the addition of 2,000 more. If 300 kids lose their transport they have to get there somehow. We know for some getting to school is a major major task for them. It is a major achievement for some of those kids to actually get to school. Without a bus to get them there some of them won’t do it. Those that do will have to change to some other form of transport, so 350 kids we are talking about another 100/200 journeys every day in the morning and the afternoon.

There have already been two accidents on the way to school, including a lad who was knocked down on the pelican crossing outside the school this year alone. Parents are queuing, they are arriving a good half-hour early to reserve their place outside the school. You go and look at that school and it is chaos there. That is repeated across Derbyshire, I do not claim it is unique to Tupton, but add another 200 cars in there and the chaos for the local residents becomes even worse.

The other point I want to make is in a little while we will be asked to agree the service plans. I think what this shows is how hollow some of those are because I have actually read those service plans and particularly the Environmental Service ones. That identifies ten key priorities for this Council when it takes decisions. I refer to three of them.

“Fewer children and young people killed or seriously injured on the roads.

More people travelling on community transport.

Reduction in congestion and air quality.”

How does this decision bring about those three? It doesn’t. It doesn’t. You have taken the decision, you may make a few changes, you may have some sop for some of the parents but you are going to cut transport, without a shadow of a doubt. You are going to affect the schools, you are going to affect the parents and, above all, you are going to affect the pupils who go to these schools. Tupton Hall might be the worst affected but it is not the only school affected, as we have heard. Therefore, Chair, I would second this motion.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. The motion has been proposed and seconded. It is now open for debate. Councillor Major.

CLLR MAJOR: Thank you, Chairman. I feel I have been misquoted by Councillor Lucas. I seem to recall commenting that I preferred to protect the use of b_line cards for educational purposes, okay making the difficult choice at the expense of them being able to use it for leisure purposes.

Brian coming from the Party that once said “Education, Education, Education” decided
that leisure, going to football matches is more important than going to school and college and I would ask him to withdraw his comments about me saying “I will cut it at any expense”.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Charles.

CLLR CHARLES: Yes, I was in that meeting and you did not say that at all. Brian did not say that at all. Where you were coming from was that young people should not be able to have the facility of using a b_line for social purposes. In effect you said they should be walking and cycling. I remember precisely what you said. To me it sounds like a Catch 22, Major Major.

I think Kevin has hit the nail on the head here and Brian as well: if you are not getting kids into school they don’t get educated. Kevin’s point that for a lot of those young people actually getting to school in the morning is an achievement. You may not think that is right but it is right. Unfortunately for a lot of kids that is right. If you take away this transport from them it is going to be a major issue. You will see your absence figures go up, your unauthorised absences without any doubt whatsoever because there will be a lot of young kids not going. I am not going to repeat what everyone else has said. I think they are important points to make though.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Riggott.

CLLR RIGGOTT: Thank you, Chair. All I am going to do is echo some of what has already been said and basically talk about in my division. What is happening in Clay Cross; what will happen in Danesmoor; what will happen in Holmgate and even what will happen in Ashover where some of their strongest supporters are, and Wingerworth. It is going to happen because same as Alan says, same as Kevin said, the decision has already been made.

I think what we are going to be seeing is more dangerous route applications made, because when you look from Clay Cross to go to Tupton Hall there is only one route and that is along the A61. Going along the A61, part of the A61 there is only one causeway and that causeway is itself not very wide so therefore you are looking at all the hazards and moving traffic.

I know some of the other members here have it in their division. The reason I want to raise this today and come up with this is because we have already heard through debates that unless you live in a Conservative area you are not part of Derbyshire. You already have, you already have earlier in debate when North East Derbyshire, Chesterfield and Bolsover were made reference to you did a load of jeering as though that is not part of Derbyshire and unfortunately that is where you come from and that is where I know you come from and I will always fight against you and fight against that attitude.

I am not going to sit down, I have a democratic right. I have ten minutes, by the way, to stand up. I have seen you dropping to sleep and I have seen you looking bored but you are going to wait another ten minutes till I have done and then I have another ten minutes after that because I have got summats else I want to raise as well so don’t think you are going home, but same as I say, Chair, it is a stupid policy. It may be driven by fiscal means but it is something that is going to have a serious impact on our children.

Alan talks about attendance. I tell you what: not only attendance but we will see an increase in juvenile crime. We will see an increase in antisocial behaviour. You are nodding your heads and shaking your heads but I tell you this: I will come here and point my finger and
say it is your fault, it is your fault, it is your fault. You are making policy, you are making these decisions. Unfortunately, Councillor Longden, I do rant a little bit and I am sure you will jump up in a bit and make reference same as you did last time but the thing is I am concerned about my electorate, those young people out there. Same as I say, and I will repeat myself what I have heard in debate today, you don’t give a damn because if you don’t come from a Conservative area you are not part of Derbyshire.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Atkins.

CLLR RIGGOTT: You don’t like to hear the truth, that is your problem.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Atkins.

CLLR RIGGOTT: Can I get up again, Chair, he wants another five…

THE CHAIRMAN: No, no. Councillor Atkins.

CLLR ATKINS: Thank you. From 5 year olds, when I was at school – we were tough then of course – they used to walk a mile then they used to take a seven mile journey on a train then walk another mile in each direction to get to school and back.

As far as this is concerned we have £40 million per day interest piling up, that is the reason for the cuts, is the problem and it has to be tackled. Somehow or other this problem has to be tackled, it has to be sorted out, and our contribution towards sorting that out has to be made somehow.

Now if the Labour Party had better alternatives to what is suggested then why is there not an amendment put forward suggesting what services the Labour Party would cut instead of the services suggested in this report and other reports? It is up to you to come up with some better ideas, I think.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Longden.

CLLR LONGDEN: Thank you, Chair. Councillor Riggott, that was a rant.

CLLR RIGGOTT: It was from the heart.

CLLR LONGDEN: Right. Can I just deal first of all with one or two issues that came up, one or two points that were made when we debated the Cabinet minute.

First of all in relation to faith schools there is a parallel there, Alan, but then when we first proposed the changes on faith school travel/transport, we were in a different world financially. If you remember we were still using the credit card. Things have changed a lot since then.

In relation to Whaley Bridge I made the decision about Whaley Bridge, I made the concession that has been mentioned. It was because of very particular circumstances that do not apply, the cessation of these 73 services that we are talking about today.

In relation to making arrangements when schools close, I have made one or two temporary arrangements when schools have closed. The trick is you have to put an end date on it. It is only temporary, and what is happening here is no end date was put on it. This thing has
just gone on and on and on.

Brian, if we were to have a motion to stop playing petty politics with kids’ education in Derbyshire I would wager that we would not need a recorded vote. I know, Brian, that you as a very valued member of Bennerley School governing body would definitely support it.

That is what you are doing now, you are playing politics. I have not heard one rational argument for continuing with the discrimination that exists within the arrangements for these 2,200 pupils, not heard one rational argument. What I have heard about is a lot of mongering about what might happen if we don’t have arrangements in place for these students after April 2012. What about, by my calculation, the 90,000 pupils that go to school every day in Derbyshire, under distance, they get educated, they go to school. We have a satisfactory attendance level. What is different about this minority of pupils that represent less than 2% of the school population?

I would like to deal, Brian, particularly with the two things you have put in the motion. First of all the word “cuts”. I know dealing with the legacy of debt and deficit and deep economic problems that the coalition has inherited from the Labour Government has meant that we have had to review funding plans and “cuts” is quite a well used, in fact over-used word, but this is not about cuts. The saving is a consequence of righting a wrong.

The other part of the motion that I want to address specifically is what is termed the “profound impact on education”. There isn’t any “profound impact” at this moment in time. That is why because these 73 services are to stop we are going to enter consultation (I will not repeat who with because I have said it several times today) to ensure, as far as we can, that we support the parents in order to get their children to school. There is no identified “profound impact” and nobody has brought that or identified any in the discussions we have had to-date.

The simple fact is 73 buses are going to be withdrawn in April 2012 and that currently provides subsidised transport for a very small number of children, around 2% as I have said. These few children live within the statutory walking distance of their schools and are therefore not, according to the legislation, entitled to subsidised travel under that legislation and the responsibility for that, both arrangements for travel and the cost of travel, lies with the parent or the carer.

Fares on these routes currently are heavily subsidised and that subsidy represents between 70 and 90% of the contracted cost of those services. Some of these services, I understand, are even used by students to attend a school other than their normal area school even where free transport is available to their normal area school.

CLLR BURROWS: Everything with you, Councillor Longden, is money. Everything is money.

CLLR CHAPMAN: Chair?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Chapman.

CLLR CHAPMAN: Yes Chair, you asked for an example there as to why bus services should be kept. On my patch in 1989 a school called Katherine House closed…

THE CHAIRMAN: Sorry, I thought you had finished.
CLLR LONGDEN: No, I haven’t.

THE CHAIRMAN: Sorry, Councillor Chapman.

CLLR CHAPMAN: Haven’t you finished?

CLLR LONGDEN: No, I have not, you butted in I sat down, assuming the Chairman would deal with that.

What I have just said I will contrast with the fact, and I have said it before this afternoon, around 90,000 children in Derbyshire who are regarded as attending under-distance schools do not enjoy free or subsidised travel to and from school and their parents are responsible for their travel arrangements and the cost of that travel. They do that every day of the school week in Derbyshire, 90,000 of them, but for some reason 2,200 have unique problems that will have a “profound impact” on education. Really? Where is the evidence?

Over the past few years Brian, as Councillor Spencer mentioned earlier, you have had several opportunities, your Party has had several opportunities to address this issue and particularly I think in 2008 when the cost of the provision increased the overall subsidy by over £700,000, but you failed to deal with it, you failed to deal with the inequality. You buried your head in the sand. You avoided the big issue, the inequality, and you placed that increasing financial burden on the rest of the community in Derbyshire.

CLLR CHAPMAN: And they didn’t object.

CLLR LONGDEN: I have heard nothing from your members in the last few minutes that even begins to excuse the ineptitude over the years of what is gross inequality. There is no case for maintaining that subsidy, this Council must not support proposals that promote the continuation of that gross inequality.

I think the real issue we are dealing with here, and I think we have discussed it fully today, is about what happens after April 2012 and how we intend to try and assist the parents that will be affected by the cessation, the decision to cease those 73 bus services. There is no justification, I repeat again, in the motion that it will have a “profound impact” on education, there is no evidence at this moment in time.

I understand that when someone has enjoyed a benefit, legitimately or not, when it is removed they are rightly disgruntled, sometimes concern and sometimes justifiably but let us be clear: the future responsibility for these children getting to school will vie with the parents and the carers, as it does for 90,000 pupils every day in this county.

So, your motion predicts that nothing will be done. I gather that is what the motion is about, nothing is going to be done, these children are going to suffer some sort of Armageddon in relation to their education. Nothing could be further from the truth. Despite the reassurances contained in the Cabinet Paper you are still telling me that consultation won’t be meaningful. Well it will. We will undertake proper consultation to try and find ways, together with the schools and other interested parties, to help them overcome the impact of those services stopping.

It is premature to assume the worst and it is quite shameful to assume that this administration would ignore parents who might have justifiable concerns about the safety of their children going to and from school after April 2012. Stop being negative and help to
ensure that these small number of students can safely, and appropriately, get to school and back just as 90,000 do every day in the same circumstances after April 2012. Your motion is an invitation to continue with the inequality in these circumstances. This Council should not support that inequality and I clearly cannot support the motion, Chairman. (Applause)

CLLR STONE: Chair, can I ask for a point of clarification. The Lead Member talked about “alternative transport” but he has not actually said what that alternative transport is if the buses are taken off and I wonder if he could give us clarification because I do not understand what he means by “alternative transport”?

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you wish to answer that?

CLLR LONGDEN: Yes Chairman. This debate is not about the “alternative” provisions that we might be able to provide. There are a number of them we have already identified earlier from a question about there may be some dangerous routes here that we have to look at, so there are all sorts of ways but I do not think today is the appropriate day to start debating the options that we can provide.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Chapman.

CLLR CHAPMAN: Thank you, Chair. The councillor wanted an example. I was here in 1989 when we had a Labour Controlled County Council. We had problems with education. We closed lots and lots of schools in Labour areas; moved children to schools that were totally foreign to them to save an absolute fortune for the Authority but we did it by providing buses. One example was Calow on my patch. There was Tapton School. They closed Tapton. The new school is Hasland. There is no bus service neither then nor now, never has been. The alternative route is you go all the way into Chesterfield then back out again so a bus was provided. Now it may be a dangerous route down Dingle Bank and Dark Lane, that we will look at and consider later but that was the reason we had a bus put on in our area. We closed lots of schools in Labour areas, we had to do it when we needed it. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Spencer.

CLLR SPENCER: Chairman, I am not going to pull on this any further but I just need to say a few things.

You cannot accept that this unfair process that is taking place is a good sign of equality throughout the county. Councillor Riggott speaks from the heart, as he always does, he probably could do it a little bit slower and I can lose my temper with the best of them so you know…

CLLR RIGGOTT: I haven’t lost my temper, Chair!

CLLR SPENCER: Well passionate, wear your heart on your sleeve, whatever you want to call it. I can do that. I defend your right to speak on behalf of the people who will let you but I will say this: this is not about political areas of the county. This is not purely about being
divisive about certain areas of the county in comparison to other areas of the county. Councillor Longden has made it quite clear, there are a huge number of children who manage to achieve what they achieve on a day-to-day basis without a subsidised bus service within their area. I believe that this proposal will give a clear indication of this Council’s direction of travel and I hope throughout the consultation process that people do get involved in coming up with alternative methods and ideas for addressing the concerns that you have rightly put today. I will say this: there has and there are examples where subsidised routes have been removed and commercial routes have replaced them. Brian knows that. There are examples and if you want those examples I am sure they could be provided, but there are examples where that has happened. I see no reason why that can’t happen in this particular instance.

I also would just like to raise the issue of reshaping, remodelling services etc. The CT organisations within the county have had a greater input from this administration than in the past and we have approximately £225,000 further funding to go into the CT from Central Government which I am sure will help with the remodelling of those services and address some of the issues that some people may have with regard to this policy.

This policy has inequalities. We are not going to agree on it because people in different areas are affected in different ways. Some Councils are affected more than others. It is nothing to do with representation of those Councils in any way, shape or form. It is a circumstance that has come about through historical procedure which has been raised also this afternoon, but I cannot support the motion, Brian, and with the best will in the world I believe we have done this in a unique and equitable way.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Flitter, and then I will hand it back to Brian.

CLLR FLITTER: Thank you, Chair. This is a difficult one for me because probably… If you just wait and listen you might get some support out of this. The way you carry on quite frankly it is a wonder anybody supports it.

I would not have used the word “deplore” because I think there is a way to get the best out of working as a partnership. Comments have been made about political areas and quite frankly we in Matlock for years have said we would never get anything in Matlock because everything is done in North East Derbyshire and the same, on another Council we say that everything came from Ashbourne. That is fair enough. That debate will go on for long enough but I am looking behind this motion. I have the greatest respect for Brian and I have also got the greatest of respect for Mike but I am just not too sure here. I would have hoped that Brian would have told us where the money was coming from because obviously Beth made a very good point earlier on about the trouble we are in and where we are going in the future. Yes, there may be a case for looking at this in the future but consultation really has gone the wrong way round. Surely we should have consulted before we have taken this decision. For me it is not just about the cutting of bus services, which I regret, but may have to come that far, but when it affects school children and people’s lives we always ask for evidence. In my book – and I get this from I am sorry but Environmental Services on Highways – always want evidence. To me if one child or one person gets injured, maimed or has a problem getting to school, that to me is enough evidence to actually rethink this.

I would have hoped that Brian would have come with the wording of “review” and not “reversal” of this policy because we could have supported that wholeheartedly, that we look at the consultation process, we review the policy and see what the outcomes of that will be.

I am not convinced about the arguments, and I know Mike said this is probably not the
place to argue about safe passage to school and the dangerous route situation, but to be quite honest I have little faith in that because when a group of people can walk a route to school and not invite the local Member and then go round a trading estate with no footpaths, heavy lorries, and say that is a safe way to school then my mind starts buzzing. I am looking behind what is said on here and I think it is done in the right spirit. I am sorry it won’t get universal support. I understand where you are coming from but I think there is a real point to be made on this that we should be looking at this very very seriously because as I said before if one person gets injured then there are only one set of people who will be made accountable and that is the people who make the policy.

CLLR STONE: Chair, when you guillotined I had my hand up but you were not looking my way.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, but I did clearly say…

CLLR STONE: I did have my hand up at the time before you counted the councillors down, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we have debated it long enough now, we have heard from all sides of the House.

CLLR STONE: The people I represent know I have not debated it and so therefore I will have to tell them I have been guillotined when we have a school in Barrow Hill where there are no buses never mind buses to school.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid my word is final. I do apologise if I missed you. Brian, would you like to sum up?

CLLR LUCAS: Thank you, Chair. Where do you start? The first word that rings out from Mike was that of “inequalities”. I can assure you in Derbyshire there are inequalities and inequalities. I can assure you the area I represent really knows what inequality is about. They do not have a subsidised bus route. They are on a well maintained commercial bus route because it makes a profit.

The other difference is when you look at the number of children in the Cotmanhay area, which you can replicate throughout the county in large towns, is their travel to school is a lot different to some of these outlying areas where children will have to walk. Purely and simply because it is a built up area there are safety crossings built in. There are, as we would term, the lollipop man or the lollipop lady, the school crossing patrol. There are a number of safety factors in larger conurbations than there are in areas that will affect this. Head teachers and governing bodies are already recognising this out in, as you might say, the other smaller areas. You have got to take things into perspective and not just use this word “inequality” because it is meaningless. It is meaningless when there are different types of inequality.

Money was mentioned in 2008 regarding the extra subsidy that went in from Environmental Services. Yes, there was. I can remember the rows. I can remember the rows with this bloke here and the secretaries in the office sitting there like this because they were not used to the French that was coming out - well they were - coming out through the door, but I battled it because I believed, I believe that that subsidy was necessary for those safety factors and for children to get to school which they had been used to and they felt safe with that. Parents felt safe with that, knowing full well that in future budgets they would have to be addressed probably differently.
Someone said why don’t we look, from the Liberal side, put alternatives. A year ago at budget time alternatives were put forward here on various schemes. You supported none. It is meaningless. I am sorry, meaningless from over there that is, meaningless.

When we look also within the report it is public transport as well, not just school transport public transport and that has an immediate effect, that has an immediate effect. I am well aware that this is going to take twelve months but you will be held to account on this not only in this Chamber but out there and I hope and sincerely hope with all my heart there are going to be no accidents anywhere in Derbyshire, anywhere.

If we do as the motion says (which I doubt because it is seen as political, it is being seen as political) but out there it is just being seen as a service that has been withdrawn. It has impact on those people’s lives, on those people’s expectations.

Credit card was mentioned, yes, credit cards are mentioned, but there are people out there again I will mention in deprived areas who are dependent on good public transport. There is nothing else. They have not got a car. There are areas, believe it or believe it not, where low car ownership still exists and people now are finding it increasingly more difficult to use their car, for whatever reason, because of the high fuel costs.

All I am saying is this: for this to be withdrawn because we have found implications, we have found differences and we have found concerns as to what has not been addressed in this document and until those have been addressed and until there is more clarity within the wording of this, that that regarding the public transport and in some way school transport should be reversed. I would like to move the motion Chair. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: The motion has been put for and seconded.

A COUNCILLOR: Recorded vote.

CLLR MACDONALD: Another ream of paper!

MR ACKRILL: Councillors are asked to indicate whether they wish to vote for, against, or abstain on the motion.

CLLR ALLEN: For.

CLLR J ALLSOP: Against.

CLLR S ALLSOP: Against.

CLLR ATKINS: For, reluctantly.

CLLR BALDRY: (Absent).

CLLR BIRKIN: For.

CLLR BLAKE: Against.

CLLR BLANK: For.
CLLR BOOTH: For.
CLLR BOWLEY: Against.
CLLR BRADFORD: Against.
CLLR BURROWS: For.
CLLR CAMM: (Absent).
CLLR CHAPMAN: For.
CLLR CHARLES: For.
CLLR COX: For.
CLLR COYLE: For.
CLLR CRITCHLOW: Against.
CLLR DIXON: For.
CLLR ELLIS: Against.
CLLR FARRINGTON: Against.
CLLR FLITTER: For.
CLLR FORD: Against.
CLLR GILLOTT: For.
CLLR HARRISON: Against.
CLLR HART: Against.
CLLR HICKTON: Against.
CLLR HIGGINBOTTOM: (Absent).
CLLR HOSKER: For.
CLLR JACKSON: Against.
CLLR JONES: Against.
CLLR LACEY: Against.
CLLR LEWER: Against.
CLLR LEWIS: Against.
CLLR LONGDEN: Against.
CLLR LUCAS: For.
CLLR MACDONALD: Against.
CLLR MAJOR: Against.
CLLR MAKin: Against.
CLLR MOESBY: (Absent).
CLLR MORGAN: (Absent).
CLLR MURRAY: Against.
CLLR K L PARKINSON: Against.
CLLR R A PARKINSON: Against.
CLLR PATTEN: Against.
CLLR PURDY: Against.
CLLR REDDY: Against.
CLLR RIGGOTT: For.
CLLR ROGERS: For.
CLLR RUSSELL: (Absent).
CLLR SMITH: For.
CLLR SPENCER: Against.
CLLR STEVENSON: For.
CLLR STOCKDALE: For.
CLLR STONE: For.
CLLR TAYLOR: (Absent).
CLLR TWIGG: Against.
CLLR WESTERN: For.
CLLR G WHARMBY: Against.
CLLR J WHARMBY: Against.
CLLR WILCOX: For.

CLLR WILLIAMS: For.

CLLR WILSON: Against.

THE CHAIRMAN: The motion is **DEFEATED**.

Motion 3 submitted by Councillor K Gillott. Councillor Gillott.

CLLR GILLOTT: Thank you, Chair.

This Council condemns the destruction of the Derbyshire Youth Service that is currently underway as part of the Conservative Controlled Council’s cuts to local service. Council reaffirms its support for the retention of the in-house universal Youth Service that has successfully contributed to the personal and social development of so many young people in Derbyshire.

Yes Chair, a few weeks ago I had cause to go into Tupton Youth Centre. It is a building I have been to many times over the years to meet the young people who use it, to meet the parents and of course to meet the staff. It is a building that is dear to my heart because it was built by my good friend and predecessor Jock McKay. It was probably the last major project Jock did and he fought long and hard for that building because at the time we had a Tory Government that grossly underfunded this Authority and he knew how important a Youth Service and provision of activities for young people were. The £115,000 it cost then has been repaid in stages over the year and thousands of kids have been through those doors and benefited from it.

As you walk through into Tupton Youth Centre you see what a well run vibrant place it is. It certainly was and is a showcase centre for this Authority. Artwork on the walls, displays of activities and other things the kids have been up to and information. I was really really proud of what I saw in there but then you begin to talk and you realise it was more of a wake I was going to rather than a vibrant Youth Centre.

As I say in 1997 when I first came on this Authority the Youth Service in Derbyshire was a shadow of what it became. It was a service we struggled to fund but over the years as the Labour Government put money into the Authority we funded that service. We boosted it into what became one of the best Youth Services in the country, rated one of the top two in England at one stage. It just didn’t do traditional Youth Service work. It engaged in targeted activities dealing with issues of deprivation; teenage pregnancy; antisocial behaviour. It did it within the universal service. It was innovative in what it did as well. In my own area we initiated a programme to help young people, 11 year olds to move from primary school to secondary school. That is what the Derbyshire Youth Service did, it was able to adapt and change to meet new services and it worked in particular with hard to reach young people, people that nobody else would deal with, the people that other groups did not want. Kids who simply wanted to roam the street. It was persistent with those kids integrating many of them into the mainstream service.

We also developed it in other ways with the formation of a Youth Council and of course on to the Youth Parliament as well and those kids have been a great sense of pride to this Authority with the work they have done. It was a service that lived up to its aims of contributing to the personal and social development and the economic well-being of young people. We did that because we believe in the young people of this county and we were
prepared to put our money where our beliefs were.

It was not just our priority because if my memory serves me correctly activities for young people year in year out came as one of the top if not the top priority for the people of this county based on the MORI surveys. I was certainly proud of the work we did and repeatedly year in year out it featured in my election manifesto, but the Youth Service in Derbyshire as we know it is now in the process of being dismantled, if not destroyed.

Again I don’t know how many of you have read the Service Plan but as the CAYA one says:

“The Youth Service will see a reduction in some aspects of direct service delivery and will be more targeted whilst encouraging the development of provision by voluntary and community groups. The style and outdoor activity provision, particularly at Whitehall, would be reviewed with an anticipated reconfiguration.”

That, as far as I am concerned, if there ever was one is a euphemism for cuts. Under the guise of a service reorganisation the Youth Service is disappearing and what are we getting in its place? We are getting the multi-agency teams, the MATs. Now I don’t have a problem with MATs, I think in many respects our idea and bringing together various agencies under one roof has its benefits and merits and I certainly support it, but the version of MATs that we now have is very very different to the one I think we envisaged.

Over the last few months I have spoken to many people who work within the Youth Service and what is clearly coming through is the lack of leadership, political leadership from this Authority. You ask these workers, “What does the Youth Service stand for? What are the outcomes? What are the targets? What do you expect it to achieve?” They cannot tell you. They cannot tell you.

A whole tier of management, the senior management of the Youth Service has gone from the Head of Youth Service down. District managers have gone. Some yes have been appointed to managers but others have left the Authority. All those years of experience and knowledge has gone. There is now no champion of young people in the way this Authority developed and had one, so we have no leadership and as I say we have no strategy. Again the service plan says: “The style will be reviewed with an anticipated reconfiguration.” You have abolished the good we had without knowing what to put in its place. I would be interested to hear what the Cabinet member has in due course to say about this and what his vision is for youth work in the county.

Morale amongst staff is as low as it could ever be. They are having to apply for their own jobs. There is uncertainty amongst part-time staff. Many many feel divided. The whole reorganisation has turned into a shambles. You only have to look at the one in my own area, the North Wingfield and Tibshelf Service based at Alice’s View. As I understand it many of these MATs are based on secondary school catchment areas except that the North Wingfield one does not cover North Wingfield Primary School because that is in the Tufton Hall Primary area, so we have a MAT area based in a village that it does not cover. It just beggars belief.

As for “targeted” what does that mean? What are the targets, the target audience that this Council is now saying are our priorities? What are the expected outcomes? The staff certainly do not know. All we know is that we are talking about cuts and these cuts are deep. 20% this year with more to come.
When I spoke to staff in my area I asked them what their budget was and they can’t tell me. They can’t tell me what their budget is. They are having to beg, steal and borrow equipment from other departments that they are sharing offices with. It gives co-location a whole new meaning.

What we have created, I think, is a one-size-fits-all policy. It is a policy without leadership, without vision, without money, it is a Tory policy.

The other question I would ask is have the young people been consulted about this? What are their views? I know they are concerned. I know they are concerned for the loss of their Youth Service, and when all these holes in the Service have developed under this Tory vision what are you expecting? You are expecting the Big Society of the voluntary sector to take over.

I have no problem with the voluntary sector. I have supported it. I have used my community priority funding and my community leadership monies to fund groups in my area. They do sterling work and I will continue to do that, but what they can’t do is replace what this Authority did. They complement the Youth Service as we have had it. They should not be prepared to replace it. You can’t expect them to fill the chasm that is now opening up in youth provision. Trying to get volunteers week in week out to do this sort of work is difficult. People have busy lives, as we are finding out. They are desperate to hang on to their jobs. They have other commitments and the sort of level of commitment that it needs to maintain this, when you have got to do it day in, week in week out for these kids. You can’t do it this week, not next week, not the week after but the week after that. It simply does not work. It is no substitute for what we have done. Our youth workers are highly trained, very highly trained in some cases to degree level. You can’t expect somebody to walk in off the street and suddenly take this on and deliver that sort of quality service. They are dealing with the hardest to reach young people, many of the sort of people that traditional clubs don’t want, but again it just shows what this Authority really thinks of young people and it fits into the long list of Tory cuts that are now taking place with children. This Authority, b_line service cut. The Playbuilder Scheme cut. The school bus services we have just debated, cut. Child benefit, cut. Family Tax Credit, cut. The Connexion Service, cut. Sure Start funding, cut. EMA payments, cut. Of course then there are tuition fees. Who will forget tuition fees? Certainly not the students and certainly not Nick Clegg.

The biggest scandal with regards to young people and what your Government are doing we have nearly one million young people without work and without the prospect of work and now they are losing one of the few things that this Authority did well for them and that was the Youth Service. We are facing a whole new lost generation.

The young people in Derbyshire deserve a quality Youth Service, not a targeted service but a universal service that reaches out to all sections of society and integrates them. We need voluntary provision, yes, but we need a Council run Youth Service. I move the motion, Chair. (Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: Have we a seconder for this motion?

CLLR BOOTH: Yes Chair, I will second this motion. I want to second this motion because I come from many years of doing voluntary youth work. The Big Society was created long before it was the mantra of the Tory Party. We were well supported with the training from the excellent Derbyshire County Council Youth Service staff and without that we probably
would not have got past base with the five/six years’ youth work that we did, after work, non-paid. I still see some of the kids if I go up to Ilkeston for a drink. Now and again an adult will tap me on the shoulder and they recall the work we did. Just wonderful, supplementary to what Derbyshire County Council Youth Service, excellent Youth Service has provided.

Now I am worried because I have heard today of cuts targeting young people, young people and the elderly. I think they are the easiest to target. You talk of targeting in the MATs but I do feel, and that is why I want to second this motion, that the MATs system you have set up, the idea is brilliant but it is how it is managed and it is how it has been rolled out. I as an elected member for Kirk Hallam and Hallam Fields and the Parish of Dale Abbey have not heard of anything to do with the MATs except for one of my local police bobbies, a sergeant, he has apparently been seconded or got a new post to support the new MAT set-up. That is great, all about partnership working, but I am concerned to hear about the cuts again, yet again targeted towards youth because if you ignore youth you are only storing up problems for the future. That is a definite. I do feel a lot of things said today we are storing up a lot of problems from the youth, from the young, EMAs and also for pensions, massive problems that you have not even thought through.

Anyway, because of the absence of the meat on the bone regarding the MAT system I am supporting this motion today.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. The motion has been put before the Council and it has been duly seconded. It is now open for debate. Councillor Lewis.

CLLR LEWIS: Thank you, Chairman. I am going to keep this as short and sweet as possible because we have spent an awful lot of time today and more than enough time listening to the Labour Group doing a poor job of political point scoring yet again.

Councillor Gillott, your statement talking about the destruction of the Derbyshire Youth Service is actually factually inaccurate. The County Council Youth Service has been integrated, as you know, into our multi-agency teams providing targeted intervention right across the county. They are working at the sharp end and they are tackling problems where they are most needed.

In establishing a new and innovative multi-agency approach the Council has delivered a million pounds in savings from a reduction in management. Frontline services have not been cut, they are actually bolstered by a framework that promotes more effective and integrated partnership working which will include working closely with schools, health colleagues and our partners in the VCI sector.

The formation of multi-agency teams gave us an opportunity to reduce duplication, management, and simplify services so they are more understandable and approachable for service users, an approach that has been endorsed by your party as part of the process of bringing multi-agency working into being.

You asked about visual. This Council is actually managing an improvement agenda in a very difficult financial climate. Part of the vision, of course, will be the need to modernise our service and the Youth Service nationally has not changed much for over 40 years. We need to ensure that our services help those who need help and support at the earliest opportunity.

We will be consulting with young people regarding that service modernisation in time and we will be ensuring that we will get value for money for every public pound spent on
children, young people and their families.

At the end of this process I actually believe that the universal provision we all value in this Council will be better than it has ever been before so I have to reject your motion, and it is worth pointing out, reminding members that because of the legacy of financial mismanagement by your former Government we find ourselves in the situation where savings absolutely need to be made.

It was mentioned as well by Councillor Wilcox about Greece, Portugal and Ireland and the situation they face. Well were Gordon Brown still Prime Minister we would undoubtedly be in the same boat. Rather shockingly, I understand, the former Prime Minister, the man who de-regulated banks and took his eyes off them, the man who overloaded the credit card, the national credit card and has left us paying £120 million a day, is actually fancied for the top job at the IMF, an international regulator, and your Party support it. You are in denial. It is like putting Billy Bunter in charge of a cake shop. (Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Charles.

CLLR CHARLES: Yes, and that was a bit like putting an archaeologist in charge of digging holes. How deep are you going to go?

I think firstly it is a shame, Councillor Lewer, he did not have the courtesy to listen to what Councillor Gillott said rather than just reading out a prepared speech before you had even heard what the discussion was about. You started off – and Kevin will pick this up – by saying the service is going to be targeted and sharpened and at the sharp end. Throughout all of his speech he made the argument about universal services and at the end you thought “I had better pick this up, it will be better.”

Let me pick up a couple of points that the Chair made in his speech at the beginning. The first one was about multi-agency teams, they are going to be in the hearts of communities you proudly said. It shows your complete lack of understanding of communities in this county because the Killamarsh MAT is going to be in Eckington. My 10,000 residents will most definitely say to you that is not the heart of our community in Killamarsh putting a multi-agency team in Eckington. Quite similar to the parallel that Kevin has given you in his patch. It does not work having people so far away, it is wrong.

The worst thing though that you said in your opening speech, which caused me great offence I have to say, you were saying you were proud of the achievements you have had and one of the achievements you have made is reducing staff numbers. I found that deeply offensive. I think the people who have had to leave this organisation will find that even more deeply offensive because it was an appalling comment to make in a speech by the Chair of this Council to say you are proud of the achievement of losing staff and people losing their jobs.

Let me look at some of the jobs that are going. A couple of weeks ago I went to three leaving occasions for five senior members of staff in the Youth Service. I won’t mention them, you will know who they are, but some worked very closely to me. Some of those people were distraught. They volunteered to go but they were distraught. They were stuck: “Do I go or do I stay and work in the Youth Service that the Tory Controlled County Council is introducing? It is not the universal service that we have devoted our lives to.” This came through from every single one of those people leaving. They are all distraught. They were distraught at leaving this organisation that they have given their working lives to, to the young people they have given their working lives to and what is going to become of it? I think it is shameful the
comments you made earlier and I think you should reflect on them in future.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewer.

CLLR LEWER: Thank you, Chairman. I remember the speech you made very well and that is a complete fabrication and misrepresentation of the statements that were made. I move that the motion be put, Chairman.

CLLR SPENCER: I will second that, Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have had a move to end the debate and it has been duly seconded. Can I put that to the vote please?

CLLR GILLOTT: Do I get a right of reply, Chair?

CLLR CHARLES: Who seconded it?

MR McELVANEY: Councillor Gillott gets a right of reply if the move to close the debate is carried.

THE CHAIRMAN: The closure motion goes to the vote. Those in favour? Against? Any abstentions? The closure motion was CARRIED. Councillor Gillott, you now have a right to sum up.

CLLR GILLOTT: I mean you are right, he did not answer any of my questions, I did not really expect him to, it was just cotton wool he was talking. It goes back to my point there is no vision, no ideas, nothing coming from the Cabinet member on this point. It comes as no surprise.

What went through my mind as he was speaking was Emperor’s new clothes, he does not know what is going off on the ground in his department. It is a frightening thought, Emperor’s new clothes and Councillor Lewis.

You have been very lucky over the last two years, you have been a Tory Council with Labour spending levels. You have had a Labour Government funding you and I don’t remember any of you standing up over the last two years saying, “We have an economic crisis, you are giving us too much money” hand it back. None of you said that. Indeed twelve months ago Councillor Hart stood up and criticised the Labour Government for taking a tough decision and taking money off this Authority, reducing its budget over crime and disorder funding just before an election, by coincidence. Chickens are coming home to roost now, you are having to take decisions and the decision is based on the funding given you by your Government. There is a day of destiny in two weeks and one day’s time that many of you are going to have to face, including the Party over there as well. I have a suspicion that many of you will have more time to spend at this Authority rather than at District Councils after that day. No doubt Councillor Flitter will be able to earn his 15% Special Responsibility Allowance as well and put the time in.

I am not against the MATs I am all in favour of the MATs but it is how you implement it, that is the difference. That is the key in this.

One or two things I did not mention. Buildings are beginning to come on the agenda as well. Buildings are not everything but buildings are important to the delivery of a service and
when you begin to look at the proper disposal there are some new service buildings on there and when you talk to staff there is a strong suspicion that others might appear on there as well or at least there will cease to be a Youth Service building and become some other form of County Council use.

I also want to deal with this point that Councillor Spencer keeps making about having to put right Labour’s profligacy. I have a quote here. It is to the CBI Conference 15 July 2008 and I will read it to you:

“This is why we are sticking to Labour’s spending totals. Taken alone they are tight. With rising inflation and unemployment creeping upwards they will become tighter.”

That was David Cameron. In 2008 you supported the Labour Government’s spending targets, you supported that. The only thing that changed was the economic crisis, the banking crisis, and the big political difference is how you dealt with that. We took one set of decisions, you have taken another. Had you been in Government then the cuts would have started earlier, the banks would have shut and this Council would have been in a mess.

All this comes down at the end of the day to how we look after the kids in Derbyshire, what level of service we provide and what the priority is. We know what your priorities are, it is quite clear. As I say two weeks and one day we will know what the people of Derbyshire think as well.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have a motion before this Council, it has been duly seconded. Recorded vote.

MR ACKRILL: Councillors are asked to indicate whether they wish to vote for, against, or abstain on the motion.

CLLR ALLEN: For.
CLLR J ALLSOP: Against.
CLLR S ALLSOP: Against.
CLLR ATKINS: Abstain.
CLLR BALDRY: (Absent).
CLLR BIRKIN: For.
CLLR BLAKE: Against.
CLLR BLANK: For.
CLLR BOOTH: For.
CLLR BOWLEY: Against.
CLLR BRADFORD: (Absent).
CLLR BURROWS: For.
CLLR CAMM: (Absent).
CLLR CHAPMAN: For.
CLLR CHARLES: For.
CLLR COX: For.
CLLR COYLE: For.
CLLR CRITCHLOW: Against.
CLLR DIXON: For.
CLLR ELLIS: Against.
CLLR FARRINGTON: Against.
CLLR FLITTER: Abstain.
CLLR FORD: Against.
CLLR GILLOTT: For.
CLLR HARRISON: Against.
CLLR HART: Against.
CLLR HICKTON: Against.
CLLR HIGGINBOTTOM: (Absent).
CLLR HOSKER: For.
CLLR JACKSON: Against.
CLLR JONES: Against.
CLLR LACEY: Against.
CLLR LEWER: Against.
CLLR LEWIS: Against.
CLLR LONGDEN: Against.
CLLR LUCAS: For.
CLLR MACDONALD: Against.
CLLR MAJOR: Against.
CLLR MAKIN: Against.
CLLR MOESBY: (Absent).
CLLR MORGAN: (Absent).
CLLR MURRAY: Against.
CLLR K L PARKINSON: Against.
CLLR R A PARKINSON: Against.
CLLR PATTEN: Against.
CLLR PURDY: Against.
CLLR REDDY: Against.
CLLR RIGGOTT: For.
CLLR ROGERS: Abstain.
CLLR RUSSELL: (Absent).
CLLR SMITH: For.
CLLR SPENCER: Against.
CLLR STEVENSON: For.
CLLR STOCKDALE: For.
CLLR STONE: (Absent).
CLLR TAYLOR: (Absent).
CLLR WESTERN: For.
CLLR G WHARMBY: Against.
CLLR J WHARMBY: Against.
CLLR WILCOX: For.
CLLR WILLIAMS: For.
CLLR WILSON: Against.
CLLR TWIGG: You missed me out, Chairman.
MR ACKRILL: Sorry, Councillor Twigg, how could I miss you out, Judith. Councillor Twigg, how do you wish to vote?

CLLR TWIGG: Against.

MR ACKRILL: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: The motion was DEFEATED.

Motion 4 submitted by Councillor David Allen.

CLLR ALLEN: Thank you, Chair.

The Government has introduced a “natural break” in the proposals to change the NHS. This will give Derbyshire County Council the opportunity to comment on the proposals which will affect all the people in the county. This Council calls on the Government as part of the consultation to abandon the opening up of the NHS to any willing provider.

People will have read the resolution and I would hope it is perhaps something which we could all agree on. The Government itself has called for a break in the proposals on the changes to the Health Service and I think this gives us the opportunity to have some conference, some debate and say where we would go. I even hope there might be some support from the Liberals who I understand unanimously objected to the changes when they had a conference a bit back.

I think the whole changes are fraught with problems. They are fraught with difficulties. They will destroy the Health Service as we know it, the Health Service which I think most people love and enjoy and feel it is the pride of the world.

There are so many American companies sat out there wanting to use any willing provider to try and undermine what is existing at the present time. They want to get in. They want to see privatisation of the Health Service and I am sure that is not what any member in this Council wants to see.

You can say “It is not a lot to do with us” but I maintain it is. We have a Scrutiny function which in a little while will be diluted to virtually nothing in terms of health, but at the moment Scrutiny has looked at many aspects of health. We have had meetings, we have had discussions with health officials from the PCT, from the SHA talking about development of services and each time I have had a rant in there as far as I could. I really feel that the people who are selling it from the PCT their heart is not in it.

That does not mean I do not think GPs have a role in that, I think a compromise could be, and it may even come out in this pause, is that GPs have a role in some sort of PCT body which could then direct how services go, but GPs are private contractors, they are not part of the NHS. They are private contractors within a structure which in the end you could say was a cop out. When it was originally created GPs should have been part of it.

There was a conference at the back end of last year when Councillor Jones had that, I am talking about the changes in social care. One of the comments in there was about the change to the Health Service and even your members felt these changes were going too far and were not really acceptable.
There is a direct link to adult care. I think if you look at articles in The Guardian and articles recently there is talk about the delayed waiting list currently coming through which will get worse. Things like hip replacements, knee replacements, cataracts are all things which are being put on hold. People are having to wait a lot longer. That can have a direct impact into falls, people wanting home care, residential care whatever. I think there is a good reason for saying this is not on.

There is no support for it. You look around the public. The papers are full of it, nobody wants it. I read every day. I don’t tend to read the Mail because I can’t reach it, it is on the top shelf. I read The Guardian, Mirror, all these papers are very much opposed to the changes. The nurses unanimously voted or did not want to have the Secretary of State come to the conference because of all these changes. In fact he seems to have disappeared a little bit. Consultants are against it. Again I could quote from the The Guardian. Nearly all professionals in the Health Service see this as being totally fraught. In fact it was not really in the manifesto. There was a minor paragraph somewhere, subsection whatever, but Cameron has actually said if they had come forward with these proposals they would not have won the election.

I think this gives us the opportunity to actually debate it. As I said earlier we have only had one Paper on this where it talks about “public health” which arguably is the right place. I have no strong feeling where public health sits but I do not see opposition for that coming to the local authority. We could now debate and hopefully have some influence on what goes on with these plans to change the Health Service and I hope perhaps for once we can get unanimous support, say “Let’s debate it, let’s have a discussion and put our comments forward to the Government” now we have this pause. As I say I hope we can all come together and agree to do that. Thank you, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Have you a seconder for this motion?

CLLR STOCKDALE: Thank you, Chair. I would like to second what Councillor Allen has said because I fully support every word he has said. I would only be reiterating now probably what he has said if I go through what I have actually written down, but I want to bring to you the fact that a conference would probably be a very useful tool. I think it could bring out some major issues that could be ironed out and worked on at Central Government level in order to bring about some proper decisions, some constructive decisions, not the stuff that is actually destroying what is a fantastic department of the organisation, the NHS, Primary Care Trust and everybody else.

The decisions that are affecting us that are being made at the moment you need to bear in mind don’t just affect the elderly, but remember the decisions that do get disregarded will come back and bite all of us one day because something will happen and it will bring this back to you if we allow it to be destroyed. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. The motion has been duly seconded and it is now open for debate. Councillor Parkinson.

CLLR K L PARKINSON: Thank you, Mr Chairman. The first point for Councillor Allen’s interest about the American pariahs waiting at our market borders in the NHS, I worked with one of those American pariahs for the best part of 13 months in the NHS and yes it is true, there is a significant resistance to them from NHS providers. Those NHS providers that have predominantly focused on protectionism within the NHS, but I did support the principle of
NHS providers that any efficiencies delivered by these service improvement organisations from outside of our own borders, that profit gets pulled back into the United States whereas I would rather see those service improvements reinvested back into the system.

To pull you back to your motion though, because I got a little bit confused with what it is you are actually against, the motion is to ask this Council to withdraw or to ask the Government to withdraw the any willing provider process from the NHS. I find it difficult to support this motion for two reasons. Firstly, I question why Councillor Allen is asking a Conservative Controlled Council to ask Government to abandon this 2007 Labour Government policy? Since 2008 any willing provider has delivered much needed plurality or service improvements that have helped to spread best practice by opening up the NHS and improving communications in collaboration between multi-professional health and social care providers who together have implemented more effective patient pathways and overall enhanced the diagnosis, treatment and recovery service to patients. Any willing provider has allowed NHS commissioners, including many NHS hospitals and NHS Mental Health Trusts to contract for services, often innovative solution services from the charitable and the third sector. He has also provided the private sector operating in the public sector, such as leisure centres with referral contracts to provide equally qualified practitioners, for example physiotherapy, weight management and obesity therapy significantly allowing non-NHS providers to reduce the number of patients with Type 2 diabetes, this significant crisis for our NHS and a growing trend in our children. Any willing provider can therefore, in its few short years, claim that it has increased standards by sharing best practices through a broader skilled workforce whilst increased patient choice through services available closer to home bringing me to my second point.

The other predominant beneficiaries of any willing provider have been primary care, the very GPs who diagnose and make the referral decisions with their patients, who themselves hold minor surgery and other clinic contracts through any willing provider.

In Councillor Allen’s own division the first GP practice listed on the NHS Choices website is registered as holding such contracts. Is he asking Council to take away choice and convenience from his division and for that practice the opportunity to play their part in improving local standards and generate additional income that will be reinvested in further services for his electorate? On these two points alone I cannot support this motion.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Flitter.

CLLR FLITTER: Thank you, Chair. It is 20-to-7 so I will be brief, although I regret not being able to speak on the last item. I am getting infuriated at calls for motions of debate to come to a close when I believe democratic right is to debate things in this Chamber.

However, Councillor Allen is quite right, the Liberal Democrats do see this as a very serious issue. We have shown in depth that we are not happy with the proposed changes to the NHS. It might be worth noting that a paper with 150 signatures has recently gone down to London to urge the Liberal Democrats to force a rethink within the Coalition to bring those changes about because there are serious inadequacies which we could not support.

However, I did think like the last speaker, Councillor Parkinson, why this actually came to the table today because Labour started this off in 2007 which makes me wonder why on earth we were talking about the “willing providers”. Listening to what he has said just literally made sense. We are not happy, we are seeking changes but it does beg that question: why are the Labour Party going back on something they started at the moment?
THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Gillott.

CLLR GILLOTT: Thank you, Chair. I was not going to speak on this but having listened to Councillor Parkinson I feel compelled to stand up. I assume you wrote the speech yourself, Councillor Parkinson, by the level of ignorance it showed!

Yes, we did introduce choice. It was choice based on where you went. You could choose your hospital. You could choose your provider. It was not choice based on price. That is the big difference now. Your Party wants to introduce choice based on price. It wants to introduce competition into the Health Service, that is what you want to do. That is the thing that will fragment the Health Service from a National Health Service into local competitors, driving price down but also driving the quality of the service down.

It is not just us saying this, every professional body within the medical service is opposing these changes. Even the Lib-Dems are opposing it. Even they get something right.

The Health Service is vital to everybody in Derbyshire, everybody benefits. This Council has a duty to represent the views of the people of the county and we should be calling on the Government to change its policy.

David Cameron said he could sum up his belief or his views in three letters, N.H.S. What else did he say: “No top down reorganisation”. Well we have got the biggest reorganisation that the Health Service has seen in many years, £1.6 billion the latest cost, money that could be spent on providing a service just on this ideologically driven review.

In terms of the motion therefore, Chair, it is vital that we do support it. We listen to what you say, and I am sure the Derbyshire people will listen to what you say as well and you will pay the price in due course. Anybody who deals with the Health Service and destroys the Health Service in the way you are proposing to do it will pay a heavy price.

I am not going to say much more, Chair, I was not intending to speak, but the level of ignorance that comes over from the benches opposite is just at times disgraceful.

CLLR BURROWS: What is the man of the people going to say about that?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Allen, do you wish to sum up on your motion?

CLLR ALLEN: Thank you, Chair. You are right, Kevin said it, I held this bit back about Labour’s involvement in any willing provider. It was the choice part that was right and I think that needs reiterating. I think in fact the wording now has been to changing from Government, they are talking about “any qualified provider” because I think they realise the whole market open to private companies is a disaster.

Councillor Parkinson talks about GP surgeries doing minor surgery. Yes, that is fine with things like that. If I have a malignant melanoma I would not go to my GP for it to be taken off because how many GPs have nibbled about at malignant melanomas that have spread like mad. They don’t see many, they don’t understand, you go to a specialist for that.

We disagree totally. I think the American companies would love to get into the Health Service. They would love to destroy it. They would love to undermine it. They would love to have a two level system. You might long for the American system where they look in your
pocket to see if you can pay for your care before you get anywhere. I don’t want that. I don’t want the Health Service to be destroyed and I think if we can do a little bit to say “This is wrong, stop what you are doing” then I think we will have solved something. It is too valuable, it is too important and I come back: GPs have a major role in life but GPs can’t do everything. They can’t manage the Health Service, they can’t diagnose, they can’t do everything. I think where there might have been a failure, there might have been a failure from the PCTs reacting to GPs’ demands sooner than just destroying it and putting it all in pockets because GPs will abandon the care. They will put companies in to run it and the companies will take the profit.

I think we have an opportunity. It is clear we are not going to have an agreement now because you have made your mind up. I have been consistent in my views about the changes. I have said many a time at both Scrutiny and elsewhere I do not believe in the changes. I do not believe at times the Labour Party had the right view. They were going too far and too fast, but their prime bit was you have a choice of where you go, which is what you should have.

I live in hope that somebody might agree to this resolution because I think it has got words in it, it talks about us having a view on the future of something which is so important to the people of Derbyshire and the country as a whole. Thank you, Chair. If we could have a recorded vote to be consistent.

THE CHAIRMAN: Recorded vote.

MR ACKRILL: Councillors are asked to indicate whether they wish to vote for, against, or abstain on the motion.

CLLR ALLEN: For.

CLLR J ALLSOP: Against.

CLLR S ALLSOP: Against.

CLLR ATKINS: Abstain.

CLLR BALDRY: (Absent).

CLLR BIRKIN: For.

CLLR BLAKE: Against.

CLLR BLANK: For.

CLLR BOOTH: For.

CLLR BOWLEY: Against.

CLLR BRADFORD: (Absent).

CLLR BURROWS: For.

CLLR CAMM: (Absent).

CLLR CHAPMAN: For.
CLLR CHARLES: For.

CLLR COX: For.

CLLR COYLE: For.

CLLR CRITCHLOW: Against.

CLLR DIXON: For.

CLLR ELLIS: Against.

CLLR FARRINGTON: Against.

CLLR FLITTER: Abstain.

CLLR FORD: Against.

CLLR GILLOTT: For.

CLLR HARRISON: Against.

CLLR HART: Against.

CLLR HICKTON: Against.

CLLR HIGGINBOTTOM: (Absent).

CLLR HOSKER: For.

CLLR JACKSON: Against.

CLLR JONES: Against.

CLLR LACEY: Against.

CLLR LEWER: Against.

CLLR LEWIS: Against.

CLLR LONGDEN: Against.

CLLR LUCAS: For.

CLLR MACDONALD: Against.

CLLR MAJOR: Against.

CLLR MAKIN: Against.

CLLR MOESBY: (Absent).
CLLR MORGAN: (Absent).
CLLR MURRAY: Against.
CLLR K L PARKINSON: Against.
CLLR R A PARKINSON: Against.
CLLR PATTEN: Against.
CLLR PURDY: Against.
CLLR REDDY: Against.
CLLR RIGGOTT: For.
CLLR ROGERS: Abstain.
CLLR RUSSELL: (Absent).
CLLR SMITH: For.
CLLR SPENCER: Against.
CLLR STEVENSON: For.
CLLR STOCKDALE: For.
CLLR STONE: (Absent).
CLLR TAYLOR: (Absent).
CLLR TWIGG: Against.
CLLR WESTERN: For.
CLLR G WHARMBY: Against.
CLLR J WHARMBY: Against.
CLLR WILCOX: For.
CLLR WILLIAMS: For.
CLLR WILSON: Against.

THE CHAIRMAN: The motion is NOT CARRIED.

19   REPORTS

THE CHAIRMAN: The next item on the agenda is Item 19, to consider Reports. I
would like to ask the Council if they would make a slight change on this report. We have had two gentleman sat at the back of the room here and their item is (d) on the report. I would like to bring that forward so they could go home, if they wish. Thank you.

(d) Independent Remuneration Panel on the Members’ Allowances Scheme

MR HODGSON: Chair, if the Council are happy with that I will say a few brief words to introduce the report, my covering report or the Joint Officers’ covering report, but the main substance is the report of the Independent Members’ Remuneration Panel.

We have had a new Panel for the last twelve months or so. They have spent a lot of time looking at different issues. It is part of the scheme, it is part of our regular review and monitoring of the scheme and their report is attached in the papers, as is an amended Members’ Allowances Scheme to reflect their proposals. I do know that Steven Briscoe and Alan Hutchinson have been sat here for many hours now. I would like to thank them for all the work they have done on the report for us but also for their patience today and then hand over to them.

MR BRISCOE: Chairman, I do commend this Independent Remuneration Panel report to you for your Council’s consideration.

As has been explained, we were appointed in 2010 and there are four of us, two of whom are present today. We come from both public sector and commercial backgrounds and we do bring a lot of experience with us, but nonetheless we have benefited from a lot of very helpful advice from both councillors and officers and I would like to put on record our thanks for that during the year.

Turning to our report. This year our report has related only to issues which were referred to us. We have looked at the Special Responsibility Allowances, specifically as they related to Opposition leaders. We are making recommendations. Perhaps the main one is that the Special Responsibility Allowance should be extended not only to the main Opposition Group but also to cover Leaders of Minority Opposition Groups. You will see that we have put some conditions on that but I do commend it to you.

We have also looked at the allowances for members who care for dependants. We do consider it important that the allowances should be appropriate for this. We have recommended a small increase and we have recommended a system of indexation which we consider to be valuable. We have also recommended some conditions which will prevent abuse.

We have looked at the terms and conditions which you all have relating to your travel and subsistence. We have endorsed the Single Status concept which the Chief Executive has introduced during last year and we have introduced some detailed conditions which relate to it. As they are in the report I will not go through those in detail.

We were asked to look at expenses and to consider whether there were some changes which we would recommend in relation to expenses. We judged that public opinion has changed over the last year or two and that it was now advisable that there should be more detailed disclosure of expenses and that this should be available for members of the public to see in a more transparent way on your website. Again those details are available within our report.

Finally, we have set out some issues for our work programme for next year but I will
reiterate what the report says: that we do welcome suggestions, be it from officers or members of the Council, or indeed members of the public in Derbyshire. Thank you. I do recommend this report for your consideration, sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you and thank you for your patience. Councillor Lewer.

CLLR LEWER: Thank you, Chairman. I would like to thank the members of the Panel for their hard work and careful consideration of the issues involved. I think the fact that this is being debated in this way with this report by this sort of Panel is a very healthy move forward for this Council. I, therefore, am happy to move the recommendations of the report.

THE CHAIRMAN: Have we a seconder for that?

CLLR SPENCER: Second it, Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Western.

CLLR WESTERN: Thank you, Chair. Can I thank the members of the Panel for their diligence in producing this report. There are some issues in this obviously that the Labour Group would wish to support, particularly the increase in the Carers of Dependants’ Allowance. As long as that is receipted expenditure I think that is an entirely legitimate thing to do.

Can I point out there are some errors on the schedule that is attached to this, Schedule 1 on page 9 which lists the Special Responsibility Allowances, because it makes reference to ten Cabinet Support Members where the report which we had earlier only showed nine. It also refers to four Chairs and Vice-Chair of Scrutiny, which again we are going to be discussing in a minute, and it is not as it should be.

Reference was made to the fact that you have reported this year on issues that were referred to you. It will be looking at the allowance for the Leader of the main Opposition Group. I am sure members around the Chamber will be pleased to know that for the next two years that person will be me and if you are looking at that with an option of increasing it then please do not waste your time because if the recommendation were to come of an increase over the next two years I would have to forego it in the current circumstances. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Any further comments? (No response) I put the recommendation that we accept the report.

CLLR CHARLES: For those changes, Chair?

THE CHAIRMAN: Proposed.

MR McELVANEY: As I understand it you are voting to accept the recommendations of the Panel, subject to the minor textual arrangements pointed out by Councillor Western.

THE CHAIRMAN: For? I think that is CARRIED.

I am going to take a comfort break for five minutes now.

CLLR SMITH: Chairman, your timing is impeccable. We wanted a comfort break an hour ago!
THE CHAIRMAN: I think I have already broken the record. We will reconvene at 10-past-7.

(Short break)

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we resume please?

(a) Departmental Service Plans

Agenda Item 19. We have dealt with item (d). We are now reverting back to the list. It is the Departmental Service Plans. Mr Nick Hodgson, Chief Executive.

MR HODGSON: Thank you, George. Very briefly, it is a covering report to the Departmental Service Plans that were recommended to you by Cabinet and I think they have been deposited in the political group rooms for a few weeks now.

The situation is slightly different this year. This is a different backcloth to the process. It is a process of refreshing the service plans from the previous twelve months but we have a significant change in that we now do not have the burden of responding to Local Area Agreements or CPAs or CAAs, or hopefully many of the Government targets, so we can actually use these plans in the future to concentrate on absolutely key County Council priorities, Derbyshire priorities, and I hope a lot of that is reflected in the refresher plans we have in front of us today. They are plans about how we are delivering the Authority’s priorities established in the Council Plan and how we are going to measure success and measure the impact of the different proposals. I commend them to you and I will leave it there, Chair, only to say there are two recommendations: one is about the service plans and the second one is about delegating authority to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, all the minor amendments to the Highways Schemes. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lucas.

CLLR LUCAS: Thank you, Chair. Well it is all in a word. The Chief Executive can call it “refresh” I call them “cuts”.

If we look at the Service Plan for Environmental Services I will be the first to say the Environmental Services Department does, and always has done, an excellent job in prioritising their schemes and putting things together for the money that is going to be made available for the Environmental Services’ responsibilities, which cover a whole myriad of things really. If we look back at 2010/11 there was some £27,845,000 to be invested into our Environmental Services and in the one 2011/12 there is £19,990,000 which obviously means there is not as much to go round to probably do what they would be hoping to do with the demands, and there is a demand led department for Environmental Services.

My only point, and I have taken this up with the Director and the Assistant Director, there are a number of references in the plan called “various”. I understand that once there is more meat on the bones with that allocation of monies under “various” that we as members will be informed. All I would ask is if it affects local members and monies being spent in a particular patch across Derbyshire that those members be informed as to what that is and when it is likely to take place.

On that, Chair, yes I can understand the difficulties, nearly £20 million this year as compared to nearly £28 million the year before, but I do feel sure that Environmental Services
will do the job that is expected of them. Thank you, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Councillor Gillott.

CLLR GILLOTT: Thank you, Chair. Mine is a question to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and I appreciate that Councillor Spencer is new to the role but perhaps he will just bear with me. I am afraid vanity has had to give way, I am now having to use glasses to read, Councillor Spencer, so perhaps you could help me.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think you have to address the questions to the author of the report, which is the Chief Executive.

CLLR GILLOTT: I think at some point we get the chance to ask Cabinet members questions on these as well, don’t we?

MR McELVANEY: I think the position is that the report has been presented. It will need to be moved and seconded and there can be a debate about the proposals.

CLLR GILLOTT: I am happy to wait and ask in a few moments.

MR McELVANEY: It is to contribute to a debate not really to ask each other questions, but you can in the form of a debate.

MR HODGSON: Can I just clarify that if I may, Chairman. Normally in these instances it is questions of fact to the officers then it gets thrown open to the debate.

THE CHAIRMAN: We need to move the motion then.

CLLR LEWER: Chairman, in the absence of any questions to the Strategic Director I will move the service plans as stated.

CLLR SPENCER: I will second that, Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have a proposer and a seconder that we move these. Can we take a vote on it please?

CLLR LEWER: We are not quite there yet. If a couple of members want to speak then that is fine.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Gillott.

CLLR GILLOTT: Thank you, Chair. It is a simple question, I am just asking the Cabinet member to take pity on me really. I have scanned through this and I may have missed it so could you tell me how many of the capital schemes in the annexe actually apply to my area of North Wingfield and Tupton please?

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Spencer.

CLLR SPENCER: Chairman, the answer to that is no, but I am sure the Strategic Director can provide Councillor Gillott with that information at a later date and given the comments by Councillor Lucas, which I am more than happy to agree with as far as the formation to the local members is concerned, I just say the various scenario came about by his
instigation, this is just a very updated version of it.

CLLR LUCAS: It did. Chair, but it is the volume. This time on a less spend there are 45 various, on the one previous in 2010/11, 75, and I did give my consent over that when I was Cabinet member. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Western.

CLLR WESTERN: Thank you, Chair. Yes, it is a different environment than we have seen before and I think that is reflected in the way these plans are written and the sort of brevity of them. I think the proof of the pudding will be in twelve months’ time when we see the actual reality of what is deliverable.

I have only one specific question and it is partly arising here because I did not get chance to contribute to an earlier debate, and that is on the Children and Younger Adults Department Plan on page 5 going over to page 6 around multi-agency teams. Like other speakers previously I think multi-agency teams are absolutely the right idea in principle but in terms of delivery the multi-agency teams are this year’s version of SAP because the theory seems to be right but the delivery seems to be lagging behind. We have some multi-agency teams where they are not able to be in their accommodation so they are acting as virtual teams. We have members of those teams who do not seem to be clear about what their role is now or in the future. Certainly the full-time youth workers who I have spoken to recently who have moved into these teams are not sure whether their role has changed as from now to be targeted on certain groups of young people or whether they still carry on with the old day job. There are issues around supervision and line management of part-time youth workers and this all feeds into the uncertainty around premises as well.

The issue I am referring to in this plan specifically is something I raised at Cabinet at the time when the voluntary and community and independent sector cuts were being proposed last year. There were certain voluntary sector contracts that were expiring on the 31 March and the suggestion was that we did not need to carry on with those contracts because the multi-agency teams would be doing this work. I mentioned specifically the Action for Children Runaway Service which was a very specialised service that started in one corner of the Authority and was so successful that it was rolled out across the whole of the Authority, very specialist work with very specialist and skilled workers in the voluntary sector that you purport to support.

Now the idea is that these multi-agency teams are suddenly going to be expert in all these specialised areas as well as doing their day job, as well as trying to get a team to gel. I did say at the time that it would help the transition if those contracts were extended for six or twelve months but that was refused.

We are in a limbo land at the moment where the voluntary sector contracts have finished, the MAT teams are struggling to get established and start work, and those services are not being provided any more. It does seem to me like we have made a bit of a mess of the transition process and I am just fearful for the young people who are going to find themselves without a service.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewis.

CLLR LEWIS: Thank you, Chairman. Yes, we are ten, twenty days into multi-agency teams and already we know it has produced some duplication by this new way of working. We
always knew there were going to be some issues with premises in the early days. As I say we are very early into this process.

You are right to note the Runaway Service will be incorporated into the multi-agency teams but there were also other VCI contracts that have been extended to take into account this period and there are local commissioning opportunities around other services that will be attached to multi-agency teams. Any other questions I am sure the Director can answer.

MR THOMAS (Deputy Strategy Director for Children’s Services): I think it is important to recognise that the multi-agency teams represent a significant change in how we do business at the Council. Establishing 33 teams covering the 41 school clusters in their communities has not been an easy task at all but it was done with extensive consultation and members of the teams, including Youth Services, were all involved in that consultation as well as key stakeholders, schools themselves, people in the communities, it was an extensive consultation. That was reported to Cabinet recently when Cabinet agreed to introduce the teams.

I pick up Councillor Western’s point around the Runaways Project. One of the things we did in terms of managing the transition was to establish a Transitions Group. Myself and other senior staff are going through the various issues that need to be picked up by that Group. One of them will be around managing runaways, as will be managing bullying and harassment. There have been concerns raised regarding bullying and harassment but I have to say eradicating bullying is everybody’s business, no one single officer in the Authority should be charged with that responsibility. Similarly with safeguarding.

The multi-agency teams’ project has been endorsed by Ofsted in their recent detailed inspection, as it has in Professor Eileen Munro’s recent report into the protection of children across England. The facts are there and speak for themselves. We have seen an unprecedented increase in children looked after in this Authority over the past three years, around 30%, and we know that those children suffer poorer outcomes when compared to their peers. That is not good enough. You are five times less likely to achieve your five A-Cs in English and Maths if you are a looked after child. These teams are there to prevent that situation from happening, to ensure that we intervene earlier.

If we look at the serious case reviews that have taken place where children have died or have been seriously injured, 40% of those cases have not been known to Social Care, have not been known to Social Care, and that is something we want to address, so by harnessing the skills we have, by integrating working and ensuring we are sharing information better, our aim is to ensure we intervene at the earliest possible opportunity. That is the intention.

With regard to the concerns you have raised we have introduced an evaluation framework as well as a performance framework, so we are continuing to monitor closely the roll-out of the teams. Even today we held a DJC with Trade Unions to listen to those concerns and respond to them. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Flitter.

CLLR FLITTER: Thank you, Chair. Well I took Nick’s point that this is just a refresher. Of course these plans were put in place 2010/2014 and during the budget debates we have to look at what we can do within the following year.

I have three main points actually. One is in Adult Care when we talk about personal
budgets. Yes, I agree personal budgets give control to those people who are able to take control but it takes the right criteria, availability, and cost of services to actually give people the choice. I hope that is taken on board when officers look at the criteria in this section.

One thing I am concerned about within Adult Care, this is something that is termed as “comprehensive information”. Well for those of us on Scrutiny I think it was Councillor Bradford who brought a whole host of publications from this Council that was not done, they were not done from central departments they were done by the departments themselves and there seemed very very little control on what was being produced with no actual figures of cost put towards it. When it talks about “comprehensive information” I hope we limit that because it ought to be noted in that very same meeting we were told that Andrew was responsible for all publications from wherever it came. I hope that some type of control is taken on board.

The other thing, children and young people I have to just mention. The one thing that concerns me in this day and age is healthier children arriving at school. I think there are a whole host of issues attached to that. I really hope that we do not only look at the issues that stand out but look at the extra support we can give within the classrooms.

I just have to comment, many people in my Ward would not forgive me if I did not mention that we do welcome the Environmental Services’ vision because that is actually working with local communities. I am very sorry to say that in this area of Matlock we do falter on that and we have a poor relationship. I am hoping now that that relationship will change. I hope we will listen to the concerns of local people and have a sympathetic ear. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we move the recommendations now?

CLLR LEWER: Yes, I move that we take the vote, Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: For? Against? CARRIED

(b) Changes to the Council’s Constitution

THE CHAIRMAN: 19(b) Changes to the Constitution.

MR McELVANEY: Thank you, Chairman, I will be brief. The report, as it indicates, concerns changes to the constitution and so these are matters for the full Council having been considered on their route here by the Standards Committee. The comments and observations of the members of the Standards Committee are contained within the report.

The proposals fall into three areas: administrative amendments. As the title again suggests they are straightforward matters like job titles, a practical suggestion that we remove the time for receiving public questions from 5 o'clock to 12 o'clock on the Friday before the Wednesday of the meeting, and a proposal in respect of the fixing of the Council’s seal.

On public questions the proposal is to limit questions to 200 words, so that is intended to make best use of, albeit flexible at the Chairman’s discretion, 30 minutes which is available for public questions/debate.

Improvement and Scrutiny Committee arrangements. The proposal is that the current or previous four Improvement and Scrutiny Committees should be reduced to three for the reasons set out in the report.

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Finally, as the report indicates, we do anticipate that there will be further changes to the constitution as the year progresses, there is a lot of legislation that we will have to have regard to. I am happy to answer factual questions. Thank you, Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Councillor Western.

CLLR WESTERN: A factual question, Chair. On page 3 of the report under the “Improvement and Scrutiny Arrangements” second paragraph, bearing in mind the need for budget reductions has it been costed out whether this will save any money and, if so, how much?

MR McELVANEY: No, it has not been costed out in that way. It is more about making the best use of the staff available. As you will see to my left we have Roy Ackrill here, who is now Head of Democratic Services and continues to be the Council’s Scrutiny Officer. It is for those structural organisational reasons that the proposals are made. Thank you, Chairman.

MR HODGSON: Chairman, if I may just add to that. There are financial savings associated with this. They are included in the financial plans for 2011/12. The fact we did not replace Dave Molyneux and Roy has taken on that role both of Dave Molyneux’s previous work on Democratic Services as well as Improvement and Scrutiny has certainly saved us about £60,000.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewer.

CLLR LEWER: Chairman, in the absence of any further questions to the Director of Legal Services I will move these amendments. They are simple, sensible refreshers that reflect the situation we are in. They will enable proper use of public questions and they will also enable Scrutiny to continue to fulfil a very important role within the organisation, improvement and scrutiny being of equal importance, and also will give a significant role to the Scrutiny and Management Committee to ensure that each Scrutiny Committee balances with the others in terms of workload by mutual agreement. I will move that, Chairman.

CLLR SPENCER: I will second the motion, Chairman.


CLLR WESTERN: Thank you, Chair. I think it is a sad day when we see a report like this. Administrative arrangements, no problem with that, that is pretty much straightforward. Public questions, this follows I think a very sad trend that has been happening over the past two years in terms of this Council closing down opportunities for debate. We have seen it with Cabinet with the removal of the Opposition place from Cabinet so there isn’t any debate there at all. There is an opportunity for Steve and myself to ask questions at the beginning but there is no debate and now we are limiting the opportunity of the public to come and speak. What we ought to be doing is encouraging the public into this place. We see precious little of them as it is, we ought to be encouraging them to come even more than they do.

I do note with some distaste the ropes that have appeared at the back, I do not know what that is about. We ought to remember why we are here. This Council only exists to serve the public, that is why we are here, and if we are not prepared to listen to the public I think we really ought to just wonder why we are here.
Totally opposed to that. I think there are ways of managing public questions better than there perhaps have been in the past.

While I am on the subject, can I just ask for some clarity about what happened as a result of an incident at the last Council meeting when the public were speaking when there were several members of the Conservative Group who were laughing while a member of the public was asking a question and the Chair did say he would deal with it. We have had nothing back to say that that has been dealt with and I would appreciate some feedback on that.

Even more significant are the changes that are suggested for Improvement and Scrutiny. By combining the two Scrutiny Committees that oversee all the services to do with children and families and all the services to do with adult care and health you are creating a massive workload for that Committee. Scrutiny Committees, it seems to me, are already hard worked in terms of Working Groups and trying to co-ordinate diaries for that. I think what will happen here, especially given the changes that are coming through on health and adult care that we have noted already today, that Committee is only going to be able to scratch at the surface, it will not be able to do a proper job, it will not be able to get to the heart of anything and I think this is clearly not about saving money it is about officer reorganisation it seems to me, from what has been said, and about closing down another valued opportunity for people to have a debate. I think that is a very retrograde step.

Chair, can I say before I sit down we would like for this whole thing (it does seem there was some debate and some difference of opinion at the Standards Committee it was not a unanimous view). It does note on the bottom of page 2: “Members of the Standards Committee had differing views on these proposals.” Could I ask that this gets referred back to Standards for another look? If we can agree to that then I think we can perhaps find a way forward. If we can’t agree to that then sadly I am afraid my Group will have to oppose this recommendation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Gillott.

CLLR GILLOTT: Yes Chair, I would like to second that proposal. I would like to make two comments really. First of all on public questions. This Council has had a long tradition of encouraging young people to engage in the Civic Society and the democratic process. We have had School Councils, Youth Forum, Youth Parliament, and I know a number of young people from Derbyshire have been down to London, sat in the House of Commons and taken part in debate. Many of them are certainly more articulate than I am and more intelligent than I am and they are certainly capable of coming here to ask questions.

We have seen today that the cuts you are imposing are hitting young people hard and they are one section of the Derbyshire population who can’t come here and ask questions, the constitution does not allow that, you have to be a taxpayer, a voter, or a ratepayer. Therefore I would put in a plea for that to be looked at so that some of the young people who are facing the cuts imposed by this Council can actually come and ask their Cabinet members why they are doing it and hold them to account.

Secondly, with regards to the Improvement and Scrutiny arrangements, I have always been a strong supporter of Improvement and Scrutiny, probably the strongest. I have championed the role of Scrutiny. I have fought for more resources. I have fought for Scrutiny to have a bigger role and for Scrutiny to be taken seriously, so when I see these changes I must admit it is causing some dilemma really because as far as I am concerned in many respects
Scrutiny in Derbyshire has died. You can see the date it died if you read the minutes of the last Finance and Management Committee meeting and what went off there, so when I see changes that reduce the role of Scrutiny on the one hand I feel very sad because Scrutiny has a major role and it should be holding this Authority to account in the way it simply does not happen. We were not allowed to ask questions of Cabinet members in the past at times, all that sort of debate has been curtailed, therefore anything that reduces it on the one hand I feel sad about, but on the other hand given how poorly it has been operated by the Tory administration and what limited talent pool they have had to chair those Committees, reducing it down to three does have its merits. As Anne has said, it is not humanly possible for the new Committee combining these two old Committees to simply do the amount of work that is required, it is just not possible, humanly possible. Even if many of you do lose your seats and are spending more time here you won’t have the number of hours in the day to do it.

On reflection it is with a heavy heart at the moment, to be honest, but I cannot support this it is just a change too many. It is closing down debate, it is making us less and less effective, backbenchers have a reduced role, it is not what Scrutiny is about, it is not what being at this Council is about either.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Flitter.

CLLR FLITTER: Yes Chair, my concerns are also on public questions. I find it very hard to vote for this tonight because being part of a Lib-Dem team that brought public question time into Council in the Dales in the mid-1990s, giving a free-for-all for members of the public to come and challenge the Council, to debate issues, I found that a great step forward. I think this is a retrograde step. I particularly feel that that system that we helped to put in place has never ever been abused since the mid-1990s and I have not seen it abused up here at County level either. No, we have had some lively debates, we have had some questions put forward very forcefully but let’s face it, that is why we are here, we are accountable to local people and we should be allowing them to question us and allow them to make their point of view. I disagree with the 30 minute time limit, I do not think people genuinely will abuse it, but you go on and you say that you are not proposing to limit the length of questions proposed by members. Well that is a different story altogether. As we have seen it is nearly 8 o’clock and we are still here, but nevertheless it is a debating chamber and I welcome the public in here to put their point of view. (Hear, hear)

MR McELVANEY: Just to clarify Chairman. Councillor Western has proposed an amendment which is to refer the matter back to the Standards Committee. I think technically – and it is perhaps the right report to be technical on – we should take a vote on the amendment and then come back to the recommendations. The amendment is to refer the matter back to the Standards Committee. Is that right, Councillor Western, is that what you have in mind?

CLLR WESTERN: That is what I had in mind. I wonder if we can also incorporate that in Councillor Gillott’s suggestion about looking at the situation with young people because I think that is a very important point, for the Standards Committee to consider that?

MR McELVANEY: I think really you could only refer this report back. Councillor Gillott’s comments can be taken into account in another way. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: The proposal by Councillor Western, and it was seconded by Councillor Gillott, can we have a vote on that proposal to refer it back? For? Against? The amendment was NOT CARRIED and we move back to the ---
CLLR LEWER: I move the substantive motion, Chairman.

CLLR SPENCER: Second that, Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can we have a vote on the changes to the constitution? For? Against?

MR McELVANEY: Just to clarify, Chairman, the substantive motion is that the recommendations be approved and you are now putting that to the vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: For that vote? Against? The recommendations have been APPROVED.

(c) Local Transport Plan 2011-2026

THE CHAIRMAN: Item 19c, Derbyshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026. Mr Ian Stephenson will give that report.

MR STEPHENSON (Strategic Director - Environmental Services): Chairman, just to say I appreciate arriving at the item that members have been looking forward to all afternoon, the way in which you have contained your excitement to this point!

It is a key strategic document for the County Council hence the reason it is here at the Council. The key priorities are to provide well maintained roads and rights of way; improve local accessibility and achieve healthier travel habits; provide efficient transport network management and improve road safety and security, and to take a considered approach to new infrastructure. It is very important with the limited resources we have that we invest those wisely. The previous LTPs of this County Council have been judged by the Department for Transport as “excellent”. The Department for Transport are now no longer judging LTPs but I am sure if they were they would judge this as excellent as well and I commend it to the Council. Thank you, Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Spencer.

CLLR SPENCER: Yes, before we move to questions, Chairman, I would just like to pay tribute to my predecessor, Councillor Jackson, and all the people in the department who have contributed to this extensive document that everybody can see for themselves.

It is an aspirational document. It is a very strategic document and I believe that we also need to take into account the present economic climate we find ourselves in, which is a theme that runs right the way through this document and it is based around the resources the Authority has to deliver the aspirations in it. I am more than happy to let Mr Stephenson answer any questions anybody may have. I am happy to move the document, Chairman.


CLLR LUCAS: Thank you, Chair. I think it is only…

CLLR J WHARMBY: Chairman, can I second that please.

CLLR LUCAS: Yes, thank you Chair. I think it is correct we do acknowledge the work done by the Transport Department in Environmental Services to put this together. There
is a whole myriad of things in here to cover a whole area of different responsibilities and aspirations. I do think that is the most appropriate word to use for this document, that of “aspirations”.

When we look at some of it in more detail, particularly on page 74 which goes on to the larger schemes and its status, looking at the first, second, third and fourth and going down the priorities that have been put in amber is that of the A515 Ashbourne bypass and the A61 Chesterfield inner relief road junction. I would certainly hope that when it comes to prioritise, because there are monies that are going to be extremely tight, that is a fact nationally for major schemes and everybody to coin a phrase of an old Trade Unionist Sid Weighell from the Railwayman’s Trade Union, “trying to get their snout in first”, I sincerely hope that Derbyshire have success with finding extra funding for these schemes, but particularly I would want to promote the Chesterfield one.

Chesterfield now is quite an integral part for other works and for developments to take place. I think it is only correct that this be looked at in that seriousness. There has been a huge amount of work done in the past where traffic management has been dependent upon that of traffic lights to keep traffic flowing throughout the Chesterfield area. That is not to say it is belittling the one for Ashbourne because we know in high tourism times it does present a problem and in everyday times there is congestion there at peak times, but looking at this on its priority and its importance I sincerely hope that the Controlling Group will make Chesterfield their number one priority for funding.

It is also good for me personally to see Ilkeston rail station getting the importance it deserves. This is something that this Authority for a number of years has been putting in their Local Transport Plan and the consultants’ report which was found under the previous administration makes the case for this extremely definite. It came out top throughout the country with what the potential was for a rail station in Ilkeston.

Can I just say, Chair, there is a huge amount of work put in by the Environmental Services Department putting these LTPs together, and in conjunction with other Authorities as well, but there are areas of concern. One of those is on our Safety Camera Partnership. There is going to be a reduction of money there and the partnership between the police, Derbyshire and the Fire Service I hope will still remain a priority because that has had a huge impact on Derbyshire roads in trying to reduce our casualty statistics.

Chair, it is a document that we will obviously be keeping our eye on waiting for any reports that come through that will move this forward. As I say it is a well presented document; there are a lot of items in here to address over many years the problems, Environmental Services wise, but at the end of the day the key word on this is “aspirational”. It is when those aspirations come to fruition that will be interesting for this Council. Thank you, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Riggott.

CLLR RIGGOTT: Thank you, Chair. What time is it? Have I got ten minutes? No Chair, this is something which I wish to draw to the Council’s attention with regard to page 74 within the Local Transport document. I know a lot of members here will not have this document but it makes reference to a scheme within Clay Cross and it would be remiss of me not to raise it here because this is the only opportunity I have to raise it. It is about Market Street and the scheme on Market Street.

The scheme on Market Street was part of the redevelopment of Clay Cross. What was
going to happen on Market Street was a weight restriction along with some traffic management. It seems evident from this document that you are taking this out. The costing of this would be minimal compared to the Highways’ budget. A few thousand pounds I would estimate. I am sure you are going to write to me and tell me it is not and it is probably more, but what it is, Chair, is that Derbyshire County Council, along with other people, along with North East Derbyshire, along with developers have moved forward this development scheme within Clay Cross. They have rejigged an old road and turned it into something that looks like a motorway to take heavy traffic from the bottom of North Wingfield hill on to the A61 and part of that scheme was Market Street where we were going to put a weight limit on to protect properties on that because it comes through a very very narrow road going up Market Street and it was going to take all that traffic away.

Now I have found within this document that we are talking about doing away with that small scheme. I come back to that, Chair, as being a “small scheme” a very very small scheme. I would hope that the Ruling Group could look at this again and obviously come back. If Mr Stephenson wants to send me some more information with regard to what it would cost and for me to take this forward, Chair, but don’t forget I will know who to blame if you don’t go ahead! Thank you, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN:  Councillor Spencer.

CLLR SPENCER:  Thank you, Chairman. I expect nothing less than local members to represent their own particular cases and causes. This document identifies certain schemes throughout it affecting every different member in every different way conceivable. I am not going to get into the minutiae of delivery and what scheme should come first and what scheme should come second, but what I can say quite categorically is that this Controlling Group is committed to the Ilkeston Railway Scheme and we will remain so through our time here at County Hall – may that long continue I hope – but we are committed and we are in agreement to that. That scheme will go forward as presented in the report.

CLLR LEWER:  I move the vote be taken, Chair.

CLLR FLITTER: Chair, I hope that Councillor Lewer will just withdraw that for a second to give me time to speak?

CLLR LEWER:  As it is you, Councillor Flitter, I will do that.

THE CHAIRMAN:  Councillor Flitter.

CLLR FLITTER:  That has set the cat amongst the pigeons, hasn’t it? Thank you for that, Andrew. I am glad to hear Councillor Spencer saying he expects us to champion our own areas and that is exactly what I am doing now. I made a couple of comments earlier which may not have gone down too well but I want to try and explain.

In the Transport Plan as we have at the moment, on page 25 it talks about “tackling problem routes”. Well some of you will know we have had one hell of a problem in Matlock with problem routes, dangerous routes, and quite frankly it has not been very successful. I am looking forward to a new relationship, new relationship not only with the Cabinet member but also with the department because I think things have to improve.

I want to refer you to key alterations in Appendix 1 and also it is referred to in Appendix 2 where we talk about the approach to a new infrastructure, we talk about a green
infrastructure with cycling priorities. That is made on quite a few occasions an emphasis of providing cycle routes through the area. I note that in Matlock we have a green way from Oker to Matlock and that is about to be done, but I have to read a couple of lines of an e-mail from a lady who has had contact, and as you know when people come to councillors it is because they have had no joy from the department. What concerns me is the lady says:

“It is a poor service to Matlock that local authorities and their officers offer no support to encourage cycling in our area.”

Further down the page it says:

“As you will see the reply is quite negative.”

I want that to change. I think cycling and the green infrastructure is very very important. I think we should be encouraging all the way down the line, and if there is negativity it needs stamping on. That is where I came in talking about a more sympathetic approach. Working with local communities is to be welcomed as long as we listen, we learn, and we have a reasoned approach.

The final point I want to bring out is on page 49 under 7.6 and we talk about “vehicle re-routing.” I just hope that we are not going back to the days where we are going to include extra speed limits for the sake of speed limits and we are not going back to the days (and I do not know how many people remember Option 12 but I thought Option 12 was disastrous). It was all about taking traffic away from the Dales, away from the Peak, but the cost, nobody really appreciated the cost that that put on the haulage industry which actually fell on to the retail industry. I have spent a lifetime in retail, I have spent a lifetime in haulage, and the problems that that would have caused I would not want anything to go back to that sort of solution, so I hope when we talk about “vehicle re-routing” we talk sensibly and we take on everything that the haulage industry actually tells us about.

THE CHAIRMAN: Councillor Lewer.

CLLR LEWER: May the motion now be put, thank you Chairman.

CLLR SPENCER: Thank you, Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: Those in favour? Against? Abstentions? The report is CARRIED.

Thank you for your indulgence today. Unfortunately I would have loved to have taken you all for a drink but the bar closed about three hours’ ago!

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