

COUNCIL, Wednesday, 29th November, 2023

PRESENT:

The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Evans) in the Chair

Ahmed	Durrans	Patient
Ashton	Foster	Pillai
Atkinson	Gallagher	Prashad
Barnes	Hey	Rivron
Bellenger	Holdsworth	Scullion
Benton	Hutchinson	Sutherland
Blagbrough	Kimber	T Swift MBE
Brundell	Kirton	Thompson
Cairney	Kingstone	Thornber
Courtney	Leigh MBE	Tremayne
Dacre	Lynn	Veitch
Dickenson	Monteith	Wilkinson
	Parsons-Hulse	Wood

53 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 27TH SEPTEMBER 2023 TO BE AGREED AS A CORRECT RECORD AND SIGNED BY THE MAYOR.

It was moved by Councillor Scullion,
Seconded by Councillor T Swift MBE,

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 27th September 2023, having been printed and a copy sent to each Member of the Council, be taken as read and signed by the Mayor.

54 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Mayor reminded Members of the need to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or other interests which they might have in relation to the items to be considered at the Council meeting.

55 TO RECEIVE THE MAYOR'S OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)

(A) The Mayor asked fellow Elected Members to help promote his festive fayre that would be taking place on the 9th December 2023, and to take part in the Christmas Jumper Day on the 12th December 2023, both events would be raising money for his chosen charities.

(B) The Leader of the Council and Labour Group, Councillor Scullion, announced that Councillor Kingstone had been nominated by the Labour Group as the Mayor Elect for the 2024/25 Municipal Year, and that Councillor Tremayne had been nominated as Deputy Mayor Elect for the 2024/25 Municipal Year. Elected Members of the Council congratulated Councillor Kingstone and Tremayne on their nominations.

56 TO RECEIVE PETITIONS, IF ANY, PRESENTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

No petitions were received.

57 TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ASKED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12.

(A) Question from Maryam Haq to Councillor Lynn, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Services and Communities:

The recycling system does not work in our windy exposed area. It is impossible for every home to have multiple bins due to homes being near roads etc. Would a system where we just keep food stuff separate, but everything else goes in a tied black bag work? The recycling would then get sorted at the depot.

This is how it works for a lot of businesses. Our school waste goes into one skip and gets sorted out at a base. This would end the need for open bags and boxes on our roads and the contents blowing all over the streets.

In response, Councillor Lynn advised that the recycling collection system has been carefully researched and found to be the most suitable for Calderdale. The separate collection of different materials for recycling enables Calderdale to maintain excellent quality recycling and reduces disposal costs. Where recycling is collected mixed and requires further sorting, there is an increased cost, and the quality of recycling tends to be much lower and often contains contamination so there are additional disposal costs when loads are rejected by the re-processors.

We encourage residents to keep their recycling as secure as possible by squashing all plastics and cans, then sealing them in the white sack with the Velcro fastening. This enables more plastics and cans to fit into the sack and helps keep them more secure while waiting for collection. The recycling containers are provided free of charge at <https://www.calderdale.gov.uk/environment/waste/request-report/bin-container/index.jsp>

(B) Question from Eefi Hamer to Councillor Lynn, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Services and Communities:

Tip Opening times: Could the tip be open from 0600 - 0800 and 1600 - 1800 so sole traders | small businesses e.g. (four vans) can tip free of charge unless it is hazardous material?

If you are a trades person and you do a full day's work, you need to ensure your van is empty and clean for the next day. Allowing this time at the end of the day or before the merchants open on the following day gives greater flexibility so they are not tempted to tip on the roads.

In response, Councillor Lynn advised that the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC's) are specifically for household waste and are not allowed by law to take trade or commercial waste.

However, trade waste can be taken to the Transfer Loading Station in Halifax, which is next to the HWRC, where it has to be weighed in and paid for by the trader. Traders should always arrange for waste disposal as an integral part of any work they undertake, and this should be through a registered waste carrier – further information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/dispose-business-commercial-waste>.

The site licence Suez holds with the Environment Agency dictates the opening hours for each site, and these are based around daylight hours, which make the sites safer for both users and site staff.

Flytipping is a serious criminal offence that carries a fine of £50,000 or up to five years in prison. For more about the law and fly-tipping, visit: [Environmental Protection Act 1990: Fly tipping](#) (GOV.UK).

(C) Question from Ella Craven to Councillor Lynn, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Services and Communities:

Due to lockdowns people's behaviour has changed. Just like at school do we need a behaviour reset for our community by making it clear through advertisements and banners around the area the damage plastics and litter is doing to health? If we make the adverts point to personal health with plastic in our food and water then maybe we can educate the drivers that are going around throwing takeaways out of their windows.

Councillor Lynn responded: Thank you for your question and let me start by saying I completely agree with you about the need to address the anti-social behaviour of those people who think it is acceptable to simply discard litter on the streets or toss it from cars, rather than dispose of it responsibly.

Not only is this behaviour harmful to the environment but it is disrespectful towards other members of the community who do act sensibly, and it also costs the council significant amounts of public money to clean up.

As you indicate, there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that microplastics are entering the human food chain and this is something we need to make people aware of, in the same way that people now understand the damage that smoking can cause to personal health.

We try to change people's behaviour through a combination of education, engagement and enforcement activity – communication campaigns pointing out the impact of certain actions; engaging key groups of people to explain why they should change their behaviour; and being prepared to use our enforcement powers against those who refuse to comply.

We have had some success recently by providing bigger and more secure bins, particularly in areas where we know people consume take-aways, and this has significantly reduced litter in the locality. We are also using a range of measures, including cameras, to detect fly tipping and littering, and then publicising the results to deter others from similar behaviour.

It is also important to recognise that most people do dispose of their waste responsibly and, with the help of residents, we are proud to have achieved the best recycling rates (including plastics) in West Yorkshire for the past ten years.

However, it may well be timely for us to think about a further communications campaign as you suggest.

This can explain the ways people can dispose of their waste in a responsible manner - through our network of public litter bins, through the kerbside waste and recycling collections, or through our five Household Waste and Recycling Centres - as well as pointing out the consequences of discarded litter and plastics for the health of individuals and the wider community.

I will discuss with the relevant officers how we can make this happen and thank you once again for your question.

(D) Question from Dylan Jugroop to Councillor Lynn, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Services and Communities:

People only take notice when they are inconvenienced. Is it possible to close lanes to litter pick safely and have a sign that states "This road is closed for litter picking.

Taking your litter home will keep lanes open. Please take your litter home."

Would it be possible to do this as this is highlighting the issue. People have become litter blind and the state of the area is becoming normalised.

Councillor Lynn responded: Thank you for your question and let me start by reassuring you that the council shares your concern about the selfish and anti-social act of littering which has become all too prevalent on our streets and in our neighbourhoods.

However, any work the council carries out on the highway has to be in line with its responsibilities as a Highway Authority to keep the road network open and safe, and this includes minimising disruption to users, including buses, cyclists, commuters and commercial traffic.

Our own staff and groups of volunteers work tirelessly to try to keep the borough clean and tidy, and we do litter pick along major roads when this can be done safely, but a road cannot be closed simply to inconvenience people and highlight a particular issue.

However, lane closures are often necessary on safety grounds when maintenance work is being carried out, and we always look to include litter picking when such closures are in place.

In terms of signage, this is again governed by national regulations, but we will certainly look at the possibility of using additional wording along the lines suggested to highlight the selfish behaviour of people who discard litter, and this is a message we always include in our wider communications.

58 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF CABINET ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS:

(A) REVIEW OF PROPERTY DISPOSALS POLICY AND STRATEGY

It was moved by Councillor Dacre, and
Seconded by Councillor Scullion,

that the recommendation of the Cabinet contained in Minute Number 66 (Part (a) and (b) be approved.

RESOLVED that:

(a) the revised governance arrangements, for the disposal of surplus land and buildings as set out in the Director, Regeneration and Strategy's written report be implemented; and

(b) the revised flowchart for the disposal of surplus land and buildings as set out in Appendix 1 of the Director, Regeneration and Strategy's written report be approved.

Councillor Leigh MBE commented on the recommendation.

(B) SELF AND CUSTOM BUILD HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT STRATEGY

It was moved by Councillor Scullion, and
Seconded by Councillor T Swift MBE,

that the recommendation of the Cabinet contained in Minute Number 69 (Part (b) only) be approved.

RESOLVED that the Self and Custom Build Housing Supplementary Planning Document be adopted.

(C) LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME UPDATE 2023

It was moved by Councillor Scullion, and
Seconded by Councillor T Swift MBE,

that the recommendation of the Cabinet contained in Minute Number 70 be approved.

RESOLVED that the Local Development Scheme Update 2023 attached at Appendix 1 of the Director, Regeneration and Strategy's written report be approved for publication.

(D) CONTRACT EXTENSION: CHILDREN'S CENTRE SERVICES - EXEMPT

It was moved by Councillor Wilkinson, and
Seconded by Councillor Scullion,

that the recommendation of the Cabinet contained in Minute Number 73 be approved.

RESOLVED that the extension to the Children Centre Services to 30th September 2025 be approved.

59 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GOVERNANCE AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS:

(A) 2024/25 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

It was moved by Councillor Foster, and
Seconded by Councillor Bellenger,

that the recommendation of the Governance and Business Committee contained in Minute Number 20 be approved.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the meeting timetable for the 2024/25 municipal year be approved, as set out in the report;
- (b) the Budget Council meeting in 2025 be held on Monday, 24th February 2025; and
- (c) the Annual Council meeting in 2025 be held on Wednesday, 14th May 2025 commencing at 12:00 hours.

(B) REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

It was moved by Councillor Foster, and
Seconded by Councillor Bellenger,

that the recommendation of the Governance and Business Committee contained in Minute Number 23 be approved.

RESOLVED that the:

- (a) amendments as contained in Appendix 2 of the Chief Executive's written report be approved; and
- (b) existing Polling Plan contained in Appendix 1 of the Chief Executive's written report be amended to incorporate those revisions.

Councillor Bellenger commented on the recommendation.

(C) REVISION OF HR POLICIES - EXPENSES POLICY

It was moved by Councillor Foster, and
Seconded by Councillor Bellenger,

that the recommendation of the Governance and Business Committee contained in Minute Number 24 (Part (a) only) be approved.

RESOLVED that the revision to the Expenses Policy and reimburse professional membership fees to roles which legally require a professional membership to practice (Solicitors, Social Workers and Occupational Therapists) to enable them to be registered with their professional body be accepted and approved.

(D) REVISION OF HR POLICIES - PROBATION POLICY

It was moved by Councillor Foster, and
Seconded by Councillor Bellenger,

that the recommendation of the Governance and Business Committee contained in Minute Number 25 be approved.

RESOLVED that the Probation Policy revisions as outlined in the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development's written report be accepted and approved.

60 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL ON THE WORK OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY.

The Leader, Councillor Scullion submitted a written report that provided Members with an update on the work of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA).

The Leader advised that she was pleased to be able to announce at the launch on 24th November, that Calderdale Council had signed up to the West Yorkshire Fair Work Charter, building on the Workforce Strategy that was approved at Cabinet in the summer, and ensuring Calderdale played its part in offering opportunity, security, wellbeing, fulfilment, and a strong employee voice as a key employer in the Borough.

The Leader explained that she was looking forward to giving a progress update to the LGA peer challenge team when they return to Calderdale. It would include the completion of a piece of work to identify how our local strategies and plans aligned with the West Yorkshire suite of strategy documents, to aid the Council in pursuing its priorities in the West Yorkshire arena, and also have a clearer view of current and future funding.

The Leader advised that her role as chair of the Climate, Energy and Environment Committee, she was pleased to hear progress on the Better Homes Hub work that was detailed in Councillor Patient's report. The alignment of climate goals with actions to reduce inequalities and address the cost-of-living crisis was at the heart of our corporate priorities in Calderdale and was pleased to see WYCA playing an active role in supporting delivery at a local level.

In addition to her report, the Leader thanked Reverend Cannon Barber for the comments he made earlier in the meeting on the difficult international situation in Israel and Palestine and advised that Members were touched by the situation and that Members of the Council were focussed on keeping residents safe and that there was zero tolerance of antisemitism or islamophobia.

The Leader advised that she had attended, in the afternoon, the last meeting of the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership that had been replaced by West Yorkshire Business and Skills (WYBS). The membership of the WYBS was made up of representatives from the five West Yorkshire authorities, private sector representatives, Federation of Small Businesses and Mid Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce and others concerned with issues of inward investment and employment. The new Chair of the West Yorkshire business board was Mandy Ridyard who was the owner and director of the Bradford based aerospace engineering company who exported internationally. The Leader advised that she would update Councillors at future meetings.

- Councillor Parsons-Hulse asked that further to the publication of the Autumn Statement by Government and the relocation of HS2 Phase 2 funding to other transport schemes, what was the Council going to do to tackle the Chancellors lack of foresight to the modernisation of the Victorian railway system in West Yorkshire? In response, the Leader confirmed that she was also disappointed in

terms of the announcement in the Autumn Statement for a number of reasons – lack of money for public services, mass transit and that the funds were not available until 2027. The Leader explained the importance of transport links throughout West Yorkshire and across the border to Lancashire. The Leader also agreed that a robust transport system was fundamental to productivity and people accessing jobs in other towns.

- Councillor Leigh MBE advised that there had recently been an event at Dean Clough at Innovate UK which had been organised by WYCA and that some Members of the Council had been invited. Councillor Leigh advised that he had not received an invitation to this, nor had any of the Conservative Group. He advised that when WYCA organised an event in Calderdale an invitation should be extended to Members of the Council and asked the Leader to ensure that there were communication improvements at WYCA. In response, the Leader advised that she was not involved in the compiling of the invitation list and that she would pass this onto the communication team to see if they should consider inviting members of opposition groups.

61 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS ON THE DISCHARGE OF THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL:

A) LEADER'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

The Leader, Councillor Scullion submitted a written report on the work she had carried out since the last meeting of the Council. The Leaders report also covered her role as Lead for Regeneration/Local Plan.

The report provided background information on events that she had attended within Calderdale, Strategic External Regeneration, and the improvements to the Planning Department.

In addition to the report, the Leader advised that it was six months on from the Peer Review and that the group would be returning tomorrow to follow up and to see if the Council had taken into consideration their recommendations and had followed up on those actions. It was expected to be a challenging process and the Leader confirmed that she would provide an update at a later time.

(B) CABINET MEMBER REPORTS

(i) Deputy Leader and Public Health

Councillor T Swift MBE, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health submitted a written report on the work he had carried out since the last meeting of the Council.

The report identified and provided background information on Halifax Master Planning and Regeneration and Public Health.

In addition to the report Councillor T Swift MBE advised that in light of the conversations surrounding the Covid-19 Public Inquiry, he wanted to reassure Members that the Council not only responded to infectious diseases but that it also forward planned and looked for new potential diseases and made

reference to cases of Avian Flu in the UK, and also respiratory illnesses affecting children in China.

Councillor T Swift MBE made reference to his report of the local and regional work on smoking prevention and the launch of the Government's consultation on creating a smoke-free generation. Councillor T Swift MBE advised that he welcomed the consultation and as Chair of the West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board he would jointly sign a letter with other health leaders to support the proposal.

(ii) Adult Services and Wellbeing

Councillor Fenton-Glynn, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Adult Services and Wellbeing, submitted a written report on the work he had carried out since the last meeting of the Council.

The report identified and provided background information on the closure of Dementia Friendly Community Event: An Audience with Scott Mitchell, Ambassador for Alzheimer's Research UK Calderdale Retreat and the CQC Inspection Readiness Update.

(iii) Children and Young People's Services

Councillor Wilkinson, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children and Young People's Services, submitted a written report on the work he had carried out since the last Council meeting.

The report identified and provided background information on Early Intervention and Safeguarding, Children and Young People's Commissioning and Education.

(iv) Climate Action, Active Travel and Housing

Councillor Patient, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Climate Action, Active Travel and Housing submitted a written report on the work he had carried out since the last Council meeting.

The report identified and provided background information on Housing, Green Economy and Active Travel and Strategic Travel Projects including bus and rail, Flooding, Transport Services and Green Spaces and Street Scene.

In addition to his report, Councillor Patient advised that Calderdale and Kirklees Council's had been successful in securing £750,000.00 worth of funding from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) Landscape Recovery: Round Two phase. The funding would focus on restoration and creating woodland and wildflower meadows.

(v) Public Services and Communities

Councillor Lynn, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Services and Communities, submitted a written report on the work she had carried out since the last meeting of the Council.

The report identified and provided background information on Housing, Green Economy, Active Travel & Strategic Travel Projects including Bus and Rail, Flooding and Green Spaces & Street Scene.

(vi) Resources

Councillor Dacre, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources, submitted a written report on the work she had undertaken since the last meeting of Council.

The report identified and provided background information on ICT and Digital, Performance Management, Finance, Corporate Procurement, Legal and Democratic Services, Human Resources and Organisational Development, Employment and Skills and Adult Learning and Corporate Asset and Facilities Management.

In addition to the report Councillor Dacre urged Members to update their passwords to passphrases as this was one of the lines of defence against cyber-attacks.

(vii) Towns, Tourism and Voluntary Sector

Councillor Courtney, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Towns, Tourism and Voluntary Sector submitted a written report on the work she had carried out since the last meeting of Council.

The report identified and provided background information on Thriving Towns, Inclusive Economy, Business Start Up, Growth, Resilience and Engagement, Tourism and Visitor Economy, Voluntary and Community and Social Enterprise Sector.

In addition to the report Councillor Courtney advised that she attended the launch of the West Yorkshire Fair Work Charter and explained how it would benefit Calderdale and align with the Council's ambitions for an inclusive and equitable local economy.

Following the delivery of the Cabinet Member reports Members asked the following questions:

- Councillor Blagbrough announced that the Brighthouse Bid was successful and could continue for a further five years. This would enable events such as the 1940s weekend and Christmas Market to continue. Councillor Blagbrough advised that the Brighthouse Civic Hall had gone onto the property market and explained that there had been some interest in a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of the property. He advised that he had contacted Officers to see if it was possible to delay the sale to consider a CAT. In response, Councillor Dacre advised that she had been notified by Officers of the interest in the site and confirmed that enquiries would be made to ascertain if they could effectively interrupt the process.
- Councillor Issott explained some of the issues faced by residents and commuters in Ripponden and Ryburn. She asked for Cabinet's assurances that they would begin the process of placing an Expression of Interest with National Highways to create new parking electrical points and a cycle lane within Ryburn to address the issues. In response, Councillor Patient

advised that there was currently a development of an Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy across West Yorkshire and hoped to provide more information in the New Year. Councillor Patient invited Councillor Issott to have a conversation with him around the problems affecting Ryburn outside of the meeting.

- Councillor Prashad advised Members that she had attended a takeover day for Children Looked After on 17th November 2023, and explained how children were paired with Councillors and Officers to discuss and put proposals forward by them on how care could be improved. Councillor Prashad urged Members as Corporate Parents to attend those meetings when invited to do so and that they would benefit greatly from their participation. In response, Councillor Wilkinson welcomed Councillor Prashad's comments. Councillor Wilkinson explained the importance of taking the role of a Corporate Parent seriously and was pleased everyone had the chance to sign the Pledge in the Victoria Hall, which had been drawn up by children and young people in our care.
- Councillor Parsons-Hulse advised that in West Yorkshire 242 children had an adoption plan, but only 101 households had been approved. What was the Council doing to make sure that children were not left waiting so long that they became less likely to be matched with prospective adopters? In response, Councillor Wilkinson advised that One Adoption West Yorkshire (OAWY) had provided an annual report and attended a Scrutiny meeting that she had attended to answer questions. Councillor Wilkinson explained that he did attend regional meetings to scrutinise the work of OAWY and explained the challenges that were faced locally and nationally in the adoption sector. Councillor Wilkinson further explained that OAWY were focused on recruiting adopters and specifically ethnic minority groups.
- Councillor Hey shared information on the number of road traffic incidents in Northowram and Shelf and explained some of the challenges faced in expediting road safety improvements, which were frustrating to residents and also the Highways Department. Councillor Hey asked if Cabinet had any views on halving the number of people injured or killed on Calderdale's roads by 2030 as committed to by WYCA. In response, Councillor Lynn advised that there were constraints in funding and also the speed at which reports were received in relation to where accidents occurred, though Officers did try to prioritise the most urgent areas of concern especially where there had been fatalities. Councillor Lynn thanked Councillor Hey for his question and confirmed that she would raise his concerns with the Head of Operational Highways.
- Councillor Kimber advised that the Head of Burnley Road Academy had spoken on Look North of the improvements made to their flood defences. Councillor Kimber asked if there were any future plans for similar measures at other schools in the valley? In response, Councillor Patient advised that he was able to speak to a representative from the Department for Education (DfE) who confirmed that there was a dedicated team who dealt with climate risk and adaption and that a programme would be rolled out to look at other schools affected by flooding in the Upper Valley.

- Councillor Foster advised that she had visited a primary school where a high proportion of children had English as their second language. Councillor Foster asked what support the Council could provide to parents whose first language was not English when applying to secondary Schools. In response, Councillor Wilkinson advised that admission documents were provided in English, though school and Council staff were available to support parents in the application process. Councillor Wilkinson confirmed that historically applications were available in Urdu, but there had been little demand for these. He advised that he would not want any families to be discriminated against and welcomed a meeting with Councillor Foster and the Headteacher to have a review of the process.
- Councillor Parsons-Hulse asked how the Council could move forward to incentivise people back into the Borough's Towns. Councillor Parsons-Hulse explained some of the issues residents and business faced by people having limited access to parking and the lack of use of cycle ways that had been implemented to encourage Active Travel. In response, Councillor Patient advised that the market towns across the Borough had had a bumper year in terms of visitors and a boost to their economy. Councillor Patient did not feel that adding additional parking spaces was the answer and that there needed to be an integrated transport network that worked locally and regionally. He agreed that questions needed to be raised around the management of park and ride schemes and also the implementation of mobility hubs.
- Councillor Thornber asked what powers could the Council use to speed up road works in Calderdale and was it possible to have a timetable of works to potentially fine utility companies should work go over timescale? In response, Councillor Lynn advised that there was a dedicated Officer employed to monitor works within the Borough. Councillor Lynn advised that the Council was to some extent at the mercy of utility companies but that it did its best to monitor this and did not believe the Council would have the power to fine them.
- Councillor Leigh MBE asked if Cabinet could reconsider its position on allowing comments and questions at Cabinet, outside of the Question Time process. Councillor Leigh MBE explained that he felt this was not a transparent way of conducting business and allowing for debate at Cabinet would be seen as working constructively across parties. In response, the Leader advised that Members had many ways to ask questions. There was Full Council where the public and Members could ask questions and openly debate topics for its consideration. and at Scrutiny meetings where Members could ask questions to Officers and attending Cabinet Members. The Leader advised that there was the option to Call-in decisions made by Cabinet and that Call-ins would be heard by the appropriate Scrutiny Board. The Leader advised that it was Cabinet business that was transacted at the meeting and it was not a debating forum. The meeting was held in public and not a public meeting.

Councillor T Swift MBE advised that if he had continued as Leader, it was his intention to review the way Cabinet conducted its business and

confirmed that the Leader and himself had discussed the changes carefully. Councillor T Swift MBE advised that there were a number of ways in which opposition Councillors could address Cabinet and commented that Calderdale was one of the few Councils where Members could ask questions without notice at Full Council.

- Councillor Thompson asked if the research into the postcodes of people travelling to gigs in the Piece Hall could be linked into the climate change work and targets. He confirmed that it would be interesting to see how far people travelled and the impact on climate change. In response, Councillor Courtney advised that it was an interesting point and one that could be looked at going forward to see how the Council could promote active travel for people attending events in Calderdale.

Councillor Patient added that as part of the Halifax Town Centre Regeneration programmes there would be the opportunity to rethink how people can access the town centre via active travel but to also protect bus routes and parking.

(Councillors Blagbrough and T Swift MBE declared a non-pecuniary interest as they were both Trustees of the Piece Hall Trust).

(Councillor Blagbrough declared a non-pecuniary interest as he was a Member of the Brighouse Bid).

62 TO APPOINT MEMBERS AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (AS NECESSARY) TO SERVE ON SCRUTINY BOARDS/PANELS AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES.

RESOLVED that Members of the Council and others be appointed to serve as Members and Substitute Members of Scrutiny Boards, Panels and Committees for the remainder of the 2023/24 Municipal Year:

Strategy and Performance Scrutiny Board	Delete Councillor Beech as a Substitute and replace with Councillor Ford
Children and Young People's Scrutiny Board	Delete Councillor Parsons-Hulse as a Member and replace with Councillor Prashad. Appoint Councillor Prashad as Chair. Delete Councillors Whittaker, Beech and Prashad as a Substitutes and replace with Councillors Blagbrough, Leigh and Parsons-Hulse.
Adult Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board	Delete Councillor Beech as a Substitute and replace with Councillor Ford

Licensing and Regulatory Committee	Delete Councillor Veitch as a Member and replace with Councillor Kimber
Place Scrutiny Board	Add Councillor Hey as a Substitute

63 TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES (AS NECESSARY) TO SERVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES.

There were no appointments of Representatives made on Outside Bodies.

64 TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ASKED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 13

(A) Question from Councillor Leigh MBE to Councillor Dacre, Cabinet Member for Resources

Earlier this month, in response to my question to the Cabinet regarding the Council's financial position, Cllr Dacre confirmed that difficult decisions are being taken to save money in light of the £10m deficit as reported in the Q2 Projected Outturn Report. Therefore, please provide examples of the difficult decisions and cost-saving measures that have been made to reduce spending this year.

In response, Councillor Dacre advised that the projected deficit reported in the Quarter 2 Monitor is £6.6M.

Examples of difficult decisions include:

Increasing parking charges in line with our Parking Strategy. It would have been politically easier not to do this as it is an unpopular decision with opposition parties and some residents and businesses.

Running the Library service with vacancies. This was referred to in the Quarter 2 Monitor. This is difficult as it can mean occasional unplanned closure of Libraries when there is inadequate cover. It undermines our commitment to our Priority of Thriving Towns and Places and increases the pressure on staff.

The process of managing the projected deficit will continue throughout the year.

In my previous answer I referred to the likelihood that difficult decisions will include possible further use of Reserves, the freezing of non-essential or non-critical spend and vacancies. We may also have to delay spending.

(B) Question from Councillor Dickenson to Councillor Dacre, Cabinet Member for Resources

Calderdale Council is gearing up to celebrate its Culture Year from April next year, and it has received a grant of £850,000 from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority for the occasion. However, it seems that some of this funding is already

being spent on a team to promote Culture Year and all the events that will take place.

How much, exactly, is being spent on this team? And it is coming from the £850,000 grant? I have heard that the council is planning to hire a company to provide musical entertainment on a canal boat journey from Hebden Bridge to Brighouse. Please can you confirm whether this is true, and if so, could you please provide me with details on how much the council is spending on this?

In response, Councillor Lynn, Cabinet Member for Public Services and Communities advised that we are delighted that WYCA have supported our CultureDale Year of Culture, with a grant of £850k. Further grants applications have been submitted to Arts Council England for £650k and Heritage Lottery Fund for £250k and we expect to hear whether we have been successful in December 23/January 24.

The Year of Culture Team was appointed in September on 2-year fixed term contracts and have been working really hard to pull together what will be a wonderful year of celebration of our place.

The Team consists of a Programme Manager, Events & Outdoor Festival Manager, Community Engagement Officer, Anne Lister Programme Co-Ordinator, Cultural Programme Support Officer and a Management Trainee. The salary costs until the end of the programme are £350k. The majority of the salary costs are funded by the WYCA grant.

The programme itself includes a number of collaborative commissions, a heritage collaborative programme, community commission and festivals for which we have budgeted £900k. The event you are referring to I think is Opals Comet, which as you say will travel through the borough utilising our canal network in partnership with Canal and Rivers Trust. It will include an artistic pilgrimage with Mr Wilsons and 3 months of workshops with communities ahead of the event. We are providing match funding of £40k, to the total cost of £110k which will be covered by other funding and investment.

Funded Workshops, youth projects, freelancers support and trainee and mentorship programme are also key to ensuring that we secure a long-term legacy from the Year of Culture.

(C) Question from Councillor Atkinson to Councillor Lynn, Cabinet Member for Public Services and Communities

Earlier this year, when the Labour Cabinet approved their policy to increase parking charges across the Borough (this includes Shibden Park incurring an increase in charges from £1.50 to £5 per day), the report also included the implementation of a Green Permit. Can Cllr Lynn, please advise how much revenue the Council expects to gain or lose from implementing the Green Permit?

In response, Councillor Lynn advised that the rationale for the introduction of a 'Green Permit' for fully electric vehicles was driven by a desire to provide a small incentive to help nudge people from petrol or diesel vehicles towards a more

environmentally friendly alternative, in line with the council's stated commitments around the climate emergency and air quality.

Since the Cabinet report in summer, and the subsequent call-in by the Place Scrutiny Board, the priority has been to introduce the agreed tariff changes and to put in train the necessary legal processes around Traffic Regulation Orders where these are required.

The 'Green Permit' has not yet been launched and is due to be launched before the end of the year. Once launched, the permit will be publicised. It is difficult, at this stage, to give an accurate estimate of the actual financial effects in terms of income. As outlined above, it is designed to nudge/encourage change. As people switch to electric vehicles the greater the financial impact. However, as with all aspects of Parking, the financial impact of any change is closely monitored, and the report made it clear that the 'Green Permit' scheme would be introduced on a trial basis and could be withdrawn or discontinued at any stage.

This remains the case and its impact will continue to be scrutinised once available and is more widely publicised in the New Year.

(D) Question from Councillor Prashad to Councillor Dacre, Cabinet Member for Resources

At the last Council meeting I raised a question about assessing risk when lending to other authorities. Council was told that Calderdale Council had no outstanding loans to other local authorities.

However, further investigation by myself revealed that there were in fact two short-term loans that would be realised in January 2024 in the sum of £2million each to Eastleigh and Somerset councils.

Recently, Somerset Council has declared a financial emergency, having a £100million budget gap due to soaring demand for adult and children's care, a situation that is widespread among councils with social care responsibilities.

I therefore feel that the question I raised at the last Council meeting needs to be re-addressed by yourself, namely is Calderdale Council adequately assessing the risks associated with lending money to other local authorities?

In response, Councillor Dacre advised that Inter-authority lending is a well-established practice, following the requirements of the Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities. The Council's Treasury Management Strategy sets out how we manage our borrowing and investment activity and agrees the policy limits and targets. Audit Committee perform the scrutiny and oversight of the policy and review performance against the limits and targets. Council is responsible for approving the Strategy.

Inter-authority lending is a low-risk mechanism used to manage cash balances prudently and represents a small proportion of overall institutions that we use for short-term investments (in 2022/23 1 out of 310 investments were with other local authorities, and the first half of this year 4 out of 99 investments). Having

local authorities in our approved list of counterparties, spreads our exposure risk and allows greater flexibility.

As previously stated, there are no known reported cases of Local Authorities defaulting on a loan. Our Treasury Advisors, Link Group continue to recommend the use of inter-authority lending as a secure and liquid investment. We do consider the financial standing of council's prior to making an investment, even though the loan is ultimately government backed. Budget gap headlines do not necessarily mean that a council's balance sheet position presents a higher risk.

I am confident that Audit Committee are best placed to provide the necessary oversight and scrutiny of the Council's Treasury arrangements in line with best practice.

(E) Question from Councillor Robinson to Councillor Fenton-Glynn, Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Wellbeing

In Adult, Health, and Social Care, a major challenge is the recruitment and retention of care workers, as I know the Cabinet will recognise.

We have been informed that the Council does not track or know the exact number of care workers it employs through its partnerships with the NHS and independent providers.

This is surprising.

Can the Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Wellbeing please confirm that they will take the necessary steps to gather this vital information?

In response, Councillor T Swift MBE, Cabinet Member for Public Health advised the Council does know the exact numbers of directly employed council staff who are working in integrated services within and alongside the NHS.

We also have a variety of integrated arrangements and developments with the NHS, and some jointly funded posts where social care staff may be directly employed by the NHS.

With the exception of reablement services which are directly provided by the Council, in the main, home care services are commissioned by the Council from independent providers who are responsible for their own workforce.

Further detail on the number of posts across the health and social care system will be provided following the meeting.

(F) Question from Councillor Issott to the Leader, Councillor Scullion

Calderdale Council celebrates and raises awareness on International Day of Older Persons, Black History Month, Pride Month, and International Women's Day, which all are important. But Calderdale Council has failed to do anything for International Men's Day on November 19th, which this year had the slogan "Zero Male Suicide".

This came after the Conservative Group advised the Council earlier in the year about the event. Is it not important that men have a suicide rate three times higher than women, or 1 in 3 men have been victims of domestic violence, or men, on average, die 4-5 years before women? Therefore, why did the Council choose to ignore the day?

But you may say that the Council is doing enough with the Cabinet recently approving the Suicide Prevention Plan 2022-24. There is another example of the Council's inaction. When the Suicide Prevention Strategic Action Plan was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2022, it planned to "develop a communications and engagement plan" by September 2022.

But then, the 2023 November Cabinet report had a recommendation to "develop and implement a communications and engagement strategy" (without a deadline date). The Council is being far too slow on this issue. Why has this not already been done?

Councillor T Swift MBE, Cabinet Member for Public Health responded: Thank you very much for your question and your interest in reducing male suicide – a key issue for Calderdale. International Men's day was recognised by CMBC with social media posts, using the hashtag #InternationalMensDay, and in light of the zero-suicide theme, linking to the award-winning West Yorkshire Suicide Prevention resources "check in with your mate". The CMBC post also acknowledged that 75% of deaths from suicide are amongst men.

There has been a communication and engagement programme running in Calderdale since 2022, utilising resources we have access to as a member of the West Yorkshire Suicide Prevention Partnership. For example the Check in with your Mate Campaign launched in March 2022, aiming to promote a wellbeing culture by normalising the conversation around suicide and mental health as well as providing communication assets, links to credible sources such as the life-saving Zero Suicide Alliance training, and signposting to local support via www.checkinwithyourmate.co.uk.

CMBC has also promoted the West Yorkshire [Suicide Prevention Champions](#) programme which launched in September 2023, and encourages everyone to take part in the free 20 minute training from Zero Suicide Alliance. Councillor Swift was the first Calderdale Champion with a further 32 champions from Calderdale having signed up by the end of October 2023.

Good communications are underpinned by an understanding of local context. An audit / review of coroners records for all deaths by suicide between 2019 and 2021 has been undertaken in 2023, and the findings from this report will be used to inform engagement and targeted suicide prevention activities.

The reference to communications in the Cabinet paper was in the context of developing a more strategic plan, informed by the findings of the audit of coroners reports. The preliminary findings are expected early in the new Year. A more detailed Calderdale specific engagement and communications plan will be finalised by the end of January 2024, based on learning from the audit, and describing how we will work more closely with residents and partners in co-producing plans to reduce suicide within Calderdale.

(G) Question from Councillor Parsons-Hulse to Councillor Wilkinson, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Service

According to Social Work Today (8th November 2023) the biggest independent children's care providers made profits of over £300million last year. Many councils are at risk of *insolvency* due to these uncontrollable costs of children's placements for our looked after children.

This Council's external residential placements budget is forecast to overspend by £3.0m and the external fostering budget by £800k.

Can you, as the Cabinet member for our children services, please tell the Council what are you doing to address the rising demand and the 'broken' provider market for our children in care?

In response, Councillor Wilkinson advised that the national placement crisis is impacting on all Councils. The Guardian published an article just this afternoon highlighting this issue and stating that councils were "being held to ransom" by private companies. It mentioned that the cost of one placement alone was costing one council £63,000 per week, which is £3.3m per year for just one child. Clearly this situation is unsustainable.

A recent review by the Competition and Markets Authority unsurprisingly concluded that the market for care placements is functioning poorly and that councils are struggling to find suitable, local placements when they are needed. As a result of this dysfunctional market, the largest private providers have been found to be charging unjustifiably high prices for placements, and consequently making disproportionately large profits. This is a national issue that requires national solutions. The Josh McCallister review identified the need for Billions £ of investment. The Governments response has been to introduce much smaller scale changes with much less investment.

The Council has invested in early help and edge of care services to support families and reduce the number of children coming into care. The number of children in the care system in Calderdale remains stable, and we have supported the National Transfer Scheme for unaccompanied children by finding them placements. We have also prioritised 'care closer to home' – we want to keep children in local care places, where they can keep contact with their families and attend Calderdale schools. Full Council agreed a £1.57m investment into internal residential care. We have also uplifted fees for foster carers and given them exemption from Council Tax and invested in marketing with more families being assessed.

So in summary - this is a national issue that needs national solutions otherwise more councils will go bankrupt but I hope I have provided some assurance that we are doing what we can locally to manage the situation.

65 **TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING MOTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE
RULE 14:**

(A) Road Repairs

It was moved by Councillor Bellenger,
Seconded by Councillor Parsons-Hulse,

Council notes that:

- a) The poor state of many roads in Calderdale is of significant concern to road users resulting in complaints to the Council and to Councillors.
- b) Poor road surface conditions can lead to physical damage to vehicles and reputational damage to the Council.
- c) The Local Government Association (LGA) has noted that, because of inflation and materials shortages, the cost of repairing a pothole has increased by 22 per cent.
- d) The LGA has reported that councils in the UK face a £14billion road repair backlog.

Council believes that the government's 'pothole fund' is a totally inadequate response to this situation. It comes nowhere near to replacing the funding that has been removed from council highways budgets and is aimed more at generating publicity than seriously tackling a growing problem.

Council therefore calls on Cabinet to:

- a) Accept that the money returned to this Council from the West Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority was intended to be spent on transport projects and therefore improving Calderdale's roads would be a legitimate call on the as yet unallocated sum of approximately £1.5million.
- b) Explore and implement innovative road repair techniques and purchase, where necessary, equipment that can lead to more, better and cheaper road repairs.
- c) Adopt a robust stance when dealing with utility companies and their contractors to ensure that, following work undertaken on roads and footpaths, reinstatements are completed to the highest standard and are of lasting quality.

It was moved as an **AMENDMENT** by Councillor Leigh
MBE, and
Seconded by Councillor Blagbrough

Council notes that:

- a) The poor state of many roads in Calderdale is of significant concern to road users resulting in complaints to the Council and to Councillors.
- b) Poor road surface conditions can lead to physical damage to vehicles and reputational damage to the Council.
- c) The Local Government Association (LGA) has noted that, because of inflation and materials shortages, the cost of repairing a pothole has increased by 22 per cent.
- d) The LGA has reported that councils in the UK face a £14billion road repair backlog.

Delete*

Council believes that the government's 'pothole fund' is a totally inadequate response to this situation. It comes nowhere near to replacing the funding that has been removed from council highways budgets and is aimed more at generating publicity than seriously tackling a growing problem.

Council therefore calls on Cabinet to:

- a) Accept that the money returned to this Council from the West Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority was intended to be spent on transport projects and therefore improving Calderdale's roads would be a legitimate call on the as yet unallocated sum of approximately £1.5million.
- b) Explore and implement innovative road repair techniques and purchase, where necessary, equipment that can lead to more, better and cheaper road repairs.
- c) Adopt a robust stance when dealing with utility companies and their contractors to ensure that, following work undertaken on roads and footpaths, reinstatements are completed to the highest standard and are of lasting quality.

And replace with:

This Council acknowledges that:

- A. The £1.5m, which has now been returned from WYCA, was initially intended to be spent on transport projects, but the funding was returned to local authorities in West Yorkshire with the intention of alleviating "extreme financial pressure" on local Councils (Tracy Brabin, October 13th, ITV).
- B. It would, therefore, not be financially prudent to spend the £1.5m when the Council's budget is reported to be overspent by £10.9m

(Calderdale Council Quarter 2 Projected Outturn Report).

- C. Highway maintenance is a priority of the Council, and the Government has recently announced on November 17th, 2023, an additional £8.3 billion on highways maintenance over the next ten years.
- D. The returned funding from WYCA should be used to bolster the Council's reserves because the Council is set to receive additional funding for highway maintenance and potholes.

This Council accepts that:

- A. The government's decision to scrap HS2 and to spend "every penny on transport projects" has made it possible to spend an additional £8.3 billion on highways maintenance.
- B. This year, funding will increase by an additional £200m to £700m. The additional funding coming to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority equates to an extra £9m over this financial year and next.
- C. Over the 10-year period from 2023/24 until 2033/34, WYCA will receive an additional £309.6m.
- D. This highway maintenance and potholes spending will not cover the entire repair backlog but will work towards tackling the long-term issue, with BBC reports from 2009 confirming that it would take 13 years to clear the backlog.

This Council resolves to:

- A. Request the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council to write to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, urging the Mayor to ensure that Calderdale receives its fair share of the additional funding coming to the region from the Government.
- B. Explore and implement innovative road repair techniques and purchase, where necessary, equipment that can lead to more, better and cheaper road repairs.
- C. Adopt a robust stance when dealing with utility companies and their contractors to ensure that, following work undertaken on roads and footpaths, reinstatements are completed to the highest standard and are of lasting quality.

The **AMENDMENT** with the replacement wording on being put to the vote was not carried.

Councillors Thornber, Bellenger and Leigh MBE commented on the Motion.

It was moved as an **AMENDMENT** by Councillor Lynn,
and
Seconded by Councillor T Swift MBE

Council notes that:

- a) Over 13 years of Conservative cuts, councils across the country have struggled to maintain local roads beyond short-term immediate repairs.
- b) Calderdale Council maintains over 800 miles of adopted highways including a mixture of urban and rural routes. Years of underinvestment mean some roads in the borough are in a poor state of repair, causing significant concern to road users and complaints to the Council and Councillors. Poor road surface conditions can lead to physical damage to vehicles, serious injury to cyclists, and reputational damage for the Council.
- c) The Asphalt Industry Alliance (AIA) conducts an independent annual survey of local authorities on the funding and conditions of local road networks. The most recent figures show the average shortfall in the 2022/23 carriage maintenance budget has increased by 20% to £7.7 million per authority, with the total shortfall across England and Wales reaching £1.3 billion.
- d) The Local Government Association (LGA) has noted that, because of inflation and materials shortages, the cost of repairing a pothole has increased by 22 per cent. The LGA has also reported that councils in the UK face a £14 billion road repair backlog, reflecting the cost of bringing the network up to a condition that would allow it to be managed proactively and cost effectively.
- e) Calderdale receives funding from several sources to maintain and improve the safety of the highway network, including £7,693,310 per annum from the City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRTVS).
- f) The Department for Transport (DfT) 'pothole fund' provides additional funding to address network deterioration, which is not guaranteed annually. In 2023 this amounted to £778,176 for Calderdale based on road network length. This will increase capacity for essential repairs which could not be included in the planned works programme.
- g) The LGA have called for 5-year funding allocations to give councils certainty in developing long-term resurfacing programmes and other improvements for a more resilient highway network.

Council believes that the government's 'pothole fund' is a totally inadequate response to this situation. It comes nowhere near to replacing the funding that has been removed from council highways budgets and is aimed more at generating publicity than seriously tackling a growing problem.

Council therefore calls on Cabinet to:

- a) Acknowledge that despite the hard work of officers to maintain the

road network in Calderdale, they are working against years of systemic underinvestment by the Conservative government.

- b) Ask officers to continue working to keep the highway network in Calderdale open and safe, prioritising and carrying out essential remedial works within available resources.
- c) Consider investment in Highways as part of the Council's annual financial planning process, taking into account all available funding sources. Proposals would be presented to Budget Council in February 2024. The introduction of new equipment or techniques must be not only affordable, but also appropriate for the specific requirements of the rural and urban road network in Calderdale.

After being put to the vote, the **Amended Motion** was carried.

Councillors Hutchinson, Leigh MBE, Cairney, Hey, Bellenger and Scullion commented on the Motion.

RESOLVED that:

Council notes that:

- a) Over 13 years of Conservative cuts, councils across the country have struggled to maintain local roads beyond short-term immediate repairs.
- b) Calderdale Council maintains over 800 miles of adopted highways including a mixture of urban and rural routes. Years of underinvestment mean some roads in the borough are in a poor state of repair, causing significant concern to road users and complaints to the Council and Councillors. Poor road surface conditions can lead to physical damage to vehicles, serious injury to cyclists, and reputational damage for the Council.
- c) The Asphalt Industry Alliance (AIA) conducts an independent annual survey of local authorities on the funding and conditions of local road networks. The most recent figures show the average shortfall in the 2022/23 carriage maintenance budget has increased by 20% to £7.7 million per authority, with the total shortfall across England and Wales reaching £1.3 billion.
- d) The Local Government Association (LGA) has noted that, because of inflation and materials shortages, the cost of repairing a pothole has increased by 22 per cent. The LGA has also reported that councils in the UK face a £14 billion road repair backlog, reflecting the cost of bringing the network up to a condition that would allow it to be managed proactively and cost effectively.
- e) Calderdale receives funding from several sources to maintain and improve the safety of the highway network, including £7,693,310 per

annum from the City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRTVS).

- f) The Department for Transport (DfT) 'pothole fund' provides additional funding to address network deterioration, which is not guaranteed annually. In 2023 this amounted to £778,176 for Calderdale based on road network length. This will increase capacity for essential repairs which could not be included in the planned works programme.
- g) The LGA have called for 5-year funding allocations to give councils certainty in developing long-term resurfacing programmes and other improvements for a more resilient highway network.

Council believes that the government's 'pothole fund' is a totally inadequate response to this situation. It comes nowhere near to replacing the funding that has been removed from council highways budgets and is aimed more at generating publicity than seriously tackling a growing problem.

Council therefore calls on Cabinet to:

- a) Acknowledge that despite the hard work of officers to maintain the road network in Calderdale, they are working against years of systemic underinvestment by the Conservative government.
- b) Ask officers to continue working to keep the highway network in Calderdale open and safe, prioritising and carrying out essential remedial works within available resources.
- c) Consider investment in Highways as part of the Council's annual financial planning process, taking into account all available funding sources. Proposals would be presented to Budget Council in February 2024. The introduction of new equipment or techniques must be not only affordable, but also appropriate for the specific requirements of the rural and urban road network in Calderdale.

(B) Prioritising Electrification of the Calder Valley Railway Line

It was moved by Councillor Leigh MBE,
Seconded by Councillor Blagbrough

This Council notes that:

- Calder Valley Railway Line (CVRL) plays a crucial role in the public transport system in West Yorkshire, with residents and visitors using it to commute for work and education and leisure.
- Even though CVRL is a key to public transport in the region, it lacks full electrification. The use of diesel-powered trains is not environmentally friendly and reduces its efficiency for residents and visitors.
- An efficient, accessible, and affordable rail transport system is the

backbone of a successful public transportation network.

- Improving public transport and particular rail is essential to boosting economic growth and reducing inequalities in Calderdale. The Council and West Yorkshire Combined Authority should take inspiration from successful public transportation systems both locally, such as Manchester's Mass Transit System, and globally, with successful transport systems driving economic growth around the world.

This Council Acknowledges that:

- Trans-Pennine rail infrastructure has been sadly lacking for many years, but thankfully, the go-ahead has been given for the electrification of the TransPennine route (Leeds-Huddersfield-Manchester [Picc]). This development now provides an opportunity for Calderdale to present a stronger and very much more substantial case for the electrification of the CVRL route (Leeds-Bradford-Halifax-Manchester[Victoria]).
- The West Yorkshire Combined Authority has identified the electrification of Calder Valley Rail as a key priority in its Rail Transport Strategy. However, due to previous funding constraints, the Authority has been unable to proceed with the implementation of this project.
- The recent cancellation of the northern leg of HS2 came with a promise by the Prime Minister that “every penny of the £40bn saving would be spent” on many other transport projects. This promised major funding now makes the substantial case for the electrification of the CVRL even more compelling – because it is now undoubtedly affordable.
- In our region, the Government investment so far entails £4 billion to improve connectivity in all six Northern City regions, £2.5 billion to improve rural travel, £700 million for enhanced bus services, electrification and upgrades to rail lines, the reopening of disused train lines to reconnect communities, £1 billion roads package, £3.3 billion road resurfacing fund, £460m for smaller road schemes, £2 bus fare cap extended until the end of 2024, and £2.5 billion for a West Yorkshire mass transit system. It is absolutely essential that the CVRL electrification project should be included, specifically, in this funding package.

This Council accepts that:

- This project is of the highest strategic priority to the railway systems in the North of England. Not only will it facilitate faster, smoother and greatly enhanced services, it will also provide rail resilience and reliability to the system and boost economic growth by attracting more businesses and investment to the area and helping Calderdale to achieve its net zero ambitions.
- The TransPennine line, together with the CVRL, will provide all-electric

alternative routes for each other. This rail equivalent of orbital motorways (such as the M25 and M60) would provide a solid foundation for further railway developments in the North. This is invaluable if we are to maintain transpennine services in the event of emergencies, essential maintenance, and the worst of the inclement weather which is frequently encountered across the Pennines.

- In our region, businesses and residents have for many years have been crying out for improved East-West links and regional connectivity, and now we have a real prospect of achieving those ambitions.

This Council resolves:

- To request the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council to write to the Mayor of West Yorkshire, the Chair of WYCA and the Government's Minister for Transport to designate the Electrification of the CVRL as a project of the highest priority and to include it, specifically, in the investment programme as announced following the recent cancellation of the northern leg of HS2.

It was moved as an **AMENDMENT** by Councillor Patient,
Seconded by Councillor Tremayne

This Council notes that:

- Calder Valley Railway Line (CVRL) plays a crucial role in the public transport system in West Yorkshire, with residents and visitors using it to commute for work and education and leisure.
- Even though CVRL is key to public transport in the region, it lacks full electrification. The use of diesel-powered trains is not in line with Calderdale, West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) or Greater Manchester's net zero targets of 2038 or sooner.
- An efficient, accessible, and affordable rail transport system is the backbone of a successful public transportation network.
- Improving public transport and particular rail is essential to boosting economic growth and reducing inequalities in Calderdale. The Council and West Yorkshire Combined Authority should take inspiration from successful public transportation systems locally, such as Manchester's Mass Transit System, and globally, with successful transport systems driving economic growth around the world.

This Council acknowledges that

- Calderdale residents need and deserve an efficient, accessible, and affordable rail transport system to reduce inequalities, address the urgent need for action on climate change, and act as a driver for economic growth. Unfortunately, the approach of the Conservative

government towards investment in rail infrastructure in the north of England has been characterised by a string of broken promises.

- To put these broken promises into historical context, in 2015 a cross-party taskforce produced the 'Northern Sparks' report, which identified CVRL (Leeds – Bradford – Halifax – Manchester Victoria) as the top priority for electrification in the next funding cycle 2019 - 2024. The Conservative government failed to prioritise and fund this work. In 2018 Calderdale Council became a signatory to the 'Electric Railway Charter', declaring the Council's continued support for the electrification campaign. In 2021 Transport for the North published the Northern Powerhouse rail report, aimed at improving journey times and connectivity across the region. If the Government were to invest in the proposals, the benefits would take over 20 years to be fully realised.
- Due to the constant changes to plans for the rail network in the North by the Government, progress can be agonisingly slow. The proposed upgrade of the TransPennine route (Leeds – Huddersfield - Manchester) is not likely to be completed for at least 10 years. It is also not completely clear whether this will include the full electrification needed to deliver all benefits including reduced running costs, improved services, and reduced environmental impact.
- In October 2023 the Government published the Network North report, following the cancellation of the northern leg of HS2. Analysis has shown it contains numerous errors, projects that have already been completed and proposals which are not fully costed. Within days, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was forced to admit the projects mentioned were just 'illustrative' examples of schemes which might be funded.
- The new train station for Bradford mentioned in the Network North report would be a positive development for West Yorkshire and should be welcomed. However, after every broken promise over almost a decade there is still no mention of the electrification of CVRL.

This Council resolves

- It will not put up with being ignored by central government. We will continue to fight for decent rail services for the people of Calderdale.
- To show real commitment to boosting productivity and tackling inequalities in our region. We will work shoulder-to-shoulder with the Mayor of West Yorkshire, WYCA, and government departments to push for the electrification of CVRL.

After being put to the vote, the **Amended Motion** was carried.

Councillors Hutchinson, Issott, Leigh MBE and Scullion commented on the Motion.

RESOLVED that:

This Council notes that:

- Calder Valley Railway Line (CVRL) plays a crucial role in the public transport system in West Yorkshire, with residents and visitors using it to commute for work and education and leisure.
- Even though CVRL is key to public transport in the region, it lacks full electrification. The use of diesel-powered trains is not in line with Calderdale, West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) or Greater Manchester's net zero targets of 2038 or sooner.
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- Improving public transport and particular rail is essential to boosting economic growth and reducing inequalities in Calderdale. The Council and West Yorkshire Combined Authority should take inspiration from successful public transportation systems locally, such as Manchester's Mass Transit System, and globally, with successful transport systems driving economic growth around the world.

This Council acknowledges that

- Calderdale residents need and deserve an efficient, accessible, and affordable rail transport system to reduce inequalities, address the urgent need for action on climate change, and act as a driver for economic growth. Unfortunately, the approach of the Conservative government towards investment in rail infrastructure in the north of England has been characterised by a string of broken promises.
- To put these broken promises into historical context, in 2015 a cross-party taskforce produced the 'Northern Sparks' report, which identified CVRL (Leeds – Bradford – Halifax – Manchester Victoria) as the top priority for electrification in the next funding cycle 2019 - 2024. The Conservative government failed to prioritise and fund this work. In 2018 Calderdale Council became a signatory to the 'Electric Railway Charter', declaring the Council's continued support for the electrification campaign. In 2021 Transport for the North published the Northern Powerhouse rail report, aimed at improving journey times and connectivity across the region. If the Government were to invest in the proposals, the benefits would take over 20 years to be fully realised.
- Due to the constant changes to plans for the rail network in the North by the Government, progress can be agonisingly slow. The proposed upgrade of the TransPennine route (Leeds – Huddersfield - Manchester) is not likely to be completed for at least 10 years. It is also not completely clear whether this will include the full electrification needed to deliver all benefits including reduced running costs,

improved services, and reduced environmental impact.

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- To show real commitment to boosting productivity and tackling inequalities in our region. We will work shoulder-to-shoulder with the Mayor of West Yorkshire, WYCA, and government departments to push for the electrification of CVRL

(C) Get Home Safely

The Mayor advised that a Motion had been received from the Labour Group regarding Get Home Safely. The Mayor further advised that an amendment had been received from the Liberal Democrat Group which had been circulated to the full membership of the Council prior to the meeting. On receipt of the amendment the Labour Group, after due consideration, amended their original Motion to incorporate Liberal Democrat Amendment.

The Mayor asked Councillor Ahmed if both himself and Councillor Brundell were happy to propose and second the incorporation of the Liberal Democrat Amendment into the Labour Motion. After being put to the vote the incorporation of the amendment into the original motion was carried.

It was moved by Councillor Ahmed,
Seconded by Councillor Brundell,

This Council notes:

- Shift work is widespread in many industries such as hospitality, health and care, retail, cleaning, and security. This can often involve late-night working.
- Many workers, especially women, are increasingly worried about their safety travelling to and from work at night.

- Safe and affordable routes home are also vital for people who go out in Calderdale at night to visit bars, restaurants, theatres and other hospitality venues.
- There are very few night bus services in Calderdale after 10:00pm to transport workers and members of the public home, and no services after midnight.

This Council believes:

- While employers may feel their duty of care ends when an employee finishes a shift, they also need to take into consideration the safety of staff journeys home especially during unsocial hours.
- Enforcement of the law against sexual assault on public transport is weak and only 2% of victims go on to report sexual harassment on public transport.
- Unite the union's Get Me Home Safely campaign calls on employers to take all reasonable steps to ensure workers are able to get home safely from work at night.
- Greater numbers of trained staff and stronger enforcement of the law against sexual assault and harassment on public transport are urgently needed.

This Council resolves:

- To ask officers to consider the development of a voluntary charter for employers of night staff to ensure staff get home safely after work. This could include bidding for financial assistance from the Government's Safety of Women at Night Fund to help businesses provide their staff with safe and affordable transport options.
- To work closely with the Mayor of West Yorkshire on initiatives to improve the safety of women and girls in Calderdale, particularly at night.
- To take every opportunity to highlight the importance of late night and off-peak services in work by the Mayor of West Yorkshire and West Yorkshire Combined Authority to improve mass transit in Calderdale. This includes a continuing focus on affordable fares.
- To ensure that the money already allocated to be spent over three financial years to support co-designed priorities and actions is effectively distributed across West Yorkshire to support delivery of The Mayor of West Yorkshire's Safety of Women and Girls Strategy.
- To work with partners to ensure that the 2024-25 funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, via WYCA, is effectively used in support of the priorities of local women and girls. Initiatives supported could

include creating safe zones to which they can walk, where they will feel safer and be covered by CCTV and be in the company of others who can offer safety and assistance, such as security staff and evening workers.

- To provide continued support for Community Safety Partnership initiatives such as Operation Jeanhaven, Street Angels and Ask Angela, which build on the 4Ps of Prevention, Protect, Prepare and Pursue, and aim to retain Purple Flag status.

After being put to the vote, the **Motion** was carried.

Councillors Bellenger, Blagbrough, Issott, Courtney, Patient, Barnes, Foster and Ahmed commented on the Motion.

RESOLVED that:

This Council notes:

- Shift work is widespread in many industries such as hospitality, health and care, retail, cleaning, and security. This can often involve late-night working.
- Many workers, especially women, are increasingly worried about their safety travelling to and from work at night.
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- To work with partners to ensure that the 2024-25 funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, via WYCA, is effectively used in support of the priorities of local women and girls. Initiatives supported could include creating safe zones to which they can walk, where they will feel safer and be covered by CCTV and be in the company of others who can offer safety and assistance, such as security staff and evening workers.
- To provide continued support for Community Safety Partnership initiatives such as Operation Jeanhaven, Street Angels and Ask Angela, which build on the 4Ps of Prevention, Protect, Prepare and Pursue, and aim to retain Purple Flag status.

66 COMMENTS ON THE WORK OF SCRUTINY BOARDS, PANELS AND COMMITTEES AND QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE TO THE CHAIRS OF SCRUTINY BOARDS, PANELS AND COMMITTEES

There were no questions to the Chairs of Scrutiny Boards, Panels and Committees or comments from Members.