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Governance and Accountability in the Modern Local Authority: An Exploratory Analysis of Views From Inside and Out - With Particular Reference to Outsourcing and Partnership Working

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**GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE  
MODERN LOCAL AUTHORITY:**

**AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF VIEWS FROM INSIDE  
& OUT – WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO  
OUTSOURCING AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING.**

**ALEX STRICKLAND FRSA**

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Public Administration

17<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

**ANNEX 9**

**Volume IV of VIII**

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## Case Study 2 Interviews

### Table of Quotations for Analysis

REF	WHO	THEME REF	THEME	CAT	COMMENT (Page numbers below refer to interview page numbers at the top of each interview)
A14	Chief Executive	A	Economic Growth	Place Shaping	Interviewer:Yes, so in addition, then, to the sort of day job of providing services, in terms of providing the schools, keeping the streets clean, and everything else – in addition to that, is this sort of place-shaping model, isn't it, in terms of what it is you're looking to create? (p5)
					Respondent:Yes. I think that's the most important – local authorities need to be relevant, and have to have impact; otherwise, why are they there, really?..... (p5)
A15	Chief Executive	A	Economic Growth	Jobs	Respondent:.....[with reference to the importance of economic growth]. I think lots of evidence that if you're in work, it's better than not being in work; less poverty, but also, generally, more emotional wellbeing; children generally have less mental health issues (p5)
A16	Chief Executive	A	Economic Growth	Transport	Interviewer:Just ..... thinking about the question about transport, and this One North business about linking everywhere up and improving connectivity: how important is that..... ? (p29)
					Respondent:Yes, for a number of reasons; partly because that's what drives jobs, and it's jobs that drive moving people out of poverty; a good quality of life. We want a vibrant economy here..... so we want a town centre that looks nice, and that people want to come to (p30)
A17	Chief Executive	A	Economic Growth	Workload	Interviewer:How much of your time is spent doing sort of economic issues, in terms of regeneration?.....(p32)
					Respondent:If you asked which of the main service areas I spend most of my



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					time on, then yes (p32)
<b>A18</b>	Chief Executive	A	Economic Growth		<p>Respondent: And if you look at adverts for chief executives' jobs, it's fairly standard now that they expect you to have some regeneration background, or some sense of that, and increasingly, you do find very few chief execs can't operate with some degree of confidence in an economic regeneration environment. It was a big learning curve for me, because I hadn't to a big extent, but you have to be able to do that.</p> <p>On this combined authority, the way we work is that each chief exec takes a lead on one of the functions, and they're all economic issues. The chief exec at XXXXXX leads on transport. Wakefield leads on skills; XXXXXX leads on innovation and ____ [0:37:33], and I lead on infrastructure, which includes housing and broadband, so we have all taken responsibility for some area of the economic devolution argument, for example, and [economic 0:37:44] investment.</p> <p>Now, that basically means we just vaguely keep an eye on it, and everyone else does the work; it doesn't mean we do a lot of work. I do see it as a key part of my role; getting to know local businesses. I don't see that as taking over from the role of my business support officers, but I think it's important that the chief executive is seen as open to business. (p33/34)</p>
<b>A19</b>	Chief Executive	A	Economic Growth	Jobs	<p>Respondent: Our biggest employer is XXXXXX what was XXXXXX a crucial relationship for us, because they employ 6,000 people in XXXXXX Interviewer: Everybody has been telling me it's absolutely key, yes. Respondent: So I do make sure that link is to me, and I go to meetings with them, and I know who they are, and that is there. I think there is something about the leader of an organisation, as in a chief executive, rather than a political leader, being business-savvy and understanding that. (p34)</p>
<b>P1</b>	Chief Executive	P	Interlinked Public Policy		<p>Interviewer: I suppose, if you think of housing, in a sense, you need to fix that to fix other things. It's got a knock-on effect, in terms of social care; it's got a knock-on effect in terms of employment, and I suppose that's the thing, really, I think that I have learnt over the last couple of weeks, speaking to people: how these things are all linked together.</p>



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					As a lawyer, you tend to think down tram tracks; law, and that's it, but just speaking yesterday about sorting out jobs and regeneration, that issue is linked in with skills and sorting them out in terms of the funding for skills and getting people skilled-up to do their jobs. It's linked into transport stuff; the issue on the XXXXXX line. (p4)
					Respondent:Yes, absolutely. (p4)
<b>P2</b>	Chief Executive	P	Interlinked Public Policy		Interviewer:Which everybody is telling me here is a real priority (Laughter). (p5)
<b>P3</b>	Chief Executive	P	Interlinked Public Policy	Quality of Life	Respondent:Yes, yes. I suppose what links it all is quality of life for residents, isn't it?.....(p5)
<b>P4</b>	Chief Executive	P	Interlinked Public Policy	Synergy	Respondent:.....But then, I think it is also about saying, "Actually, it's those [linkages] and synergies, [whatever] linkages and synergies – if you're delivering waste management and you're delivering adult social care, then you can link up asking bin-men to keep an eye out for people who look vulnerable and feed straight back." (p6)
<b>P5</b>	Chief Executive	P	Interlinked Public Policy	Synergy	Respondent:think there's something about how you manage things as a package, but consummately going back to: you're trying to do the right thing (p6)
<b>B23</b>	Chief Executive	B	Joint Working	Presence	Respondent.....I suppose part of my role is making sure the council is present and at the table of the places it needs to be present and at the table of, and that we are getting the best out of any partnership working, so: are we talking to the right people? Are we in partnership with the right organisations, and is that working? (p7)
<b>B24</b>	Chief Executive	B	Joint Working	Porous Boundaries	Respondent:So I think there's – I talk about porous boundaries. I think local authorities have to have porous boundaries; they have to be open to any other sector, any other partner, joint working, and trying to maintain that porosity, if that's a word; it probably isn't. (p8)
<b>B25</b>	Chief Executive	B	Joint Working	Health	Respondent:A lot of the work we're doing with health now is, "Well, where's the mandate on that?" It's not always clear, is it? Flowing through central government, local government, or where it is. (p8).
<b>B26</b>	Chief	B	Joint Working	Health	Interviewer:Yes (p8).



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	Executive				Respondent:The government is putting a lot more – or the Department of Health and NHS England are putting a lot more expectation on Health and Wellbeing Boards, so there's been a number – we've all commented recently how many things come out of NHS England directly to the chair of Health and Wellbeing Boards, and don't go to the chief executive or the leader. That's an emerging pattern. (p8/9)
<b>B27</b>	Chief Executive	B	Joint Working	Health	Interviewer:Right. (p9)
					Respondent:Well, in lots of places, the chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board isn't even a councillor, or if they are, they're not me or the leader (p9)
<b>B28</b>	Chief Executive	B	Joint Working	Planning Powers	Respondent: .....so most elected members of most local authorities, for example, are very sensitive to any suggestion that the combined authority get planning application powers, because they very much see that as a local issue (p10)
<b>H8</b>	Chief Executive	H	Leadership	Systems	Respondent:.....I suppose it's a bit of a glib summary, but it's partly systems leadership. I think you have to have the skill to operate in a complex environment, so I think that's partly the skill to understand you can't be in charge of everything, so it can't be leadership through command and control, and it can't necessarily even be leadership through getting easy ownership of a decision. A lot of it is trying to lead across the system, which means you need to be able to influence; you need to be able to negotiate; you need to be able to woo people. (p16).
<b>H9</b>	Chief Executive	H	Leadership	Soft Skills	.....I think internally, it's about: how do you inspire people? How do you give them a sense of what the future is; what we're trying to achieve? How do you keep people focused on, "It's about impact, not about process," (p17/18).
<b>H10</b>	Chief Executive	H	Leadership	Systems	..... A lot of it, I think is about having a net of tentacles' (p19).
<b>C13</b>	Chief Executive	C	Quality Service	Challenge	Respondent.....I'm a pragmatist think sometimes it's appropriate, sometimes it isn't..... in my own opinion [outsourcing] has driven service improvement. Certainly, adult social care, I think, has vastly improved once we started using external companies, because it's a – (p24)
					Interviewer:It's a challenge. (p24)



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<b>C14</b>	Chief Executive	C	Quality Service	Pragmatism	Respondent..... I'm a pragmatist; I think it's a mix. I think it is still ideological, and maybe that's more noticeable here, where it's no overall control, so you see the political party differences much more strongly (p24/25)
<b>C15</b>	Chief Executive	C	Quality Service	Quality	Respondent .....I think the challenge for local authorities is less around contract management than quality management. (p28)
<b>G11</b>	Chief Executive	G	Motivation	Socially Valuable	RespondentI've never worked in the private sector. I think I do like being in something that I feel is a socially valuable job in that sense. (p36)
<b>G12</b>	Chief Executive	G	Motivation	Justice	.....the sense of being able to influence where I can see examples of social injustice. The chance to make a difference: that is a motivator for me, and I like the problem-solving side. I like being in a job where you have to deal with lots of problems all the time (p36)
<b>G13</b>	Chief Executive	G	Motivation	Variety	..... I like broad and shallow. I don't actually understand anything in any detail, but I do an awful lot of different things, and for me, that suits me better than had I become a very good lawyer, for example, where I probably would have understood a lot of stuff in depth (p37)
<b>G14</b>	Chief Executive	G	Motivation	Variety	Respondent: And increasingly, and I think that is partly, frequently, my message to staff, is that more and more of us have to be generic. I think there are fewer and fewer narrow professionalisms, and if you look at all the restructures that have been done, most places have gone from eight or nine directors to three or four. It's a standing joke here; the heads of service, which is our equivalent of assistant directors, how long can a job title get? Because every time we restructure, we just stuck another function on somebody, so people are now running functions they probably didn't know existed five years ago. So I think we're all becoming increasingly broad and shallow, and I think a lot of people at the senior level of government are probably motivated by that mix of liking to do lots of different things, but also liking to feel they're making a difference in the world somewhere. (p38)
<b>E9</b>	Chief Executive	E	Appetite to Scrutinise		Interviewer.....do you find that there's an increasing appetite amongst members to get a democratic grip on some of these sort of unelected bodies? In terms of scrutiny, is there a wish, is there an appetite amongst politicians to widen the remit and try to make these things accountable? (p12)

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<b>E10</b>	Chief Executive	E	Appetite to Scrutinise	Unelected Bodies	Respondent: I think members get frustrated with organisations that are not democratically accountable, but have a significant impact on place, because the politicians get blamed for it all, so if they can't have any control over it, and there isn't that accountability. (p12)
<b>E11</b>	Chief Executive	E	Appetite to Scrutinise	Political Blame	.....we've got issues about the hospital here. They certainly find it frustrating that, potentially, we could see significant restructuring of the hospital and various other services, and there is no political involvement in that at all (p13).
<b>E12</b>	Chief Executive	E	Appetite to Scrutinise	Political Blame	<p>Interviewer: I suppose the other thing about it, as well, just thinking about this thing about place, and about place-shaping, and sorting that out; the thing is, is that I suppose you've got so many things these days; the global economy, where firms can make decisions on the other side of the world and it effects what happens here, whereas people are here for keeps, aren't they? And the decisions that are made; they've got to live with them and they've got to defend them.</p> <p>Respondent: Yes, yes.</p> <p>Interviewer: I think it's that local connection, sometimes, [that sort of drives 0:45:30].</p> <p>Respondent: Yes. I think that's the other thing about local democracy, as well. You do get people moving in and out, and becoming politicians, but generally, most politicians are in the same place most of their political career at a local level. I think, whilst you never know who's going to get re-elected, and you never know how long they're going to be around, generally, they live here, and they have to live with the consequences of their decision, and they have to live with the consequences of their decision on the doorstep, over many years. There is an element, in a place like this, where a lot of the staff live here, as well, but realistically, at a senior level, you get a turnover, because people are ambitious; there's only ever one chief exec and four directors, so eventually, if anyone else wants to be chief exec, they're either going to kill me or move, aren't they? (p40/41)</p>



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<b>Q1</b>	Council Leader	Q	Politics is Central	Elections	Respondent:and what pleases me the most as a conservative, it was a by-election; I'd lost in the May election in 1990 and then I won the by-election off Labour in the year that the poll tax was introduced.(p2)
					Interviewer:Really? That was something. (p2)
<b>Q2</b>	Council Leader	Q	Politics is Central	Elections	Respondent:It was the fifth time I'd fought that ward. Yes. (p2)
<b>Q3</b>	Council Leader	Q	Politics is Central	Political Beliefs	Respondent:Well I sort of first got involved in politics because I wanted to make a difference and change things for the good, for the people of XXXXXX basically, so it's that really and with my political beliefs....,(p9)
<b>Q4</b>	Council Leader	Q	Politics is Central	Budget	`.....Yes, in 2008 I became leader,..... I'd done the Conservative budget for a number of years, and I've sort of won the argument within the group that we can look to reduce.....The first year that I got real control of our budget process and I'd got the groups backing to do it, I reduced that to 2.5%. The following year I cut it down to an increase of 1.7% and the following year it was a 1% decrease, and I think that's the first decrease in local taxation that has ever occurred. (p18)
<b>Q5</b>	Council Leader	Q	Politics is Central	Budget	Respondent:`.....[with reference to priorities] ..... I would suggest that it's putting together a balanced budget for next year's budget process, and sort of get to grips with the savings that we need to make, which for XXXXXX is going to be £12.2 million we need to save (p11).

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<b>Q6</b>	Council Leader	Q	Politics is Central	Budget	<p>Respondent: Yes but something which you talked about earlier is that I've always maintained that we could and should do a lot more in joint services with other councils, and we can reduce our costs that way without affecting the frontline services.</p> <p>Interviewer: Yes.</p> <p>Respondent: A few years ago with the conservative group leader in XXXXXX we put a scheme together where we going to share a senior management team, which would run both councils, and that – just in the...</p> <p>Interviewer: What sort of joint chief executives and...</p> <p>Respondent: Yes, and senior management; the whole senior management structure would have been shared, you know, and we would still have sort of management at a lower level, in whichever...</p> <p>Interviewer: Yes.</p> <p>Respondent: And they'd be split sort of thing; the two councils would be run totally separately but we'd just have an agreement that the chief exec. would spend part of the time in XXXXXX and part in XXXXXX and that was because we were both in opposition at the time, but our finance offices got together and they estimated that within two years, after sort of putting it in practice and settling down etc.</p> <p>Interviewer: Yes, so for it to bed in, yes.</p> <p>Respondent: That would have saved £2.5 million and by further integration there would have been much greater savings as it was further integrated in.</p> <p>Interviewer: Yes, and presumably part of the motivation behind that is to do as much as you can in terms of shared services for sort of backup stuff, back office stuff.</p> <p>Respondent: Back office stuff, yes. (p13/14)</p>
<b>Q7</b>	Council Leader	Q	Politics is Central	Budget	<p>Respondent: And I'd have gone then, through to the middle management and made reductions which I think I'd sort of set in place how to do that, and better procurement things which we did, which I like to think helped the liberal – first the liberal and then the Labour leadership in years since then. (p16)</p>



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<b>Q8</b>	Council Leader	Q	Politics is Central	Political Beliefs	Respondent: ...the vast majority of the work is done with cross party agreement, you know, I would say 80/85% of the work a council does is agreed upon by all political parties. It's only the sort of last 15/20% where there's disagreement, and that's all we read about in the paper, it doesn't sort of sell that. (p9)
<b>Q9</b>	Council Leader	Q	Politics is Central	Political Beliefs	Respondent: Well I think the major thing about XXXXXX I would say, is that we don't want to lose XXXXXX Banking Group. Interviewer: Okay. Respondent: It's one of the headquarters in XXXXXX one of their three headquarters, and last time I was leader, it was under serious consideration. Interviewer: Because that's former XXXXXX isn't it? Respondent: Yes, the XXXXXX Building Society, so I fought very hard to help with other people and it was a Labour government at the time and the minister came up on a regular basis with us to talk with XXXXXX Banking Group to try and ensure that we retained that presence in XXXXXX because that would have major impact on our local economy. They employ more than 5,000 people in XXXXXX (p41/42)
<b>A20</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Skills	Respondent.....I think people are coming round to [the idea that] apprenticeships are the way forward' (p58).
<b>A21</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Transport	Respondent .... if you were building a factory to manufacture widgets which you're going to send throughout the UK and possibly Europe, do you want to invest in a place in XXXXXX which it's going to take you at least an hour to get to the nearest motorway no matter which way you go....? (p39)
<b>A22</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Transport	Interviewer: So if that link could be improved and you could improve those journey times to Manchester, presumably that would be a real boost for Calderdale? (p27)
<b>A23</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Transport	Respondent: Oh yes, and with the changes in the hub in Manchester, we should be able to get direct links to the Manchester airport, which would be excellent. (p27)

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<b>A24</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Jobs	<p>Interviewer: Yes, so presumably, I mean just thinking about that issue about inward investment, I mean presumably – what happens? If you get a company that wants to come to XXXXXX and they give you a ring and say, “Councillor look, I’m looking at bringing this here, but I need X, Y, Z’, I mean what happens then? Do you then sort of start having a think and having a chat with the economic development people about, have we got the site? Have we got the skills? Just give me a flavour.</p> <p>Respondent: Well we like to be a bit more proactive because we try and identify sites which are going to meet the criteria of new businesses. (p38)</p>
<b>A25</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Jobs	<p>Respondent: Yes, so you need flat land and we’ve got to make sure that we have land available for businesses to move to. (p40)</p>
<b>A26</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Jobs	<p>Respondent: Yes, the XXXXXX Building Society, so I fought very hard to help with other people and it was a Labour government at the time and the minister came up on a regular basis with us to talk with XXXXXX Banking Group to try and ensure that we retained that presence in XXXXXX because that would have major impact on our local economy. They employ more than 5,000 people in XXXXXX</p> <p>Interviewer: Gosh, so it is really important.</p> <p>Respondent: Yes, but after seeing that, the one thing that I would try and discourage is more jobs reliant on the finance industry, because if you have all your eggs in one basket...</p> <p>Interviewer: I understand it.</p> <p>Respondent: So, I would welcome basically anything but I would prefer diversification. (p42)</p>



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<b>A27</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Skills	Respondent: Yes, and that's important as well, because I do feel that schools are letting down the people, you know, we are not stretching children; all children should be stretched, and every child has a talent, and the schools should find that talent and encourage it, and no child should be wrote off as being not worth it, and unfortunately that does happen. Interviewer: Yes. Respondent: Which is why I'm absolutely over the moon about the changes which XXXXXX Gove introduced about education; every education list – he'd shoot me for saying that, you know, I do feel that they are making a difference and if you go to these successful schools now who are getting good Ofsted's, they have strong management, strong discipline in the school and the children learn. You can see that because the results improve and that's what we should have in every school; every school should be top Ofsted rating, otherwise... (p32)
<b>A28</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Skills	Interviewer: Presumably in terms of that, you know, IT is pretty central. Respondent: Oh yes, I mean when you think about it now, a car mechanic needs to be an expert on IT, because everything is done by computer now. Interviewer: True. Respondent: The computer tells you where the problem is. Interviewer: It's true. (p55)
<b>A29</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Jobs	Respondent: I do feel quite strongly actually that the best vehicle for some of this is the LEPs, the Leeds city region LEP, to have businessmen themselves involved, because it's great just politicians thinking that we know best, but I like to listen to people who've actually put their own money on the line, and they're sort of saying... (p34)

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A30	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Transport	<p>Interviewer: And I mean that is interesting to me because it sort of shows how everything links together, and presumably when you look at an issue like health and social care and the integration around that, and sort of sorting out issues around dementia, or even sorting issues around early years education, you know, everything has got to link together. And, I suppose if you think about jobs and the issue about being able to grow the local economy, being able to get the right skills and to train people up so that they can take jobs and be able to attract jobs, so you're thinking about transport and the XXXXXX line that comes through from Manchester, which everybody, myself included, trundles through on that, 5 miles an hour.</p> <p>Respondent: Yes.</p> <p>Interviewer: I mean it's all linked in. I mean in terms of the importance of partnerships to get those issues sorted out, I mean just give me a flavour on that.</p> <p>Respondent: Oh it's highly important, you know, if as leader at the council, I started shouting about how important it is to invest in the – to electrify the XXXXXX line and put some decent rolling stock on and increase the signalling system so that we can get more trains running along, you know, because at the moment because of – in parts of the XXXXXX it's a very old signalling system.</p> <p>Interviewer: Yes.</p> <p>Respondent: So, because of that, for rail safety reasons, we can only have a train about every 13 minutes.</p> <p>Interviewer: Is that right?</p> <p>Respondent: With a modern train system you can have them every five or six minutes. So, we could almost double the number of trains available on the line. If those things came through, I was told a number of years ago that the XXXXXX line, they were looking to electrify it in the late 50's.</p>
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					<p>Interviewer: Is that right? Respondent: And I'm assured that whenever work was done on the track, they dropped the track so that there was headroom under the bridges for electrification, and when Summit tunnel was closed, I don't know if you remember that. Interviewer: Yes. Respondent: There was a fire and it was closed for about two years in the late 90's, I'm told they also dropped the track there as well for possible future electrification, because they had to relay the track throughout the tunnel, and so they reduced the – they increased the depth of the tunnel so that it could take electrification. Interviewer: So what's the hold up on that? Is it just the money to do it? Respondent: It's the money to do it, yes. Interviewer: The money to do it. Respondent: And a few weeks ago, I speak to – they had a meeting in Leeds, an announcement where the prime minister came up, and Patrick McLoughlin... Interviewer: Yes, when he got attacked by the ____ [0:28:49]. Respondent: Yes, the secretary of state for transport came up. Interviewer: Yes. Respondent: And as I was leaving – I always go across to Leeds on the train, and I was leading to come back to XXXXXX on the train and Patrick McLoughlin just stopped me as I went out of the door and asked me if I knew the way to the railway station. That was a bad mistake of his, because he had a 10 minute walk with an ear bashing about the need for – and I got a promise from him that he would come up and have a meeting.</p>
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					<p>Interviewer: Really? Respondent: And he's coming on Monday. Interviewer: Ah well done. I mean presumably sorting that issue out is probably important, but one of the things that XXXXXX said to me on Monday was that – because I was asking about these travel to work areas in terms of how XXXXXX sits with that, and he was saying to me "Well you know, it's primarily Leeds and Bradford" and I said, "Well what about Manchester?" He said, "Oh it's difficult because of the lakes." Respondent: Yes but people do live in XXXXXX and travel to Manchester. Interviewer: Yes. Respondent: Now they tend to earn good salaries. Interviewer: Right. Respondent: And I think it's a real plus for XXXXXX because a proportion of those good salaries are spent in the economy in XXXXXX Interviewer: Yes. Respondent: You know they come back to XXXXXX and go to the excellent eating places we have. Interviewer: Yes. Respondent: The children spend their pocket money etc. in the local community. Interviewer: Yes, so it all comes back into XXXXXX Respondent: Yes. Interviewer: So if that link could be improved and you could improve those journey times to Manchester, presumably that would be a real boost for XXXXXX</p>
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					<p>Respondent: Oh yes, and with the changes in the hub in Manchester, we should be able to get direct links to the Manchester airport, which would be excellent.</p> <p>Interviewer: Oh right, yes.</p> <p>Respondent: And if we can't get a direct link at least we could go to Victoria from XXXXXX and just swap platforms and get on a train to the airport, rather than having to go to Piccadilly.</p> <p>Interviewer: Yes, because this is the thing, I mean transport is interesting because it shows, I suppose, the effect of sort of needing the thing to be integrated.</p> <p>Respondent: Yes. (p22-27)</p>
<b>A31</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Transport	<p>Respondent: Yes but people do live in XXXXXX and travel to Manchester.</p> <p>Interviewer: Yes.</p> <p>Respondent: Now they tend to earn good salaries.</p> <p>Interviewer: Right.</p> <p>Respondent: And I think it's a real plus for XXXXXX because a proportion of those good salaries are spent in the economy in XXXXXX</p> <p>Interviewer: Yes.</p> <p>Respondent: You know they come back to XXXXXX and go to the excellent eating places we have. (p25/26)</p>

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<b>A32</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Transport	<p>Interviewer: Yes, because this is the thing, I mean transport is interesting because it shows, I suppose, the effect of sort of needing the thing to be integrated. Respondent: Yes. Interviewer: Needing to get – I mean the argument about HS2 presumably, and you're right slap bang in the middle of it here on that Y. Respondent: Yes. Interviewer: I mean the arguments around that, there was lots of talk in the media about it being in terms of journey time to London, but of course the other issue is capacity and connectivity because as far as I can see on it, unless they sort out that west coast mainline, you won't even be able to get a seat on it. Respondent: Yes, this is the main point, you know, the high speed train, yes, you get to London quicker, but you will free up more time on east and west coast lines for local and goods traffic which again will help the local economy. Interviewer: Yes. Respondent: And one thing that I'm keen about as well is to ensure that we do have good connections to the new station in Manchester and Leeds to connect into the High Speed 2. I'd love a High Speed 3 to come through XXXXXX but I think... Interviewer: It's not going to is it at the moment? Respondent: No, well I think it would be far too expensive and I see the best way and most economical route would be up via Skipton area and a route up that way, sort of thing. Interviewer: Oh right. Respondent: And I think you could almost get by without having to tunnel, because that's usually the most expensive.</p>
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					<p>Interviewer: Okay. Respondent: You know, you can follow the lines, if you look at that route, I think that is a strong possibility of a route. Interviewer: Would that go up sort of round Keighley area and up towards Skipton? Respondent: Yes, somewhere round about that area, up above Keighley you know. I'm just trying to think, is it Steeton, that sort of area? Interviewer: I know, yes. Respondent: Come across to that area and across to Leeds sort of thing, following the – I think you'd come up the Ribble Valley and down the Aire Valley. Interviewer: I know where you mean, yes. Respondent: That sort of thing, and because you're in the valley sort of thing, I just think that that is... Interviewer: That sounds like the best route. Respondent: A good route for it because it wouldn't be as expensive. Interviewer: What did you think about the – I mean just whilst we're on transport, because it fascinates me, I mean it's got that many links into everything else, in terms of the One North proposals to try to – obviously George Osborne has been saying what he's said on that, there are issues about trying to improve the connectivity across the Pennines and trying to improve the links for freight as well from Liverpool to Hull, I mean what's your thoughts generally on that? Respondent: Well I always think that High Speed 3 should be Liverpool and major cities through to Hull and up to Newcastle, and join the lot, so I'm fully... Interviewer: Yes, it doesn't work otherwise does it? Respondent: No, and that – we could really make a major impact on the northern economy and create the jobs which are needed. Interviewer: Yes. (p27-30)</p>
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<b>A33</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Place Shaping	<p>Interviewer: Yes, what about tourism here, I mean as I say, you know, I've come here for years, I've always loved it; what's the – how big is tourism in terms of your economy here and what you do?</p> <p>Respondent: I can't give you any exact figures off the top of my head, but it is important; there are quite a lot of people employed in tourism of one sort or another, and we have some real gems. Hopefully down by the railway station we've got Eureka, the children's museum. (p44-45)</p>
<b>A34</b>	Council Leader	A	Economic Growth	Place Shaping	<p>Respondent: You know, our town centre, I think is absolutely superb.</p> <p>Interviewer: It is, and the other thing that strikes me, just sort of walking round, not only XXXXXX but of course XXXXXX there's a lot happened in XXXXXX in terms of the investment that's gone into that, and there's just a real buzz about those places.</p> <p>Respondent: Yes.</p> <p>Interviewer: You know there really is. You see people going in and out and it's busy. It's absolutely brilliant. (p50)</p>
<b>R1</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	R	Care Services		<p>Alex:Just thinking about XXXXXX generally, what is the top priority here? ..... Is it fair to say top priority is jobs and economic regeneration? (p2)</p>
<b>R2</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	R	Care Services	OFSTED	<p>XXX:I think it is up there, but I would probably put alongside that looking after the vulnerable members of the community, both adult and children.</p> <p>You may know that we are in intervention at the moment as far as OFSTED is concerned.(p3)</p> <p>Alex:I didn't know that. (p3)</p> <p>XXX:Not entirely positive reports on safeguarding of children. We are hoping to come out of that as the result of the next inspection which is imminent, but we have been under that process for the last three years. (p3)</p>

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<b>R3</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	R	Care Services	OFSTED	.... I think we certainly have had a period where the OFSTED reports indicated that perhaps there was a lack of understanding and ownership about the corporate parenting role that I have. But that has been addressed (p5).
<b>R4</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	R	Care Services	OFSTED	.....inevitably [the OFSTED process] has led to concern about the morale of staff and part of the problem has been with the turnover of social work staff as well (p4)
<b>R5</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	R	Care Services	Staff	Alex:It is difficult, isn't it, to get people and keep them, in the current climate? (p4)
					XXX:Exactly. When we are in the area we are in, I am talking about West Yorkshire geographically then attracting permanent social work staff is difficult when they are in demand, and there tends to be a greater level of pay, certainly within Leeds City Council which is not too far away (p4)
<b>R6</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	R	Care Services	Staff	Alex: It is difficult as well trying to get people into those Director posts in terms of Children's Services, from what I have heard, it is near impossible. XXX: Well it is, Somerset have just lost their Director and yes, I was only speaking to Stuart XXXXXX at the back end of last week, he is our Director of CYP about the fact that yes, there are severe shortages amongst senior well positioned Directors, for picking up the type of issues that are being experienced through many local authorities, because of things that have happened at XXXXXX Somerset, Rotherham, where is next? That is the concern. (p6)



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<b>R7</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	R	Care Services		Alex: Presumably, given the tight financial settlement that everybody is working within, I suppose there is a question whether down the line you will get local authorities only delivering statutory services and nothing else?XXX: I forget the graph of doom that was being talked about.Alex: The graph of doom yes.XXX: Was one that depicted the spend on just adult social services alone, because of the increasing population, expanding to take up the whole of the predicted budget that was available for local authorities.Well I think that has been criticised to some extent for the way in which it was depicted, because it won't happen that way. But there is an element of truth in that, that because we have a population that we know is going to get older and increase and with the increases in medical help, people are living longer and living with more problems unfortunately. The money is going to have to come from somewhere, so there are some very, very difficult questions to be answered.Your generation Nancy will inherit a great deal of the problems that are currently there and I have got two sons who are not much older than you and I do worry about what we are handing on to you, because, not to worry... (p24/25)
<b>S1</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	S	Public Health		XXX: I was only talking about this this morning, that trying to embed the public health ethos across all aspects of the authority is difficult. Because it is a relatively new concept for us to have public health come back into the responsibility of local government. (p9/10).
<b>S2</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	S	Public Health	School Transport	.....the buses within XXXXXX are schoolchildren, going back and forth to school. How do we make sure that that is something that results in there being some health benefit to children, rather than having them constantly on buses, is ther a better way of doing it? Can they cycle to school? Can they walk to school? (p10).

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<b>S3</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	S	Public Health	Health	.....if we can do things at the front end of the system, again going back to children, preventing childhood obesity, but also stopping smoking for example, that is our responsibility within the local authority is to try to have an impact on that. Teenage pregnancies, all of those things, if we don't spend the money at the front end, the preventative stuff, we are just storing up problems for ourselves further down the track. (p11).
<b>D10</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		XXX'I was heavily involved in the work behind setting up the combined authority, advising not just XXXXXX but also our West Yorkshire partners. (p12)
<b>D11</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		I attended a number of discussions about what the combined authority (a) was going to be empowered to undertake initially, but what it was going to have to be prepared to contemplate undertaking as part of its ethos for being set up, years down the track.(p12)
<b>D12</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		One of the things that is within the powers of the combined authority, which is not yet fully understood, is economic regeneration and development, but also planning.(p13)
<b>D13</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		I think that the way in which the combined authorities will work, is that they will take on a greater regional responsibility for the regional planning that needs to take place. I am talking not just about planning issues themselves, but about transport infrastructure'. (p12/13)
<b>D14</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		Alex:Presumably if you get that you have then got the issue of, "How do we skill people up to take these jobs?" (p21)



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<b>D15</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		XXX:Well there is that, and also where do you put the people by way of housing? Because XXXXXX it's geographical, topographical profile, it is not brilliant. You are talking about the further up the manor you go, you have got valleys which are difficult to place any form of significant levels of housing. (p21)
<b>D16</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		So there are all those different issues at play.(p21)
<b>D17</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		Alex:What is your travel to work area like at Calderdale? Does it rely on Greater Manchester? Or is it Leeds? What is the pattern? (p21)
<b>D18</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		XXX:It is coming in more from Leeds than from Manchester. I don't think Manchester is something that feeds into us a great deal, because it is not that easy to get to. If you are travelling by car it is a nightmare on the M62. (p22)
<b>D19</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		The rail link is not brilliant, so I think we are not a massive inward attractor of commuters. A lot of people travel out from XXXXXX to go and work elsewhere. So the more we can improve our transport the better we can be by way of attracting people to come into XXXXXX but we have to give them jobs to do that.(p22)
<b>D20</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		XXX:It will bypass us to an extent, unless we get our own upgrade as part of our electrification of the XXXXXX it's called. So we would need that on the back of HS2. (p23)



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<b>D21</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		Alex:And that HS3 that was being talked about, about a new line across the Pennines, that wasn't going to come to XXXXXX at all presumably? (p23)
<b>D22</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		XXX:No. (p23)
<b>D23</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		Alex:So the crucial thing is to upgrade that XXXXXX line? (p23)
<b>D24</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		XXX:Absolutely. (p23)
<b>D25</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		XXXI know the XXXXXX members, it probably stands true for all of the West Yorkshire members, there was just no appetite at this stage for them to give up their ability to determine what happens within their own region on planning issues (p15)
<b>D26</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		XXXThat will be I think a significant obstacle to overcome, because if you look at an area like XXXXXX it is a very distinct area. (p15)

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<b>D27</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		XXXInteresting point because one of the things that has become apparent with the budget cuts that have been effected over the last two, three, four years and will continue to be effected over the next two, three, four years, is trying to move away from the council being regarded as the body of first resort. (p23)
<b>D28</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		In other words, if something was to go wrong within a family then at the moment it is the case of, well it is the council that will be the body that you turn to, to sort it out. Quite often what we would like perhaps to move towards being is an authority or a body that signposts people to where they can get help and not being the organisation that provides that. (p23/24)
<b>D29</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		That is a difficult position to get to because like it or not local government has that role and for it to start moving away from that and become a commissioner is changing a cultural way of looking at things and you also then need to also have in place the organisations to whom you can signpost people.(p24)
<b>D30</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		That is going to take a fairly marked shift in how funding is set up to allow that. So for example, if you have got people who come with, as the population increasingly gets older, the services that we provide for vulnerable adults and care home facilities and all of the rest of it, like residential homes etc., should we be the organisation that is seen as capable of providing that? Or do we just try to make sure that there are either the voluntary sector or private organisations that provide that, but we just signpost people off to that? (p24)
<b>D31</b>	Head of Democratic and Partnership Services	D	Reshaping Governance		One of the things that local politicians are wary about is the description that has been applied to the combined authority that it will become West Yorkshire County Council again, which we moved away from (p13)
<b>F10</b>	Scrutiny Officer	F	Overview Scrutiny Function		Interviewer:.....[with reference to Scrutiny Reviews] I saw one that was done on economic regeneration, one that was done on children's social care....(p7)
<b>F11</b>	Scrutiny Officer	F	Overview Scrutiny Function		Respondent:.....The one that I'm proudest of, because I did it or I worked on it, was ..... on dementia (p7)
<b>T1</b>	Scrutiny	T	Ad Hoc Scrutiny		Interviewer:Is that the major thing that you're involved in at the minute? (p19)



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	Officer				Respondent:For about two and a half years, there's been a strategy review of health and social care services, and in February, three of the provider trusts, three of the provider organisations produced what they called the Strategic Outline Case that had five models for the provision of predominantly acute hospital care across half of XXXXXX and XXXXXX (p19)
					Their preferred option that they stated at that time was that XXXXXX XXXXXX Infirmary would become what they call and unplanned site and XXXXXX XXXXXX Hospital would become a planned site [and what that meant, in shorthand, was 0:03:03] that we wouldn't have A&E in XXXXXX
					There would be some minor injuries unit cover at the hospital but there wouldn't be an accident and emergency – (p19)
<b>T2</b>	Scrutiny Officer	T	Ad Hoc Scrutiny		Interviewer:That will be in XXXXXX? Did that cause a row? (p19)
					Respondent:Yes, absolutely. Significant local anger. Actually just starting to write the report up. The council set up something called the People's Commission which is like having a set with scrutiny power.(p19)
					It was very political, I think they just wanted to do something different, and they set it up and I got asked to support that as well. (p20)
<b>T3</b>	Scrutiny Officer	T	Ad Hoc Scrutiny		Interviewer:Who was on that? (p20)
					Respondent:Six different councillors who aren't necessarily on scrutiny. Some of the more senior councillors, and they decided to appointment an independent chair, so we've got an independent as the chair of it, a guy called Professor XXXXXX XXXXXX who's from Oxford Brookes University, and six councillors. (p20)
<b>T4</b>	Scrutiny Officer	T	Ad Hoc Scrutiny		`The People's Commission has asked without any statutory powers the chief officer of the Clinical Commissioning Group to attend and give evidence, and he has. (p26)
<b>T5</b>	Scrutiny Officer	T	Ad Hoc Scrutiny		They've asked the chief executive of the acute trust to attend and give evidence, and he has. (p26)
<b>T6</b>	Scrutiny Officer	T	Ad Hoc Scrutiny		We've asked Yorkshire Ambulance Service to come and give evidence without any statutory powers, and they have (p26)
<b>T7</b>	Scrutiny	T	Ad Hoc Scrutiny		Interviewer:So there's been cooperation across the board? (p26)



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	Officer				Respondent:If they said, “No, you've got no powers to ask us,” we’d do a press release. We’d say, “We asked Yorkshire Ambulance Service to come and tell us about keeping people safe, and they wouldn't talk to us.” (p26)
<b>L7</b>	Scrutiny Officer	L	Goodwill		Respondent `I’m talking about health and social care because that’s the scrutiny panel I support more. We’ve just revised our contracts, hub care is provided by private organisations in XXXXXX predominantly. Hardly any is in-house, it’s all contracted out’. (p28)
<b>L8</b>	Scrutiny Officer	L	Goodwill		Interviewer:That’s adult social care, is it? (p28) Respondent:Yes, that’s carers going into old people’s homes and cooking them a meal or bathing them or whatever support they need. (p28)
<b>L9</b>	Scrutiny Officer	L	Goodwill		Interviewer:That’s all outsourced, you say? (p28) Respondent:90% of it is outsourced. It’s been a service that has been subject to criticism, not just in XXXXXX but up and down the country for doing visits for 15 minutes, for paying people off for zero based contracts. (p28)
<b>L10</b>	Scrutiny Officer	L	Goodwill		The workers who are on minimum wage or thereabouts not being paid travel time. (p29)
<b>L11</b>	Scrutiny Officer	L	Goodwill		Interviewer:Yes, I’ve heard of this before, so they're chipping off the time of the people who are going – (p29) Respondent:Yes. They've got a task which is going and taking them medication, and they rush in without shutting the front door to save time. (p29)
<b>L12</b>	Scrutiny Officer	L	Goodwill		They're probably few and far between. We’re changing the contracts. What we’ve done in XXXXXX is we had about 15 providers. We’ve reduced it to 3 based on a locality, so we’re giving more business to 3 companies, and we’re trying to pay them on outcomes rather than inputs. (p29)
<b>L13</b>	Scrutiny Officer	L	Goodwill		Rather than saying, “We’re paying for 1,000 hours a week, we’re paying you to take these people from A to B to get them more independence,” or whatever it might be.(p29)
<b>L14</b>	Scrutiny	L	Goodwill		Interviewer:Is that difficult to measure in terms of the contract? (p29)



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	Officer				Respondent:Yes, it is difficult to measure, but what you can get is you've got bigger organisations which become more professional. We're encouraging them to pay the living wage. We're encouraging them to do these things – (p29)
<b>L15</b>	Scrutiny Officer	L	Goodwill		Interviewer:I presume everybody's looking for an outcome, you either get the outcome or you don't. If you don't get it, then you're on the rack for it. (p29)
<b>L16</b>	Scrutiny Officer	L	Goodwill		Respondent:By and large, councillors are happy with this approach, but in March I think it is, we're going to get those three companies to come and meet the scrutiny panel. (p30)
<b>L17</b>	Scrutiny Officer	L	Goodwill		Respondent:We ought to do more of it across the XXXXXX Someone said to us the biggest employer in XXXXXX is XXXXXX Bank, the old XXXXXX XXXXXX XXXXXX. What happens, I think there are 6,000 people in XXXXXX working for XXXXXX Bank. (p30)
<b>L18</b>	Scrutiny Officer	L	Goodwill		If XXXXXX Bank goes down as it nearly did in 2008 or even in the crash, the town goes down, but we've never got XXXXXX in. We should be talking to XXXXXX in scrutiny, and we haven't done that yet. (p30)
<b>L19</b>	Scrutiny Officer	L	Goodwill		Interviewer:Yes, because the impact of their operation will be so large. (p31)
<b>L20</b>	Scrutiny Officer	L	Goodwill		Respondent:Also, it's not just about calling them in, they might say to us, "If we're going to stay in XXXXXX what the council's got to get better at is A, B, C and D." They can give messages back. (p31)
<b>U1</b>	Scrutiny Officer	U	Scrutiny Agenda		After a period of time, one of the scrutiny panel members on children's rang me up and said, "I want the scrutiny panel to do a detailed review into social care for children. How do we go about that?" (p33)
<b>U2</b>	Scrutiny Officer	U	Scrutiny Agenda		I said, "First of all we talk to the chair of the scrutiny panel," which we did. I drafted a recommendation for them if they wanted to do it. I didn't go to that meeting, I think XXXXXX was at that meeting, and they passed this recommendation setting up a review. (p33)
<b>U3</b>	Scrutiny Officer	U	Scrutiny Agenda		The next morning the chief executive who wasn't XXXXXX it was a previous chief executive, came into my office uninvited, which he's quite entitled to do, he's the chief executive, but he'd never done before, and he said, "What happened last night at scrutiny, Mike?" (p34)

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<b>U4</b>	Scrutiny Officer	U	Scrutiny Agenda		I explained and I told him what I wrote, and he said, “Yes, I thought you might have drafted that. I’m going to stop this. We’re not doing this review, XXXXXX we’re going to stop it,” and he walked out. (p34)
<b>U5</b>	Scrutiny Officer	U	Scrutiny Agenda		Respondent[with reference to a previous Chief Executive] I thought if he stops this review going ahead, I can’t do scrutiny again, because the scrutiny members are just going to say, “Oh, the chief executive decides.” (p34)
<b>M5</b>	Scrutiny Officer	M	Scrutiny Resources	Staff / Budget	Respondent:We spend relatively little on top of our salaries. We’re three full time workers. The bulk of the spend on scrutiny is three full time workers, the special allowances for the chairs of the scrutiny panels and the administration around running meetings.....we don’t spend it but we could spend about £8,000. (p39)
<b>M6</b>	Scrutiny Officer	M	Scrutiny Resources	Staff / Budget	Respondent: So we’re quite parsimonious. Four years ago perhaps we decided we wanted to look at the council’s medium term financial strategy. The only person who understands the medium term financial strategy in depth is the head of financial services who’s the guy we’re scrutinising.We got an external guy at £1,000 to help us with that process because we didn't see how we could do that bit of work just taking advice from XXXXXX who was the head of finance at that time. (p40)
<b>V1</b>	Scrutiny Officer	V	Scrutiny Culture		Respondent`.....[with reference to Mid Staffs Inquiry] Francis made 290 recommendations, 6 were about scrutiny. What he said about scrutiny was you took on trust far too much what the people responsible for running services told you. The chief executives of the hospitals were coming to scrutiny councils, “It’s all right, it’s all okay. It’s a blip,” or whatever. He said, “You've not paid attention to what people and the press were telling you.” (p76/77)



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<b>V2</b>	Scrutiny Officer	V	Scrutiny Culture		<p>Interviewer: I suppose that's the thing, isn't it? When you're looking at scrutiny, I suppose really what you're after is people who are going to read the stuff, take an interest in it, get to grips with the issues and really try and pursue it to get an answer or get a start of an answer, but to get something. It's more that than the party political knockabouts.</p> <p>Respondent: Yes. There's nothing wrong with a bit of party political from time to time.</p> <p>Interviewer: No, I'm a great fan of it.</p> <p>Respondent: There's a guy who used to train on scrutiny, he was a former councillor, and he was Labour, party member. There's nothing that's more fun than having a pop at the Tories. He's be talking to Tories and vice versa, but you don't do that -</p> <p>What I think can sometimes be very powerful in scrutiny is a councillor who has, I went on one Yorkshire and Humber training session and the councillor told me, he was from Rotherham, and an old guard councillor from Rotherham, old Labour, been a Labour councillor for 30 years, said, "Get this son an obsession."</p> <p>In other words, find something to focus on, because you can't do everything. Get this son an obsession.</p> <p>I worked with a councillor called XXXXXX Thompson in XXXXXX who was a Labour councillor who subsequently resigned from the Labour Party because of the Iraq war and stayed just Independent who was more green than the Greens.</p> <p>Whatever the issue was, XXXXXX would ask about solar panels, or XXXXXX would ask about water runoff or whatever. What that did is it sharpened up the officers, because if XXXXXX -</p>
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				<p>Interviewer: If they're going to ask about it -Respondent: He's going to ask about it. We could be talking about sport and he'd find a green element to it, and that's fine because the officers thought, "Oh, Christ, Keith's on that committee, I'd better..." Roger XXXXXX here who is a Conservative. There's XXXXXX he's on the right of the Conservative Party, XXXXXX.If you start talking about European grants, he'll go onto a bit of a rant. In my personal view, it's not a particularly thoughtful rant, but again, don't casually say, "We've been working with the EU on this," because XXXXXX will come in with his views and present that challenge.He said some things in some settings that I find difficult but he's actually quite fearless. I worked closely with a Conservative councillor last year and she said, "You don't need to worry about XXXXXX following the line because he doesn't follow the Conservative Party lines. He just does what he wants." (p47/48)</p>
<b>V3</b>	Scrutiny Officer	V	Scrutiny Culture	<p>Respondent: Scrutinising decisions of cabinet is an important safeguard. When I worked at XXXXXX we used to talk about you'd call a decision in, you'd take it to scrutiny, you'd take it back to the executive as they called in in XXXXXX The executive always made a recommendation in response. "Point A: The Executive thanks such-and-such a scrutiny panel for all its work in this issue. Point B: Piss off." Obviously not phrased like that but -</p> <p>Interviewer: That was the gist. (p61)</p>



# Table of Quotations for Analysis

V4	Scrutiny Officer	V	Scrutiny Culture		<p>Interviewer: Is there a correct following that through to try and make sure that when scrutiny does something and comes up with something and does a really good in-depth piece of work, is there any magic trick or is there anything which you can do to try and make people take notice of it and do something or is it too difficult? Respondent: I don't think there's a magic trick. Sometimes if you do something in-depth, you get it into people's heads, members', councillors' heads. Someone described it as a bit of work that has a long tail. My colleague XXXXXX in XXXXXX talked about that, so you imagine the graphs going over time. It has an impact. It's not about reports, it's not about report back, it's about councillors remembering. There's a thing in the world of dementia called the Butterfly Scheme. It's a very simple scheme, it was devised by a relative of someone with dementia. What happens in acute hospitals in particular is that the staff aren't trained at working with people with dementia, and sometimes don't identify people with dementia. If you agree and you've got dementia, or your relative agrees, there's a butterfly emblem put on your bed and then you train your staff. So if you haven't got a butterfly emblem and they bring you a cup of tea around, they say, "Here's your cup of tea." If you have got a butterfly emblem they bring you a cup of tea and make sure you drink it, because what happens is people get dehydrated with dementia in hospitals where they're supposed to be looked after, because the staff are busy and people with dementia are difficult and the staff aren't trained. The Butterfly Scheme is something that struck a chord with the councillors, and if you met our mayor, XXXXXX now and said, "What's the Butterfly Scheme?" she'd say, "Yes, that's what we heard about in the dementia review, that's where there's a symbol on the bed in hospital." So it's got a long tail. She can talk about that in the community, she knows a bit about that.</p>
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## Annex 9A - Chief Executive Interview

1 START AUDIO

2

3 Interviewer: \_\_\_\_ [0:00:01].

4

5 Respondent: Yes, yes.

6

7 Interviewer: Do you enjoy it, then?

8

9 Respondent: Housing, or being a chief exec?

10

11 Interviewer: Both.

12

13 Respondent: Yes, yes.

14

15 Interviewer: Yes?

16

17 Respondent: Yes, yes.

18

19 Interviewer: So, you were at [REDACTED] for how long?

20



21 Respondent: Three years. I don't know how much background you want, but I  
22 was originally a graduate trainee in housing management with  
23 Hull City Council, so I did the qualification for the Chartered  
24 Institute of Housing, worked in housing management, and kind  
25 of worked my way up through the various estate housing  
26 [manager 0:00:28] roles, and then Hull created a post of area  
27 director, which was basically setting up geographically-based  
28 committees of the council to drive community involvement and  
29 community-based regeneration within areas, so I moved into  
30 that post. A lot of that was about European funding; community  
31 economic enterprise, community involvement stuff.

32 Then, I moved to Leeds as chief executive of a housing ALMO.  
33 Leeds put its housing into the arms-length organisations. It set  
34 up six [alms housing 0:01:03] ALMOs, and I went as a chief  
35 exec as one of those, and then about three years later, two  
36 years later, it merged them into three, so then I was chief exec  
37 of one of the remaining three. Then, I went to [REDACTED] in about  
38 2009, as director of Adult Social Care and Communities there.

39

40 Interviewer: Oh, really?

41

42 Respondent: Which was interesting, because I didn't have a social care  
43 background, but what [REDACTED] wanted with somebody with the  
44 leadership background, so I was at [REDACTED] for about three  
45 years in that role, so that was adult social care, museums,  
46 [culture side 0:01:38], and it was originally housing, which was  
47 [Crosstalk], but then, because we restructured, oddly enough I  
48 lost housing and ended up with lots of stuff I hadn't done before.

49

50 Interviewer: Right (Laughter).

51

52 Respondent: Then, I came here, in October 2012.

53

54 Interviewer: Wow. You know the thing that has amazed me about this  
55 speaking to people? It is how everything is sort of linked in. I had  
56 a conversation with Councillor [REDACTED] yesterday, and he was  
57 telling me about the top priorities for the council being jobs and  
58 regeneration, and about sorting out the issue in terms of Ofsted  
59 that you've got at the moment, and about the physical  
60 regeneration of the town centre and the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] which I  
61 think is wonderful, by the way; I visited it years ago, and I fell in  
62 love with. I think it's brilliant [when it's done 0:02:24].

63 But all those issues, and going back to what you said, in terms  
64 of housing and social care, everything is linked in, isn't it?

65

66 Respondent: Yes, well, my own view is: I think housing is a really good  
67 grounding for almost any local authority work. Housing  
68 management, rather than housing strategy, is incredibly generic:  
69 it's a very problem-solving based job. You do community work,  
70 you do the legal stuff, unfortunately, sometimes.

71

72 Interviewer: Yes (Laughter).

73

74 Respondent: You manage – housing officers as frontline staff probably spend  
75 more time with politicians than in a lot of services, where you  
76 don't really meet politicians until you're a lot more senior,  
77 because housing is such a [live ward 0:03:04] issue. So, I think  
78 it's a really, really good grounding, actually. If you're looking – if



79                   you talk about the combined authority, of the five West Yorkshire  
80                   chief execs, three of us have got a housing background.

81

82   Interviewer:       Is that right?

83

84   Respondent:       Yes; well, Joanne [REDACTED] at Wakefield, and Tony [REDACTED] who's  
85                   actually just leaving [REDACTED] we were all originally – I mean,  
86                   obviously, everyone had diversified in different ways, but all  
87                   originally that route. I think there are quite a few chief execs now  
88                   who probably came through a similar route.

89

90   Interviewer:       I suppose, if you think of housing, in a sense, you need to fix  
91                   that to fix other things. It's got a knock-on effect, in terms of  
92                   social care; it's got a knock-on effect in terms of employment,  
93                   and I suppose that's the thing, really, I think that I have learnt  
94                   over the last couple of weeks, speaking to people: how these  
95                   things are all linked together.

96                   As a lawyer, you tend to think down tram tracks; law, and that's  
97                   it, but just speaking yesterday about sorting out jobs and  
98                   regeneration, that issue is linked in with skills and sorting them  
99                   out in terms of the funding for skills and getting people skilled-up  
100                  to do their jobs. It's linked into transport stuff; the issue on the  
101                  [REDACTED] line.

102

103   Respondent:       Yes, absolutely.

104

105   Interviewer:       Which everybody is telling me here is a real priority (Laughter).

106

107 Respondent: Yes, yes. I suppose what links it all is quality of life for residents,  
108 isn't it? And you can look at that down a lot of different lenses.  
109 Some people will look at it down the educational lens, and  
110 education is the key to everything; some people will look down  
111 other lenses. I think lots of evidence that if you're in work, it's  
112 better than not being in work; less poverty, but also, generally,  
113 more emotional wellbeing; children generally have less mental  
114 health issues.

115 As you say, everything is linked, but what links it is quality of life  
116 for residents and communities, and lots of things feed into it.

117

118 Interviewer: Yes, so in addition, then, to the sort of day job of providing  
119 services, in terms of providing the schools, keeping the streets  
120 clean, and everything else – in addition to that, is this sort of  
121 place-shaping model, isn't it, in terms of what it is you're looking  
122 to create?

123

124 Respondent: Yes. I think that's the most important – local authorities need to  
125 be relevant, and have to have impact; otherwise, why are they  
126 there, really? [Lots of 0:05:29] people can run a waste-  
127 management contract.

128

129 Interviewer: Yes (Laughter).

130

131 Respondent: So, I think there is – if you're going to do something, you do it  
132 well, so I think if we are providing services, they should be  
133 excellent services, but there is a thing about: why a local



134 authority as opposed to lots of management contracts? I think  
135 partly it is the democratic – it's about locally-elected people  
136 shaping the place, and also deciding what services should look  
137 like, so that local democracy element is probably the most  
138 crucial one. But then, I think it is also about saying, "Actually, it's  
139 those [lineages 0:06:04], and synergies, [whatever] linkages and  
140 synergies – if you're delivering waste management and you're  
141 delivering adult social care, then you can link up asking bin-men  
142 to keep an eye out for people who look vulnerable and feed  
143 straight back.

144 I think there's something about how you manage things as a  
145 package, but consummately going back to: you're trying to do  
146 the right thing.

147

148 Interviewer: It's interesting what you say in terms of the accountability issue,  
149 because that was really the key thing that got me on to this:  
150 thinking about how complex everything has become. I suppose,  
151 30 years ago, you had councils that were providing services  
152 directly. You had people who were elected to look at it; it was  
153 relatively simple. Everyone knew where they were.

154 Nowadays, it's all complex, because you've got partnerships;  
155 everybody's got to work together. Maybe the lines of  
156 accountability aren't particularly that clear, but what you're  
157 saying is that that democratic issue, in terms of the democratic  
158 legitimacy that you get, is really crucial in terms of local  
159 authorities.

160

161 Respondent: Yes, yes. Absolutely, yes.

162

163 Interviewer: Just thinking about that, and thinking about the community  
164 leadership stuff: [I trust 0:07:24] part of your job is to sort of hold  
165 [the ring] on all of these partnerships, is it? To get an overview  
166 and keep everyone alive; is that \_\_\_\_ [0:07:32] (Laughter)?

167

168 Respondent: I certainly try doing that. I guess it depends what you mean by  
169 partnerships, doesn't it? I suppose local authorities are one  
170 player in an area. I think we do quite frequently end up as the  
171 leader in all the different systems, because of the democratic  
172 leadership and the political leadership, but there are some  
173 partnerships that we play into as an equal; there are some that  
174 we lead; there are some that we're quite a minor player in.

175 I suppose part of my role is making sure the council is present  
176 and at the table of the places it needs to be present and at the  
177 table of, and that we are getting the best out of any partnership  
178 working, so: are we talking to the right people? Are we in  
179 partnership with the right organisations, and is that working? I  
180 think there's always a challenge in any local place that the local  
181 authority is quite often the biggest player, and quite often, you  
182 can become a bit insular, and that can be a challenge.

183 I'll quite happily bounce around all these strategic meetings,  
184 saying, "Oh, [we'll be in Crosstalk 0:08:30] in partnership with  
185 anyone," but then on the ground, people say, "Well, why do we  
186 have to talk to the third sector? Why do we [have to talk to them  
187 Crosstalk 0:08:36]?"

188

189 Interviewer: Yes, yes.

190



191 Respondent: So I think there's – I talk about porous boundaries. I think local  
192 authorities have to have porous boundaries; they have to be  
193 open to any other sector, any other partner, joint working, and  
194 trying to maintain that porosity, if that's a word; it probably isn't.

195

196 Interviewer: Yes (Laughter).

197

198 Respondent: It's probably a challenge, yes, and then depending on the – I  
199 mean, it's the governance stuff that you'll be more familiar with  
200 than me. Once you enter formal partnerships, you've got all the  
201 governance and accountability issues, haven't you? So that is a  
202 challenge with the combined authority. It's a challenge with  
203 things like the Health and Wellbeing Board, because, while  
204 they're clearly structured into local authority governance,  
205 obviously they have non-local authority and non-elected  
206 membership.

207

208 Interviewer: Yes.

209

210 Respondent: A lot of the work we're doing with health now is, "Well, where's  
211 the mandate on that?" It's not always clear, is it? Flowing  
212 through central government, local government, or where it is.

213

214 Interviewer: Yes.

215

216 Respondent: The government is putting a lot more – or the Department of  
217 Health and NHS England are putting a lot more expectation on

218 Health and Wellbeing Boards, so there's been a number – we've  
219 all commented recently how many things come out of NHS  
220 England directly to the chair of Health and Wellbeing Boards,  
221 and don't go to the chief executive or the leader. That's an  
222 emerging pattern.

223

224 Interviewer: Right.

225

226 Respondent: Well, in lots of places, the chair of the Health and Wellbeing  
227 Board isn't even a councillor, or if they are, they're not [me or  
228 the leader 0:09:44].

229

230 Interviewer: Yes, yes.

231

232 Respondent: So, there's an assumption outside local authorities that Health  
233 and Wellbeing Boards are probably different from how they're  
234 assumed internally, and actually, they are just a council  
235 committee, in theory, aren't they?

236

237 Interviewer: Yes.

238

239 Respondent: So there's something about: how do you make sure governance  
240 and accountability works, and things either don't get missed or  
241 the wrong thing gets done? As you know, in a local authority,  
242 even if you achieve the right outcome, if you do it the wrong way  
243 –

244



245 Interviewer: You've had it, yes (Laughter).

246

247 Respondent: You're very vulnerable to judicial review and things, aren't you?

248

249 Interviewer: That's right; that's right.

250

251 Respondent: There is, I think increasingly, because the move much more  
252 towards sub-regional and regional working, and obviously the  
253 whole devolution debate is around city regions; it's not around  
254 individual authorities.

255

256 Interviewer: Yes.

257

258 Respondent: It's: where is the dividing line between local sovereignty and  
259 sub-regional working? Which is a tension [for Crosstalk 0:10:33]  
260 everyone, so most elected members of most local authorities,  
261 for example, are very sensitive to any suggestion that the  
262 combined authority get planning application powers, because  
263 they very much see that as a [local issue Crosstalk 0:10:45].

264

265 Interviewer: Yes; I'm told that is a very sensitive thing in terms of – you  
266 know, if somebody from another authority decided that [a site is  
267 going to be something 0:10:54].

268

269 Respondent: Yes.

270

271 Interviewer: It's very interesting what you say; in terms of the position of the  
272 council on partnerships being first among equals because of its  
273 democratic legitimacy, do you find that partners respect the  
274 democratic mandate of a council? Do you have an added sort  
275 of...?

276

277 Respondent: No, no. I see what you're saying.

278

279 Interviewer: [Crosstalk 0:11:16] (Laughter)?

280

281 Respondent: When I said first among equals, I think what I meant was, I think,  
282 different partnerships in the combined authority, which  
283 effectively, is a partnership of local authorities; it's a peer  
284 partnership, in effect. There are some where we are first among  
285 equal because of our size, and because of our leadership role.  
286 There are others where we might be a minor player. I suppose  
287 we're different in different ways.

288 I think the democratic – I think people outside of the world of  
289 local authority struggle with the politics. Health struggle with  
290 local politics. They will say they don't do politics; it's interesting  
291 as soon as a national minister says something, they will leap all  
292 over the place, but they do struggle with local politics, and they  
293 do – I wouldn't want to be quoted on this, but obviously, local  
294 councillors can be of varied calibre, whereas most other  
295 partners are led by professionals.

296 I know, for example, our clinical commissioning groups really  
297 struggle with some of the elected members here, because they  
298 just don't get the fact that politicians want to change the world,



299 and they can't change the world if they don't get elected, so they  
300 do play to the electorate, and they find that very difficult.

301 In some ways, it's interesting; if you take the GPs, for example,  
302 working with the politicians on the Health and Wellbeing Board,  
303 in some ways they're very similar, because both the politicians  
304 and the GPs are now operating as strategic leaders, because of  
305 the CCG. But they all directly see people, because the GPs see  
306 them in the surgery, and the members see them in the ward.

307

308 Interviewer: Yes; yes, yes.

309

310 Respondent: So, actually, they can have really interesting conversations  
311 about what life is really like, because they're seeing it first-hand,  
312 but on the other hand, the GPs are entirely professional, not  
313 elected, not interested in politics, but very, very bright and  
314 technically qualified. The local members are very tuned into the  
315 place and the residents, but a lot of them are obviously not  
316 qualified, not experts in anything, but very knowledgeable about  
317 a lot of stuff, and those two worlds don't easily come together.

318

319 Interviewer: Yes, and do you find, in terms of – thinking of health, or thinking  
320 of other things, do you find that there's an increasing appetite  
321 amongst members to get a democratic grip on some of these  
322 sort of unelected bodies? In terms of scrutiny, is there a wish, is  
323 there an appetite amongst politicians to widen the remit and try  
324 to make these things accountable?

325

326 Respondent: I think members get frustrated with organisations that are not  
327 democratically accountable, but have a significant impact on

328 place, because the politicians get blamed for it all, so if they  
329 can't have any control over it, and there isn't that accountability.

330

331 Interviewer: Yes.

332

333 Respondent: I don't think every politician necessarily wants to be in charge of  
334 everything, but I think they do find that frustrating. I'm probably  
335 more familiar, or more thinking in my head about the relationship  
336 with health, because that's more of a live issue, because we've  
337 got issues about the hospital here. They certainly find it  
338 frustrating that, potentially, we could see significant restructuring  
339 of the hospital and various other services, and there is no  
340 political involvement in that at all.

341

342 Interviewer: Yes. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] mentioned this to me the other day. There  
343 was a massive issue.

344

345 Respondent: Yes, and it's a big issue, yes, so they can [call scrutiny on that  
346 Crosstalk 0:14:29].

347

348 Interviewer: Because that hospital's only recently been done, hasn't it?

349

350 Respondent: Yes. Everyone will have different views of the rights and wrongs  
351 of the case, but I think the principle being that a significant  
352 impact on local services, a decision is made that doesn't involve  
353 any local politician. They find that frustrating, because they know  
354 they will be blamed for it.



355

356 Interviewer: Yes, yes.

357

358 Respondent: Or praised for it, depending [which way you go 0:14:49].

359

360 Interviewer: Yes; whatever (Laughter).

361

362 Respondent: Scrutiny does have the right to call all health bodies in to  
363 scrutinise them, but the council doesn't have the right to be part  
364 of the decision-making process, and I think that is a frustration.  
365 They do find it frustrating, sometimes, even at the level of the  
366 police, and obviously, the police does have a political and  
367 democratically-elected leadership, but local politicians aren't  
368 necessarily involved.

369 I would guess the sorts of things they – I don't think any of them  
370 want to take over Boots or WH [REDACTED] but anything that has a  
371 significant impact on [rights 0:15:18] and locality, I think they can  
372 find it frustrating if there is no democratic input.

373

374 Interviewer: Yes. It's fascinating to hear. I was of the view that a lot of these  
375 things have happened to try to improve efficiency in delivering  
376 services, whereas, to some extent, maybe accountability has  
377 taken a sort of back step, and so it's trying to play catch-up on  
378 some of these issues, to try to make sure that it works  
379 (Laughter).

380

381 Respondent: It's all sorts of tension, isn't it? Because other people would say,  
382 "That's just politicians wanting to run everything, and they don't  
383 have to run everything." I think they didn't have any more control  
384 over PCTs and the old structure; I just think it's almost more  
385 noticeable now, because health is such a big issue in the press  
386 and everything.

387

388 Interviewer: Yes; yes.

389

390 Respondent: I think there are still issues about: where's the space for them? I  
391 think, absolutely, space for strategic leadership, but a lot of  
392 politicians actually get very operational, so when they say  
393 'democratic mandate', what they really mean is they want to do  
394 hands-on management, and that probably isn't appropriate.

395

396 Interviewer: Yes. (Laughter) Yes.

397

398 Respondent: So, there is a thing about: what do we mean by accountability?  
399 The health world would argue they are politically accountable,  
400 but obviously, they're politically accountable through national  
401 politics, which is much less of a day-to-day sense of politics,  
402 really.

403

404 Interviewer: Yes, yes.

405

406 Respondent: I suppose that whole issue of accountability – I think where  
407 people get uneasy is in local government, and you know as well



408 as anyone how convoluted it can be, but in theory, you should  
409 be able to trace a decision through all the appropriate  
410 constitution and back to the relevant act of parliament. It should  
411 all, eventually, even if it takes you a while to work it out, be clear  
412 how the decision got made, and where the authority came from  
413 to make that decision.

414 I think a lot of the uneasiness now is that there are some quite  
415 big decisions made all over the place, and actually, it's not  
416 always that clear who had the authority to make that decision;  
417 where did it flow through? Where did it come from? And that is  
418 partly an uneasiness, I think.

419

420 Interviewer: Yes, and just on the question, in terms of going back to what  
421 you said about leadership, in terms of your position at [REDACTED]  
422 when you took something that was slightly different, and your  
423 position here: give me an idea, if you can, of what kind of  
424 leadership you need, in a sort of complex partnership  
425 environment. What kind of skills do you need to do it, in terms of  
426 making it work? What do you look at?

427

428 Respondent: [Crosstalk 0:17:52]. Well, I think there are lots of different  
429 leadership models, aren't there? I suppose it's a bit of a glib  
430 summary, but it's partly systems leadership. I think you have to  
431 have the skill to operate in a complex environment, so I think  
432 that's partly the skill to understand you can't be in charge of  
433 everything, so it can't be leadership through command and  
434 control, and it can't necessarily even be leadership through  
435 getting easy ownership of a decision. A lot of it is trying to lead  
436 across the system, which means you need to be able to  
437 influence; you need to be able to negotiate; you need to be able  
438 to woo people.

439                    You need to accept that you can't know everything, so actually,  
440                    yes –

441

442    Interviewer:        Yes. Is that difficult to do?

443

444    Respondent:        Yes. Well, I find it difficult to do.

445

446    Interviewer:        (Laughter) I think I would.

447

448    Respondent:        Yes; you have to trust your staff. You have to trust that people  
449                    will get on and do intelligent, clever things without you telling  
450                    them to do that. I think it gets easier because you see it  
451                    happening, so it's an experiential thing, to some extent, isn't it?

452

453    Interviewer:        Yes, yes.

454

455    Respondent:        Equally, you learn where you do need to keep an eye on things.  
456                    There's a real balance. My tendency is that I tend to learn by  
457                    micromanaging and then pulling back, and you can't  
458                    micromanage everything, and actually, that can become very  
459                    destabilising for an organisation, because everyone just sits,  
460                    then, waiting to be told what to do, and you can't [afford that  
461                    Crosstalk 0:19:14].

462

463    Interviewer:        Yes. Yes, I've seen it happen (Laughter).

464



465 Respondent: Yes, so I think even in your own organisation, it's about – I think  
466 internally, it's about: how do you inspire people? How do you  
467 give them a sense of what the future is; what we're trying to  
468 achieve? How do you keep people focused on, "It's about  
469 impact, not about process," because a big organisation can  
470 become quite navel-gazing, can't it?

471

472 Interviewer: Yes. Yes.

473

474 Respondent: And people can quite often reward themselves for following  
475 good process, without looking to see if it's made any difference.  
476 I think that [constant Crosstalk 0:19:43] -

477

478 Interviewer: I've seen that as a lawyer; tick a box, and (Laughter)...

479

480 Respondent: Yes, exactly. Part of the leadership role is, I think, that constant  
481 internal challenge: what are you doing? How is it making a  
482 difference?

483

484 Interviewer: Yes, so a constant eye on outcomes, really, in terms of what's  
485 delivered.

486

487 Respondent: Yes, yes. I think a big part of it is problem-solving, and  
488 unblocking; you need to be able to spot where the blockages are  
489 in the organisation, and then a lot of it is about that system  
490 leadership; if you want something to happen, if we need new  
491 jobs, we're not going to do that by employing another 1,000

492 people. We're going to do that by encouraging lots of start-ups;  
493 trying to get [inward 0:20:12] investments, and I can't order  
494 someone to start a business up and employ someone  
495 (Laughter).

496

497 Interviewer: Yes (Laughter).

498

499 Respondent: So, it's how do you influence; how do you create the right  
500 environment? A lot of it, I think, is about having a net of  
501 tentacles, if that makes sense, [that you can pull in Crosstalk  
502 0:20:27].

503

504 Interviewer: Yes; it does make sense, yes.

505

506 Respondent: And I think the other thing is learning that – I think the hardest  
507 thing that I found, when I went to [REDACTED] – oddly enough, when  
508 I was chief executive of ALMO, it was a single function, housing,  
509 and it's small. So you can actually – you know what difference  
510 you are making on a daily basis. When I went back into local  
511 government as a director \_\_\_\_ [0:20:48] here, I could sometimes  
512 look back on what I've done over the last month, and actually, I  
513 would struggle to say: where did that make an impact?

514

515 Interviewer: Right.

516

517 Respondent: Because sometimes, actually, where I've made the impact is, I'll  
518 have had a meeting trigger something off that will happen in five



519 years' time. The more senior you get, I think the harder it is to  
520 say, "I did that."

521

522 Interviewer: Yes.

523

524 Respondent: I think what almost – and it doesn't sound very [sexy to say, "I  
525 influenced that," Crosstalk 0:21:08].

526

527 Interviewer: Yes, so in terms of quick wins, it's a bit – eh?

528

529 Respondent: Yes. You can sometimes do it, and I think we all find our own  
530 way of doing it, so lots of chief execs will say – quite a common  
531 thing is your top seven things that you personally want to  
532 achieve. I sort of tend to think, "Where do I want to put personal  
533 leadership?" Here, for example, I'm very interested in digital  
534 innovation driving change, so I take some personal leadership of  
535 some of the programme of that, and I'm interested in trying to  
536 change domestic violence, so I've put some personal time – not  
537 personal time, but energy into that.

538

539 Interviewer: Yes, yes.

540

541 Respondent: Whereas I kind of vaguely hope planning officers know what  
542 they're doing, and I don't get involved in that unless there's a  
543 problem.

544

545 Interviewer: As a planning lawyer, I wouldn't assume that, but there you go  
546 (Laughter).

547

548 Respondent: I went to a meeting \_\_\_\_ [0:21:55] meeting in London a couple of  
549 months ago that was with senior civil servants, discussing how  
550 services might work with more neighbourhood control. On the  
551 one hand, it felt like, "Where have we made any difference  
552 today?" We had a very esoteric policy discussion, but actually,  
553 potentially, in five years' time, we could have more  
554 neighbourhood management of services, and that won't have  
555 happened unless some of us sat and had that very esoteric  
556 policy –

557

558 Interviewer: Is there a sort of balance between -? In terms of what you say  
559 on the sort of digital infrastructure stuff, that's obviously crucial  
560 now, in terms of sorting out broadband and sorting those issues  
561 out, to sort out the infrastructure, so you can get jobs in, and  
562 drive growth, and all the rest of it.

563 In terms of that, how much input can a local authority actually  
564 have in terms of driving that? With the current powers that  
565 you've got, and through the combined authority, have you got  
566 enough in terms of powers, funding, to actually drive that  
567 agenda and [give the idea a push Crosstalk 0:23:06]?

568

569 Respondent: I think it's understanding – I think part of the leadership role is  
570 trying to work out: where are all the different things you could  
571 bundle together to push on that? All of us would say, "No, we  
572 haven't got enough power," because we're all power-mad;  
573 [you're talking to a 0:23:16] local authority chief exec, aren't  
574 you?



575

576 Interviewer: Yes (Laughter).

577

578 Respondent: So, in terms of – if you took broadband infrastructure, we do  
579 have a part-government, part-ERDF funded project through the  
580 combined authority to roll out broadband access across the  
581 region, so there is an ongoing project which has got – BT won it  
582 under tender, so it's a contract to get BT to put fibre-optic  
583 cabling and new cabinets in.

584 Where one of the blockages on that is, which I think we struggle  
585 with, is [state age 0:23:49] rules, because it's commercial, so  
586 [state age rules petters]; a lot of us would think, "Can't we just  
587 get on and do it? Yes, it's interfering in the market, but the  
588 market's not delivering what we want it to anyway, is it?"

589

590 Interviewer: Right, [anyway 0:23:57]. Yes.

591

592 Respondent: So that kind of – where your scope and influence stops and  
593 starts can be a barrier, but there are sometimes ways round it. A  
594 number of authorities are now looking at putting in their planning  
595 requirements – Leeds has done some work which we're now  
596 looking at around what its planning requirements are for a new  
597 home, that includes that it has to have the capacity for  
598 broadband in planning.

599

600 Interviewer: Right, yes. Yes.

601

602 Respondent: So, if you're building, as well as putting the drains in, you put the  
603 ducts in for fibre-optic cable.

604

605 Interviewer: At the same time.

606

607 Respondent: So, it's about thinking about, "What powers have you already  
608 got?" Rather than thinking, "God, it's really frustrating I can't get  
609 broadband across the whole of [REDACTED] what powers have  
610 we got? I think we would always all say we could do with more  
611 powers and more money, and yes, we could; we could do more,  
612 but I think part of the role of senior – not just the chief exec –  
613 senior people, is thinking, "What are all the different things we  
614 do, that if we bundled them together and thought about the  
615 relationship between them, we could then have that impact?"

616 I think there is a role for – you're almost back to, as well, what is  
617 the role of a local authority? Which is a very live debate, isn't it?

618

619 Interviewer: Yes, yes.

620

621 Respondent: The combined authority, linked to the LEP, has got four  
622 economic priorities, if you like, and infrastructure is one of them,  
623 so stimulating housing, stimulating broadband; we see that as a  
624 key local authority role. What we don't see as the key local  
625 authority role is digging the ditches to put fibre-optic cable in and  
626 building the houses, but it's about facilitating [and enabling  
627 Crosstalk 0:25:28].

628

629 Interviewer: Yes, yes, so it's enabling that to actually happen.



630

631 Respondent: Yes.

632

633 Interviewer: Just on that issue in terms of – just thinking about outsourcing  
634 stuff, and this thing about the [commissioning council 0:25:39];  
635 the debate about whether councils should provide services  
636 directly or not. I put it to [REDACTED] on Monday, and I was surprised  
637 when I originally thought this, but it struck me that, in terms of  
638 outsourcing, it's not as ideological as it once was. When it was  
639 coming in, in the '80s, there was a big ideological debate around  
640 it, and it was politically controversial.

641 I was asking: has the ideological gloss now been stripped from  
642 outsourcing? Is it really just a case of delivery, and does it  
643 deliver, and if it doesn't deliver, we'll do something else? Is that  
644 – or is outsourcing still an issue?

645

646 Respondent: I think it's still an issue. I think you'll get different mind-sets, to  
647 be honest. I'm a pragmatist; I think sometimes it's appropriate,  
648 sometimes it isn't. I don't particularly – I think the problem with  
649 headlines like 'the commissioning council' is that it boxes you  
650 into one way to go. Having said that, I think outsourcing, in my  
651 own opinion, has driven service improvement. Certainly, adult  
652 social care, I think, has vastly improved once we started using  
653 external companies, because it's a –

654

655 Interviewer: It's a challenge.

656

657 Respondent: I think the problem with the local authority delivering everything  
658 is it gets a bit smug, really, and it's very dominated by the  
659 unions. I'm a pragmatist; I think it's a mix. I think it is still  
660 ideological, and maybe that's more noticeable here, where it's  
661 no overall control, so you see the political party differences  
662 much more strongly. There will be some members from all three  
663 parties who would take an equally pragmatic approach [of it  
664 0:27:17].

665 I think where there is still a difference is, you're more likely to get  
666 on the left-end Labour end, more the sense that local authorities  
667 should be employers; they should be role models of good terms  
668 and conditions, and that municipal ownership is a good thing in  
669 itself.

670 And you're more likely to get Conservatives saying, "Local  
671 authorities should be small. State input should be minimal."

672

673 Interviewer: So you've still got that political sort of -?

674

675 Respondent: They wouldn't necessarily articulate it like that, but it's still there.

676

677 Interviewer: But it's still there.

678

679 Respondent: One minor example here is that we own the theatre; the Victoria  
680 Theatre. We struggle to invest in it; there is a Friends of Victoria  
681 Theatre, which a number of times has raised the possibility of  
682 setting up a trust and transferring it to a trust. There isn't a  
683 business case that says that will necessarily stop our subsidy of



684 it. Our Labour Party has been quite, "No, we want a municipally-  
685 owned theatre. That's important."

686 The Conservatives have been, "We just want a theatre that  
687 works. That's important."

688

689 Interviewer: Right (Laughter).

690

691 Respondent: I think if we'd come up with a model that said the trust could get  
692 rid of all the subsidy \_\_\_\_[0:28:17] and make a profit, Labour  
693 probably would move in that direction, so there's sort of an  
694 element of pragmatism, but there is this very strong view. We  
695 are outsourced here; waste management is outsourced; [lots are  
696 0:28:29] outsourced, because there was a Conservative-  
697 controlled council for a long time.

698 There are a number of newer Labour members who would want  
699 to take, and have asked us to look at, in the past, taking waste  
700 management back in-house, because they see it as a job; it's  
701 working for the council, council terms and conditions. We've said  
702 no, because we can't afford it, but genuinely, part of the problem  
703 is sometimes we do outsource, because it's cheaper, because  
704 it's terms and conditions.

705 So, actually, they're right in a way, but you could argue council  
706 terms and conditions are too generous. I said to my senior  
707 management team the other day, "None of us are proposing  
708 cutting our own terms and conditions, are we?" But I don't know;  
709 how do you decide what are the right terms and conditions? But  
710 certainly, part of the reason we outsource is because it's  
711 cheaper, and the reason it's cheaper is because private  
712 companies don't pay the same pension [arrangements and  
713 Crosstalk 0:29:21] everything that we've got, so somewhere,

714 Labour are always slightly uneasy because they know that,  
715 really.

716

717 Interviewer: Yes, yes.

718

719 Respondent: I think my own experience, certainly in social care, was that  
720 competition in the marketplace does drive up quality, but I am  
721 equally aware social care is an obvious example, equally, of  
722 where paying people minimum wage and treating them like crap  
723 means you get poor quality, so it is a balance, isn't it?

724

725 Interviewer: A lot if it's down to treating people right, isn't it (Laughter)?

726

727 Respondent: I think everybody has got more pragmatic about outsourcing, but  
728 I wouldn't say the ideology has gone out of it completely, no.

729

730 Interviewer: That's interesting. It is interesting.

731

732 Respondent: And actually, when we talk [on 0:29:57] West Yorkshire around  
733 shared services, a number of – we're outsourced waste  
734 management; a number of the others are still in-house waste  
735 management, and the others, politically, just wouldn't agree to  
736 outsourcing in order to join up with us, and we can't afford to in-  
737 source to join up with them, so you will still get that tension.

738

739 Interviewer: (Laughter) Yes, you've still got that. The other thing is, in terms  
740 of outsourcing, on the question of – is contract management still



741 an issue for local authorities? They've been particularly bad at  
742 that in certain [places Crosstalk 0:30:30].

743

744 Respondent: Erm, yes, well –

745

746 Interviewer: South West [won 3,000 pay to contract 0:30:33] and all that  
747 [nonsense] (Laughter).

748

749 Respondent: I think it varies. I think the challenge for local authorities is less  
750 around contract management than quality management. Again, I  
751 would go back to my social care background. I think a lot of the  
752 arrangements with private sector providers you can't manage by  
753 saying – I mean, it's one of my frustrations with health. They  
754 say, "We'll just specify the contract, and that will be what gets  
755 delivered."

756 I don't think you can deliver quality through compliance with a  
757 specification. I think that's about: how do you develop the  
758 market? How do you get good quality providers in the market?  
759 How do you work with them? When I was at [REDACTED] for  
760 example, when we did training on new social care legislation, or  
761 just how to be nice generally in social care, we did it cross-  
762 sector, so the private providers attended the same training as  
763 our staff.

764 I think you have to have a relationship. It's partly – I say it's  
765 about quality; it's about relationship management. It's about a  
766 relationship; it is not about managing what the words said on a  
767 contract. That's fine if you want to say, "I ordered 100 sheets of  
768 paper, and you only delivered 50," but if it's a service – if there's

769 somebody, at the end of the day, there's a human being  
770 impacted on, it has to be relationship management, I think.

771

772 Interviewer: Yes, yes. That's interesting.

773

774 Respondent: That's a skill I think we do have in probably some bits of social care; I  
775 think we have it in some bits of – people who work with businesses  
776 absolutely understand that relationship management issue, so I think  
777 we have those skills in some places, but not widespread enough, I  
778 think.

779

780 Interviewer: Yes. It is interesting to pick up on that, because there are different  
781 views in terms of outsourcing, and whether it's a good thing or a bad  
782 thing, but that is interesting what you say; it is not simply the issue of  
783 contract management. It's the issue, really, of: how is it delivered?  
784 Where's the quality? How [is the market developed 0:32:21]? Are  
785 people getting a grip on that quality issue?

786 Just in terms of – going back to the regeneration stuff; I'm thinking  
787 about [REDACTED] [REDACTED] thinking about the question about transport, and this  
788 One North business about linking everywhere up and improving  
789 connectivity: how important is that in terms of [REDACTED] Is that  
790 central [to what you are hoping to do Crosstalk 0:32:53]?

791

792 Respondent: Yes, for a number of reasons; partly because that's what drives jobs,  
793 and it's jobs that drive moving people out of poverty; a good quality of  
794 life. We want a vibrant economy here; we don't want to just be the  
795 place where people come home and sleep and then go and work  
796 somewhere else, and town centres are partly what drives a vibrant  
797 economy. People come into a town centre to shop, so we want a town  
798 centre that looks nice, and that people want to come to.



799 We want our assets to work, and actually, [REDACTED] as a place, as a  
800 culture, both politically and residents, is a somewhere that really  
801 values its heritage, so [Crosstalk 0:33:32].

802

803 Interviewer: Oh, yes. That has really come across to me this week. That has come  
804 across, and the other thing that's come across is civic pride. It really  
805 does, doesn't it?

806

807 Respondent: Yes. It really does. [REDACTED] would never be a council that would  
808 own the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and board it up, and say it's a pain in the arse.  
809 They would always want that to be an asset that's cared for, and used,  
810 really. So, it's important because it's important for residents in  
811 [REDACTED] to have a nice-looking town centre with assets that they  
812 can use, and that becomes sustainable. I mean, I don't want the  
813 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] boarded up because it's expensive [without paying its way  
814 0:34:03] (Laughter). Not that I don't care about it, but I want it to pay  
815 its way, so there's that issue.

816 I think the other issue is, when you're working with a city region, sub-  
817 region, it's important to collaborate with other local authorities, but  
818 also, you don't want to fall behind. For example, Leeds and  
819 Manchester are constantly talking about the connectivity between  
820 Leeds and Manchester, which is great, but if all the connectivity  
821 between Leeds and Manchester is via Huddersfield, [REDACTED] could end  
822 up being left behind.

823

824 Interviewer: Yes, and at the moment, that's the plan for HS3, isn't it?

825

826 Respondent: Yes, so we're [tucking in under 0:34:35] [REDACTED] because if we get  
827 left behind, [REDACTED] do, as well, because we're [on the] [REDACTED]  
828 route.

829

830 Interviewer: Right, yes.

831

832 Respondent: So there is that slight sense of, “Yes, we want the best for the  
833 situation, but we all want the best for ourselves, as well,” and what we  
834 don’t want to do is get left behind. We haven’t got a university, so it’s  
835 important for us that all the other authorities are having good  
836 relationships with university, and fighting for their universities, because  
837 we still benefit from – Huddersfield University is a huge asset for all of  
838 us.

839 I think – I’ve forgotten your question (Laughter). Economic  
840 regeneration is important, because it creates jobs and it creates  
841 businesses, and that’s what creates local wealth. It’s also, on a very  
842 narrow point, because the way the government has changed [local  
843 authority 0:35:19] finance, more and more of our income comes from  
844 business rates, so the more businesses we’ve got –

845

846 Interviewer: [The more you can 0:35:25]...

847

848 Respondent: The better, as long as they’re in properties, not just sitting in their  
849 spare bedroom. Yes, how do you create an affluent society? Because  
850 affluence brings wellbeing, and affluent societies have shopping  
851 centres people want to come and use; people have money to go and  
852 spend in the shopping centres they want to come and use. They look  
853 after the buildings, and –

854

855 Interviewer: How much of your time is spent doing sort of economic issues, in  
856 terms of regeneration? Is it possible for you to [tell us 0:35:56]?

857

858 Respondent: In terms of what?

859



860 Interviewer: In terms of day-to-day [time to do your task 0:36:01].

861

862 Respondent: [Crosstalk 0:36:02].

863

864 Interviewer: Is that the biggest thing you do, or...? Is that the main issue, or is it a  
865 bit of everything?

866

867 Respondent: If you asked which of the main service areas I spend most of my time  
868 on, then yes; that's probably answering a slightly different question. I  
869 don't spend a lot my time here on adult social care, or museums, or  
870 anything, because they have got professionals in charge; they're up  
871 and running.

872

873 Interviewer: Taken care of. Yes.

874

875 Respondent: Clearly, on a local basis, we've got professionals running the  
876 economics side well, but because it's the regional, sub-regional stuff,  
877 and because there's just so much – because a lot of it is about: how  
878 do I present the council as business-friendly? I think, increasingly,  
879 that's probably the one thing that's changed most in the role of the  
880 chief executive in the last few years: chief executives are increasingly  
881 also almost the chief economic officer, in some ways.

882

883 Interviewer: That's very interesting. Yes.

884

885 Respondent: I wouldn't want to say the chief economic officers aren't delivering  
886 themselves.

887

888 Interviewer: Yes, yes.

889

890 Respondent: And if you look at adverts for chief executives' jobs, it's fairly standard  
891 now that they expect you to have some regeneration background, or  
892 some sense of that, and increasingly, you do find very few chief execs  
893 can't operate with some degree of confidence in an economic  
894 regeneration environment. It was a big learning curve for me, because  
895 I hadn't to a big extent, but you have to be able to do that.

896 On this combined authority, the way we work is that each chief exec  
897 takes a lead on one of the functions, and they're all economic issues.  
898 The chief exec at [REDACTED] leads on transport. Wakefield leads on  
899 skills; [REDACTED] leads on innovation and \_\_\_\_ [0:37:33], and I lead on  
900 infrastructure, which includes housing and broadband, so we have all  
901 taken responsibility for some area of the economic devolution  
902 argument, for example, and [economic 0:37:44] investment.

903 Now, that basically means we just vaguely keep an eye on it, and  
904 everyone else does the work; it doesn't mean we do a lot of work. I do  
905 see it as a key part of my role; getting to know local businesses. I  
906 don't see that as taking over from the role of my business support  
907 officers, but I think it's important that the chief executive is seen as  
908 open to business.

909

910 Interviewer: Yes; knows what's going on in terms of – yes.

911

912 Respondent: Our biggest employer is [REDACTED] what was [REDACTED] a crucial  
913 relationship for us, because they employ 6,000 people in [REDACTED]

914

915 Interviewer: Everybody has been telling me it's absolutely key, yes.

916



- 917 Respondent: So I do make sure that link is to me, and I go to meetings with them,  
918 and I know who they are, and that is there. I think there is something  
919 about the leader of an organisation, as in a chief executive, rather  
920 than a political leader, being business-savvy and understanding that.  
921
- 922 Interviewer: Yes, yes.  
923
- 924 Respondent: Not necessarily commercial deals, but certainly business, and I would  
925 say the one common skill-set of all the chief execs of the combined  
926 authority here is that we all have some finger on something to do with  
927 the economic stuff.  
928
- 929 Interviewer: Right. That's fascinating.  
930
- 931 Respondent: Whereas other [developments Crosstalk 0:38:39] – I do lead on health  
932 and social care, and that is probably because of my background.  
933 Some of the others aren't interested in health and social care at all,  
934 and there will be other things they're doing that I'm not interested in,  
935 but the commonality is the economic [forum 0:38:50].  
936
- 937 Interviewer: Yes. It's fascinating; it really is brilliant to get that insight, because like  
938 I've said to other people this week, I learn an awful lot more by having  
939 a conversation in terms of, "What do you do?"  
940
- 941 Respondent: Yes. The trouble is, once you start me off, I'll keep talking (Laughter).  
942
- 943 Interviewer: Oh, it is; it's absolutely fascinating. I'm just looking down at my list  
944 here; I think it's pretty much all covered. I think the only other question

945 that I would ask you is in terms of your motivation. You're obviously  
946 very inspirational.

947

948 Respondent: [Crosstalk 0:39:30].

949

950 Interviewer: You're obviously – I just say what I think. You're obviously  
951 inspirational; you're obviously driven to deliver results. What's your  
952 motivation? Public service? What drives you on it?

953

954 Respondent: I like being busy, and I like being busy with things that I'm interested  
955 in, if I'm honest. I like health and social care because I find it  
956 intellectually interesting; I like a lot of the theory. I like the idea of,  
957 "How do you influence wellbeing?" I like concepts; I like theory, so I  
958 like being in a job where I can apply concepts and theories. I like  
959 being busy.

960 I suppose, in some ways, I wouldn't necessarily have said I'm public  
961 sector ethos in the way that some people say, "I just want to be out  
962 there to serve people," but equally, I've never worked in the private  
963 sector. I think I do like being in something that I feel is a socially  
964 valuable job in that sense.

965

966 Interviewer: Yes, yes.

967

968 Respondent: I think I'd struggle if I didn't have that sense of, "Am I adding value  
969 somewhere in the world?" really, and I'm not the most – I don't go over  
970 and fight Ebola; I'm not a completely selfless Mother Theresa, but I  
971 like that sense of being – social injustice; the sense of being able to  
972 influence where I can see examples of social injustice. The chance to  
973 make a difference: that is a motivator for me, and I like the problem-  
974 solving side. I like being in a job where you have to deal with lots of  
975 problems all the time. I actually quite enjoy that side of the job, really.



976 I suppose, partly, I also like the fact it's very different. I get very bored  
977 very easily, and I suspect most chief execs do.

978

979 Interviewer: So, there's no two days the same, in terms of \_\_\_\_ [0:41:07]  
980 (Laughter)?

981

982 Respondent: Yes, exactly. I like broad and shallow. I don't actually understand  
983 anything in any detail, but I do an awful lot of different things, and for  
984 me, that suits me better than had I become a very good lawyer, for  
985 example, where I probably would have understood a lot of stuff in  
986 depth, but not – [though that's probably the wrong Crosstalk 0:41:22]  
987 example, actually, because lawyers probably do do that breadth as  
988 well. I'm sure ■■■ would say he does everything broad and shallow  
989 these days, as well (Laughter).

990

991 Interviewer: I think the thing that I found was that, in terms of some of the stuff that  
992 I do, because I don't just do planning stuff, because I do pretty much  
993 [in regeneration, I do a lot Crosstalk 0:41:40].

994

995 Respondent: I think it probably was the wrong example, because ■■■ – yes.

996

997 Interviewer: But it does give you some opportunity so that [Crosstalk 0:41:48].

998

999 Respondent: Mm, it's having a finger in lots of pies, isn't it?

1000

1001 Interviewer: Yes.

1002

1003 Respondent: And increasingly, and I think that is partly, frequently, my message to  
1004 staff, is that more and more of us have to be generic. I think there are  
1005 fewer and fewer narrow professionalisms, and if you look at all the  
1006 restructures that have been done, most places have gone from eight  
1007 or nine directors to three or four. It's a standing joke here; the heads of  
1008 service, which is our equivalent of assistant directors, how long can a  
1009 job title get? Because every time we restructure, we just stuck another  
1010 function on somebody, so people are now running functions they  
1011 probably didn't know existed five years ago.

1012 So I think we're all becoming increasingly broad and shallow, and I  
1013 think a lot of people at the senior level of government are probably  
1014 motivated by that mix of liking to do lots of different things, but also  
1015 liking to feel they're making a difference in the world somewhere.

1016

1017 Interviewer: Yes. I think it's brilliant. I first came to [REDACTED] [to see 0:42:43]  
1018 about 25 years ago, and I just fell in love with the towns here. I love it.  
1019 It's got real character.

1020

1021 Respondent: Yes, because I went to – I was in Hull for a long time, and I felt a real  
1022 emotional connection with Hull. That's where my son was born. I came  
1023 to Leeds – I live in Leeds – and yes, Leeds is a great city, and I really,  
1024 really enjoy it. It's a place, and I like it. I went to [REDACTED] and I think I  
1025 never really did feel quite connected with [REDACTED] and I think that's  
1026 partly because I was commuting in.

1027 I came here, and I still don't live here, because my son's still at school,  
1028 but I felt a real, and always have done, emotional connection with  
1029 [REDACTED] quite early on. I think that's partly because, for me, it suits  
1030 me, but it's the size of it; I think I quite like being able to be fairly  
1031 hands-on, having just said I don't interfere. I probably do. I quite like  
1032 having an organisation that I can understand in my head. I think I'd  
1033 struggle with an organisation of 10,000 staff, if I'm honest; it suits me. I  
1034 feel I can make a difference, but I also think the members here, the  
1035 elected members, they are so passionate about [REDACTED] This is a



1036 place where people care about the place, as you said. I think you just  
1037 do get that emotional connection very quickly, here.

1038 People quite often say, "Oh, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are very similar;  
1039 just [REDACTED] is a bit bigger." But they're not, actually; they're very, very  
1040 different in that sense, I think.

1041

1042 Interviewer: Yes. I have definitely got that this week; from speaking to people, from  
1043 speaking to your leader yesterday, from speaking to [REDACTED] and [all of you  
1044 0:44:13]. I've really got that idea. You've only got to look at the  
1045 building (Laughter). You've only got to look at the building. It's just  
1046 fantastic. They don't build them like that anymore, do they?

1047

1048 Respondent: No. Don't ask me how much it cost.

1049

1050 Interviewer: It's a real – you know, it is great to see.

1051

1052 Respondent: I think that's something I quite like about local government. I mean, it's  
1053 not [the main 0:44:32] motivation, but I think in most local authorities,  
1054 there is that real respect for civic tradition. There's a whole area of the  
1055 work which is about how we're delivering services, combined  
1056 authority, etc., but we've also all got a mayor, and a mayor's office,  
1057 and very arcane rituals, and actually, they are so important as part of  
1058 the fabric of local government, aren't they?

1059

1060 Interviewer: Yes, yes.

1061

1062 Respondent: And every authority's got that [Crosstalk 0:44:55].

1063

1064 Interviewer: I suppose the other thing about it, as well, just thinking about this thing  
1065 about place, and about place-shaping, and sorting that out; the thing  
1066 is, is that I suppose you've got so many things these days; the global  
1067 economy, where firms can make decisions on the other side of the  
1068 world and it effects what happens here, whereas people are here for  
1069 keeps, aren't they? And the decisions that are made; they've got to  
1070 live with them and they've got to defend them.

1071

1072 Respondent: Yes, yes.

1073

1074 Interviewer: I think it's that local connection, sometimes, [that sort of drives  
1075 0:45:30].

1076

1077 Respondent: Yes. I think that's the other thing about local democracy, as well. You  
1078 do get people moving in and out, and becoming politicians, but  
1079 generally, most politicians are in the same place most of their political  
1080 career at a local level. I think, whilst you never know who's going to  
1081 get re-elected, and you never know how long they're going to be  
1082 around, generally, they live here, and they have to live with the  
1083 consequences of their decision, and they have to live with the  
1084 consequences of their decision on the doorstep, over many years.

1085 There is an element, in a place like this, where a lot of the staff live  
1086 here, as well, but realistically, at a senior level, you get a turnover,  
1087 because people are ambitious; there's only ever one chief exec and  
1088 four directors, so eventually, if anyone else wants to be chief exec,  
1089 they're either going to kill me or move, aren't they?

1090

1091 Interviewer: Yes. [Got to move around Crosstalk 0:46:07] (Laughter).

1092



1093 Respondent: So you do get that slight churn. I know some people say, "You'll all be  
1094 off, so you don't really have to live with the effect of your decisions." I  
1095 don't think any of us are that cynical, but I do -

1096

1097 Interviewer: I don't believe that, and I would quote on that the words of Howard  
1098 Bernstein, last week, who said, "You're only as good as your last  
1099 failure."

1100

1101 Respondent: Yes, and I think most of us have pride enough in our job to deliver, but  
1102 I do think local politicians absolutely do have to defend on the  
1103 doorstep what they're doing, so that sense of how shape a place, I  
1104 think, is vital.

1105

1106 Interviewer: It's fascinating, and as I say, local authorities have fascinated me for  
1107 years. I love the way they work; I love the mechanisms. \_\_\_\_[0:46:46].  
1108 It's just absolutely fascinating. It's brilliant, [REDACTED] I'm really grateful  
1109 to you for all your help on this.

1110

1111 Respondent: Well, it's very nice to meet you.

1112

1113 Interviewer: I really appreciate it, and I really appreciate the fact that [REDACTED]  
1114 has helped me out. As I said to your leader yesterday, I shall sing  
1115 [REDACTED] praises.

1116

1117 Respondent: [Crosstalk 0:46:56].

1118

1119 Interviewer: I always have done, actually; I have always told people to come and  
1120 visit here, because I think it's brilliant.

1121

1122     Respondent:            Yes. No, it is a lovely place, yes.

1123

1124     Interviewer:            But I really do appreciate it.

1125

1126     Respondent:            Good. That's fine.

1127

1128     Interviewer:            So, thank you very much.

1129

1130     Respondent:            Are you off back to Liverpool -?

1131

1132                                    END AUDIO

1133                                    [www.uktranscription.com](http://www.uktranscription.com)

1134

1135



## Annex 9B – Council Leader Interview

1 START AUDIO

2 Interviewer: I think it's good, I mean I got the chance just to do this, as I say I did  
3 my first degree in politics and then I trained as a lawyer, and then I got  
4 the chance then to do this researching public administration and what  
5 I'm really looking at is local authorities; how they work. I'm particularly  
6 interested in partnership working, outsourcing.

7

8 Respondent: Yes.

9

10 Interviewer: I'm interested in questions of sort of leadership and things like that,  
11 and what struck me about it is, to the extent that stuff is written about  
12 local authorities by academics, very few people have actually  
13 bothered to go and ask people who are actually doing it, and it's  
14 amazing when you read these books because it's all sort of second  
15 and third hand stuff. So, what I really wanted to try and do, was get a  
16 picture of what happened by picking people's brains who actually do  
17 the job and who are actually involved in it, and that's really what I'm  
18 trying to do, just to get an idea in terms of what happens, how you see  
19 it.

20 I'm interested in your views on the situation about the combined  
21 authority as well, because all that's obviously topical, and just in terms  
22 of your position, councillor, in terms of your position here, I mean how  
23 long have you been a councillor? Your council control is pretty recent  
24 isn't it?

25

26 Respondent: Yes, well I was first elected in 1990.

27

28 Interviewer: 1990, wow.

29

30 Respondent: Yes.

31

32 Interviewer: That's a good record isn't it?

33

34 Respondent: Yes, and what pleases me the most as a conservative, it was a by-  
35 election; I'd lost in the May election in 1990 and then I won the by-  
36 election off Labour in the year that the poll tax was introduced.

37

38 Interviewer: Really? That was something.

39

40 Respondent: It was the fifth time I'd fought that ward. Yes.

41

42 Interviewer: That's really about determination as well, isn't it?

43

44 Respondent: Yes.

45

46 Interviewer: Because I mean politics fascinates me anyway and I suppose in a  
47 sense, you know, politicians have it in their blood, don't they?

48

49 Respondent: Yes.

50

51 Interviewer: They feel a sense that they want to do it, so you went for that a  
52 number of times before you actually got it?

53



54 Respondent: Yes.

55

56 Interviewer: And it was a by-election.

57

58 Respondent: Yes.

59

60 Interviewer: Wow, and you've held that seat since, consistently?

61

62 Respondent: No.

63

64 Interviewer: No?

65

66 Respondent: I lost in 96 by 280 votes and I won it back in 98 by 380 votes.

67

68 Interviewer: Wow.

69

70 Respondent: And then I lost it again in 2002.

71

72 Interviewer: So it's been really sort of up and down.

73

74 Respondent: Yes, I mean I could possibly argue, it's a ward that I should never  
75 have won, and I think I fought it because the ward that [REDACTED]  
76 the ex-MP for [REDACTED] used to represent the council.

77

78 Interviewer: Is that right?

79

80 Respondent: In 87.

81

82 Interviewer: Yes.

83

84 Respondent: So I started fighting it then, and I sort of thought, go for it, and even  
85 the conservative members said I'd never win it.

86

87 Interviewer: Really?

88

89 Respondent: Because it was five times in such a short – because of the by-  
90 elections, there were a number of by-elections.

91

92 Interviewer: Yes, and just in terms of your ward, [REDACTED] is in that ward isn't it?

93

94 Respondent: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] yes, which I represent now.

95

96 Interviewer: I've been through there; I passed through there years ago on the bus,  
97 I loved it, I thought it was a brilliant place.

98

99 Respondent: Yes.

100

101 Interviewer: I mean just whilst you're on that councillor, can you give me an insight  
102 right, into just thinking – not thinking at the moment about leadership  
103 duties, but just thinking about ward stuff in terms of sort of  
104 representation of your ward; give me an idea what that is like. Can you



105 paint a picture for me about if you were to be elected a ward  
106 councillor, what happens? Give me an idea of a typical day.  
107

108 Respondent: Well a typical day, it varies so much, there isn't such a thing as a  
109 typical day, but as a ward councillor, we just deal with issues as they  
110 come up.  
111

112 Interviewer: Yes.  
113

114 Respondent: We've three conservative councillors and we both work very closely  
115 with each other, whoever sort of picks up the query first acknowledges  
116 receipt of the issue, because it's usually by email now.  
117

118 Interviewer: Is it really?  
119

120 Respondent: Yes, well especially in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] because...  
121

122 Interviewer: Right.  
123

124 Respondent: And so the first person to pick it up of the three of us usually says,  
125 "And I'll be dealing with this" and we copy the other two in.  
126

127 Interviewer: Right.  
128

129 Respondent: So that they know it's been dealt with and we sort of...  
130

131 Interviewer: Yes, so it's a bit of teamwork really across...

132

133 Respondent: Yes, it's good teamwork and the other thing which we do; we ensure  
134 that we keep in touch with the electorate. Outside election time we put  
135 out between three and four in-touch sheets about issues regarding the  
136 ward.

137

138 Interviewer: Yes, right.

139

140 Respondent: And at Christmas we send them a Christmas card.

141

142 Interviewer: And who do you send that to?

143

144 Respondent: To every household.

145

146 Interviewer: Everybody?

147

148 Respondent: Every house in the ward and the vast majority of them are delivered  
149 by the three councillors so they actually see us walking round as well,  
150 and we get a lot of...

151

152 Interviewer: That is important isn't it, because the classic problem what people  
153 always say is, "You only see these politicians at election time."

154

155 Respondent: Yes, that's it; we still get accused of that, but we tend to have a good  
156 argument, and most people do respect that we're there. Any public



157 meetings etc., we're there in the ward etc., and I think we do represent  
158 the ward well.

159

160 Interviewer: Yes.

161

162 Respondent: And all three of us have a reasonable majority.

163

164 Interviewer: Yes.

165

166 Respondent: I was re-elected in May and it's the first time my percentage of the  
167 vote has dropped below 50%

168

169 Interviewer: Oh really?

170

171 Respondent: And it dropped to 43%

172

173 Interviewer: Yes.

174

175 Respondent: And that was because of UKIP standing.

176

177 Interviewer: Yes, that was a bit of a national trend, that sort of...

178

179 Respondent: Yes, and it was, I think, the same day as the European elections, so...

180

181 Interviewer: Right, yes. So, where they got the bounce from it sort of fed through in  
182 terms of...

183

184 Respondent: Yes, but you know, I think in a four cornered fight, to still get 43% of  
185 the vote is...

186

187 Interviewer: Yes, it's not bad is it? It's not bad, and in a former life when I was a  
188 sort of political scientist, sort of crunching all these figures and stuff,  
189 and you're right, to get that in a four cornered fight is good. I mean  
190 presumably in terms of just thinking about sort of ward representation,  
191 in terms of what drives you, I mean what's the sort of key motivation  
192 behind that? Obviously you've got wider sort of politics stuff on it, but  
193 in terms of your motivation, what gets you out of bed in the morning in  
194 terms of ward councillor stuff, if anything?

195

196 Respondent: Well I sort of first got involved in politics because I wanted to make a  
197 difference and change things for the good, for the people of  
198 [REDACTED] basically, so it's that really and with my political beliefs, but  
199 when you look at anything, Westminster or local councils, the vast  
200 majority of the work is done with cross party agreement, you know, I  
201 would say 80/85% of the work a council does is agreed upon by all  
202 political parties. It's only the sort of last 15/20% where there's  
203 disagreement, and that's all we read about in the paper, it doesn't sort  
204 of sell that.

205

206 Interviewer: Yes, that's why \_\_\_\_ [0:08:44] the Daily Mail.

207

208 Respondent: You know, all [REDACTED] councillors agreed that we should give a  
209 good service to the elderly people of [REDACTED] you know.

210



211 Interviewer: Yes, I mean it is interesting that, because the thing that you see is  
212 obviously the division and the party political sort of \_\_\_\_ [0:09:10] fight  
213 of Westminster and everything else, but in a sense, and I suppose I've  
214 sort of come to this view, dealing with members of a period of years, I  
215 mean it strikes me that people are in it for the right reasons. From  
216 what I have seen of all parties regardless...

217

218 Respondent: Yes.

219

220 Interviewer: I think everybody is in it to try to do the right thing, as they see it, and  
221 to try and make a difference for the good, which is positive really, and  
222 I suppose as well, in a sense, all politics is local isn't it, in the sense  
223 that everything sort of comes back to the service you can give to that  
224 ward and what you can do for them, and I suppose it all feeds back  
225 into that. I mean it's fascinating to just get a picture of what a ward  
226 councillor would do for me, I mean it really is, because presumably  
227 again that plays into the wider sort of observation of you wanting to  
228 serve people or wanting to do public service for the people of  
229 ██████████ and the people of your ward.

230

231 Respondent: Yes.

232

233 Interviewer: What about, what's the situation in terms of – I mean very interesting  
234 discussion with ██████ the other day, and I've looked at your community  
235 strategy in terms of what your priorities are, and I think it's fair to say  
236 that jobs is right up there; jobs and economic regeneration is pretty  
237 much up there.

238

239 Respondent: Absolutely, yes.

240

241 Interviewer: And ■■■ was also telling me about the situation with Ofsted and the  
242 need to sort of deal with that situation and sort that out, and obviously  
243 you've got the challenges around health and social care and  
244 integration and everything else. I mean in terms of your top priorities  
245 councillor, just talk me through that, give me an idea of what the key  
246 thing is for ■■■ at the moment. Give me a flavour.

247

248 Respondent: Well at the moment I would suggest that it's putting together a  
249 balanced budget for next year's budget process, and sort of get to  
250 grips with the savings that we need to make, which for ■■■ is  
251 going to be £12.2 million we need to save.

252

253 Interviewer: What's that as a percentage?

254

255 Respondent: As a percentage of the net budgets now, we do a three year budget so  
256 this is for 17/18 and the net budget, we're reducing it down from – it's  
257 just over 160 million, the net budget.

258

259 Interviewer: Yes.

260

261 Respondent: So, it's a fair percentage.

262

263 Interviewer: Yes, I mean I read the other day that council funding from 2010 had  
264 been cut generally by about 30%.

265

266 Respondent: Yes.

267

268 Interviewer: Yes, but it's a massive amount.



269

270 Respondent: But if you look deeper into that though it's not quite as bad as that.

271

272 Interviewer: Okay.

273

274 Respondent: It's something that I keep disputing because part of those savings is  
275 that back in 2010 there was a sort of standard 2% inflation increase  
276 for wages, well there's been no increase for wages but it's classed  
277 that 2% increase for the wages as reductions in spend.

278

279 Interviewer: Yes.

280

281 Respondent: Well to me that's false accounting.

282

283 Interviewer: Yes, I mean is it getting harder to make the savings, what's required?

284

285 Respondent: It is because as it stands at the moment we've managed to do it  
286 without any major impact on essential services, and that's been a  
287 priority across all parties.

288

289 Interviewer: Yes.

290

291 Respondent: There's been that thing that we've got to maintain the high standard  
292 and quality of service which we give to the people of [REDACTED].

293

294 Interviewer: Yes.

295

296 Respondent: And I think as we go down it gets harder and harder to do that.

297

298 Interviewer: Yes, because all the easy stuff has been done earlier on and then it  
299 gets to the...

300

301 Respondent: Yes but something which you talked about earlier is that I've always  
302 maintained that we could and should do a lot more in joint services  
303 with other councils, and we can reduce our costs that way without  
304 affecting the frontline services.

305

306 Interviewer: Yes.

307

308 Respondent: A few years ago with the conservative group leader in [REDACTED] we put  
309 a scheme together where we going to share a senior management  
310 team, which would run both councils, and that – just in the...

311

312 Interviewer: What sort of joint chief executives and...

313

314 Respondent: Yes, and senior management; the whole senior management structure  
315 would have been shared, you know, and we would still have sort of  
316 management at a lower level, in whichever...

317

318 Interviewer: Yes.

319

320 Respondent: And they'd be split sort of thing; the two councils would be run totally  
321 separately but we'd just have an agreement that the chief exec. would



322 spend part of the time in [REDACTED] and part in [REDACTED] and that was  
323 because we were both in opposition at the time, but our finance offices  
324 got together and they estimated that within two years, after sort of  
325 putting it in practice and settling down etc.

326

327 Interviewer: Yes, so for it to bed in, yes.

328

329 Respondent: That would have saved £2.5 million and by further integration there  
330 would have been much greater savings as it was further integrated in.

331

332 Interviewer: Yes, and presumably part of the motivation behind that is to do as  
333 much as you can in terms of shared services for sort of backup stuff,  
334 back office stuff.

335

336 Respondent: Back office stuff, yes.

337

338 Interviewer: So you can protect frontline.

339

340 Respondent: Yes, the most important thing is the people who actually provide the  
341 service to the general public, and I would argue that sometimes  
342 there's far too many tiers of management, and I also feel that there's,  
343 how can I put this? Some, not all, but some managers are there  
344 through length of service rather than capability.

345

346 Interviewer: Yes, I've seen it, no, you're right; I mean I've seen it in different  
347 authorities. It's a bit different for me sometimes because the work that  
348 I get, I get on a contract basis, and you're only as good as your last  
349 failure basically, so it is what it is, and once a contract is up, you've  
350 got someone else, but it is true, I suppose. I suppose there are people

351 that you see in different places that have been there for a very long  
352 time, and it's difficult to sort of get people to move along really.

353

354 Respondent: Yes, but when I was leader before of [REDACTED] council in 2009/10, I  
355 started off with a restructure of the senior management team, and at  
356 the time, the senior management team was 33 and I cut it down to 26,  
357 and two of that 26 was actually financed by the Primary Care Trust.

358

359 Interviewer: Right.

360

361 Respondent: So in effect, cost wise to the council, it was down to 24, and once  
362 you'd paid all the redundancies etc., that fed through to £600,000 a  
363 year savings.

364

365 Interviewer: Oh so it's not bad is it really?

366

367 Respondent: No, and that didn't affect frontline services at all, you know, nobody  
368 noticed any difference at all.

369

370 Interviewer: That's interesting.

371

372 Respondent: I actually – my next step then was to actually do the same with middle  
373 management, but officers tend to suggest that you cut the frontline  
374 and the management structures never change, so I sort of sent out  
375 this clear signal that, you know, I'm starting at the top and I'm working  
376 down.

377

378 Interviewer: Yes.



379

380 Respondent: And I'd have gone then, through to the middle management and made  
381 reductions which I think I'd sort of set in place how to do that, and  
382 better procurement things which we did, which I like to think helped  
383 the liberal – first the liberal and then the Labour leadership in years  
384 since then.

385

386 Interviewer: Yes.

387

388 Respondent: You know, because groundwork was done.

389

390 Interviewer: Because the framework was there, yes.

391

392 Respondent: And in 2010 I actually set a budget which gave a 1% reduction in  
393 council tax without cutting a single frontline service at all.

394

395 Interviewer: Right.

396

397 Respondent: And no increases in costs apart from some inflation of costs, you  
398 know, like for swimming pools etc., they just went up by about 2% for  
399 inflation.

400

401 Interviewer: What fascinates me is, I read somewhere the other day that people  
402 are actually quite surprised that the local authority sector has been  
403 able to absorb a lot of these cuts on the scale that they have, and  
404 they're quite surprised that they're able to do it.

405

406 Respondent: Yes, I'm not, I was quite adamant that we could have reduced council  
407 tax considerably, or spent more money on services, before the  
408 austerity measures about the current government, this was in 2008/9  
409 when I...

410

411 Interviewer: Right, so that was sort of the back end of the \_\_\_\_ [0:19:56] from the  
412 financial crash.

413

414 Respondent: Yes, in 2008 I became leader, I was deputy leader before then and  
415 responsible for – I'd done the Conservative budget for a number of  
416 years, and I've sort of won the argument within the group that we can  
417 look to reduce, and I started work in 2008 to look at how we could get  
418 that down with the officers, and in 2008, the budget for the three years  
419 forecast an increase in council tax of, I think it was 4.8% each year.  
420 The first year that I got real control of our budget process and I'd got  
421 the groups back in to do it, I reduced that to 2.5%. The following year I  
422 cut it down to an increase of 1.7% and the following year it was a 1%  
423 decrease, and I think that's the first decrease in local taxation that has  
424 ever occurred.

425

426 Interviewer: Yes.

427

428 Respondent: Certainly in [REDACTED] and I don't think it had happened before in  
429 [REDACTED] council or any of the district councils.

430

431 Interviewer: How much of a challenge is it? Because just picking up on this issue  
432 about budgets, and it fascinates me, because everything sort of  
433 comes back to budgets and stuff. Picking up on a discussion I had  
434 with [REDACTED] when you think about the priorities that you've got in this  
435 borough in terms of jobs, and to sort out jobs, you know, you've got to  
436 sort out skills, you've got to sort out transport, you've got to sort out a



437 range of things, when you're dealing with sort of public health matters,  
438 you've got challenges around air quality, stopping smoking, all kinds of  
439 issues, and all these issues are interlinked aren't they, and some of  
440 them you will only get a payoff out of, way down the line.

441 You know, like some of these public health issues around obesity you  
442 mentioned, sorting all these issues out, and the really complex issues,  
443 the really cross cutting issues that you'd need to do something in  
444 terms of investment; you'd need to put a lot of work and a lot of time in  
445 to do it presumably, but you'll only get that payoff later down the line,  
446 how do you juggle with that? Is it easy to sort of argue for resources to  
447 go in, if the payoff is going to be 20/30 years down the line?

448

449 Respondent: Yes, you've got to have that vision for the future, and what it's likely to  
450 be like in the future.

451

452 Interviewer: Yes.

453

454 Respondent: I would suggest it's difficult to do it for 30 years at a time, but  
455 certainly...

456

457 Interviewer: Yes, it's hard to do it for three.

458

459 Respondent: Yes, certainly five to 10 years, you can see things by investment.

460

461 Interviewer: Yes.

462

463 Respondent: Which is – I think there are some good examples where we've done  
464 that in social care, both adults and children social care; we've invested

465 in there, you know, in 2008 we invested in two new swimming pools.  
466 That was a bit of good fortune; we had a share in Leeds [REDACTED]  
467 airport and we received pay out from that, because the airport was  
468 owned by the five West Yorkshire authorities, each with a varying  
469 degree of shareholdings in them, and so all five agreed to dispose of  
470 our shareholding, and...

471

472 Interviewer: So that was sold off to a private company was it?

473

474 Respondent: Yes.

475

476 Interviewer: Right.

477

478 Respondent: And with our share of the investment which we got back, we built two  
479 new swimming pools.

480

481 Interviewer: Right.

482

483 Respondent: You know, so that...

484

485 Interviewer: So that played into that longer term issue about sorting out health and  
486 sorting out leisure and everything really?

487

488 Respondent: Yes.

489

490 Interviewer: Because all these things are linked in aren't they? I mean that's what  
491 fascinates me about it.



492

493 Respondent: Yes, they are, and I would think actually about – by the government  
494 giving us back the powers for public health, that sits well, I think, with  
495 the council and you know, back in 2008/2009, we started talking with  
496 the primary care trust at the time, and the national health service,  
497 about what we could do to work much closely together.

498

499 Interviewer: Yes.

500

501 Respondent: A, to cut costs, but at that time it was to cut costs so that we could  
502 invest more in the services of our health and social care parts.  
503 Because if we have better sports facilities for people, they're fitter,  
504 they don't need the hospital as much.

505

506 Interviewer: Yes.

507

508 Respondent: And so there are savings there and we were putting the argument  
509 across that those savings have got to be shared.

510

511 Interviewer: Yes.

512

513 Respondent: Because although we make an investment the hospital benefits.

514

515 Interviewer: Yes.

516

517 Respondent: Some of that should come back to the council for the investment.

518

519 Interviewer: Yes, so you want some pay back on that to sort of reinvest?

520

521 Respondent: Yes.

522

523 Interviewer: And I mean that is interesting to me because it sort of shows how  
524 everything links together, and presumably when you look at an issue  
525 like health and social care and the integration around that, and sort of  
526 sorting out issues around dementia, or even sorting issues around  
527 early years education, you know, everything has got to link together.  
528 And, I suppose if you think about jobs and the issue about being able  
529 to grow the local economy, being able to get the right skills and to train  
530 people up so that they can take jobs and be able to attract jobs, so  
531 you're thinking about transport and the [REDACTED] line that comes  
532 through from Manchester, which everybody, myself included, trundles  
533 through on that, 5 miles an hour.

534

535 Respondent: Yes.

536

537 Interviewer: I mean it's all linked in. I mean in terms of the importance of  
538 partnerships to get those issues sorted out, I mean just give me a  
539 flavour on that.

540

541 Respondent: Oh it's highly important, you know, if as leader at the council, I started  
542 shouting about how important it is to invest in the – to electrify the  
543 [REDACTED] line and put some decent rolling stock on and increase  
544 the signalling system so that we can get more trains running along,  
545 you know, because at the moment because of – in parts of the  
546 [REDACTED] it's a very old signalling system.

547

548 Interviewer: Yes.



549

550 Respondent: So, because of that, for rail safety reasons, we can only have a train  
551 about every 13 minutes.

552

553 Interviewer: Is that right?

554

555 Respondent: With a modern train system you can have them every five or six  
556 minutes. So, we could almost double the number of trains available on  
557 the line. If those things came through, I was told a number of years  
558 ago that the [REDACTED] line, they were looking to electrify it in the  
559 late 50's.

560

561 Interviewer: Is that right?

562

563 Respondent: And I'm assured that whenever work was done on the track, they  
564 dropped the track so that there was headroom under the bridges for  
565 electrification, and when Summit tunnel was closed, I don't know if you  
566 remember that.

567

568 Interviewer: Yes.

569

570 Respondent: There was a fire and it was closed for about two years in the late 90's,  
571 I'm told they also dropped the track there as well for possible future  
572 electrification, because they had to relay the track throughout the  
573 tunnel, and so they reduced the – they increased the depth of the  
574 tunnel so that it could take electrification.

575

576 Interviewer: So what's the hold up on that? Is it just the money to do it?

577

578 Respondent: It's the money to do it, yes.

579

580 Interviewer: The money to do it.

581

582 Respondent: And a few weeks ago, I speak to – they had a meeting in Leeds, an  
583 announcement where the prime minister came up, and Patrick  
584 McLoughlin...

585

586 Interviewer: Yes, when he got attacked by the \_\_\_\_ [0:28:49].

587

588 Respondent: Yes, the secretary of state for transport came up.

589

590 Interviewer: Yes.

591

592 Respondent: And as I was leaving – I always go across to Leeds on the train, and I  
593 was leading to come back to [REDACTED] on the train and Patrick  
594 McLoughlin just stopped me as I went out of the door and asked me if  
595 I knew the way to the railway station. That was a bad mistake of his,  
596 because he had a 10 minute walk with an ear bashing about the need  
597 for – and I got a promise from him that he would come up and have a  
598 meeting.

599

600 Interviewer: Really?

601

602 Respondent: And he's coming on Monday.

603



604 Interviewer: Ah well done. I mean presumably sorting that issue out is probably  
605 important, but one of the things that [REDACTED] said to me on Monday was  
606 that – because I was asking about these travel to work areas in terms  
607 of how [REDACTED] sits with that, and he was saying to me “Well you  
608 know, it’s primarily Leeds and [REDACTED] and I said, “Well what about  
609 Manchester?” He said, “Oh it’s difficult because of the lakes.”

610

611 Respondent: Yes but people do live in [REDACTED] and travel to Manchester.

612

613 Interviewer: Yes.

614

615 Respondent: Now they tend to earn good salaries.

616

617 Interviewer: Right.

618

619 Respondent: And I think it’s a real plus for [REDACTED] because a proportion of  
620 those good salaries are spent in the economy in [REDACTED].

621

622 Interviewer: Yes.

623

624 Respondent: You know they come back to [REDACTED] and go to the excellent  
625 eating places we have.

626

627 Interviewer: Yes.

628

629 Respondent: The children spend their pocket money etc. in the local community.

630

631 Interviewer: Yes, so it all comes back into [REDACTED].

632

633 Respondent: Yes.

634

635 Interviewer: So if that link could be improved and you could improve those journey  
636 times to Manchester, presumably that would be a real boost for  
637 [REDACTED].

638

639 Respondent: Oh yes, and with the changes in the hub in Manchester, we should be  
640 able to get direct links to the Manchester airport, which would be  
641 excellent.

642

643 Interviewer: Oh right, yes.

644

645 Respondent: And if we can't get a direct link at least we could go to Victoria from  
646 [REDACTED] and just swap platforms and get on a train to the airport,  
647 rather than having to go to Piccadilly.

648

649 Interviewer: Yes, because this is the thing, I mean transport is interesting because  
650 it shows, I suppose, the effect of sort of needing the thing to be  
651 integrated.

652

653 Respondent: Yes.

654

655 Interviewer: Needing to get – I mean the argument about HS2 presumably, and  
656 you're right slap bang in the middle of it here on that Y.



657

658 Respondent: Yes.

659

660 Interviewer: I mean the arguments around that, there was lots of talk in the media  
661 about it being in terms of journey time to London, but of course the  
662 other issue is capacity and connectivity because as far as I can see on  
663 it, unless they sort out that west coast mainline, you won't even be  
664 able to get a seat on it.

665

666 Respondent: Yes, this is the main point, you know, the high speed train, yes, you  
667 get to London quicker, but you will free up more time on east and west  
668 coast lines for local and goods traffic which again will help the local  
669 economy.

670

671 Interviewer: Yes.

672

673 Respondent: And one thing that I'm keen about as well is to ensure that we do have  
674 good connections to the new station in Manchester and Leeds to  
675 connect into the High Speed 2. I'd love a High Speed 3 to come  
676 through [REDACTED] but I think...

677

678 Interviewer: It's not going to is it at the moment?

679

680 Respondent: No, well I think it would be far too expensive and I see the best way  
681 and most economical route would be up via Skipton area and a route  
682 up that way, sort of thing.

683

684 Interviewer: Oh right.

685

686 Respondent: And I think you could almost get by without having to tunnel, because  
687 that's usually the most expensive.

688

689 Interviewer: Okay.

690

691 Respondent: You know, you can follow the lines, if you look at that route, I think that  
692 is a strong possibility of a route.

693

694 Interviewer: Would that go up sort of round Keighley area and up towards Skipton?

695

696 Respondent: Yes, somewhere round about that area, up above Keighley you know.  
697 I'm just trying to think, is it Steeton, that sort of area?

698

699 Interviewer: I know, yes.

700

701 Respondent: Come across to that area and across to Leeds sort of thing, following  
702 the – I think you'd come up the Ribble Valley and down the Aire  
703 Valley.

704

705 Interviewer: I know where you mean, yes.

706

707 Respondent: That sort of thing, and because you're in the valley sort of thing, I just  
708 think that that is...

709

710 Interviewer: That sounds like the best route.



711

712 Respondent: A good route for it because it wouldn't be as expensive.

713

714 Interviewer: What did you think about the – I mean just whilst we're on transport,  
715 because it fascinates me, I mean it's got that many links into  
716 everything else, in terms of the One North proposals to try to –  
717 obviously George Osborne has been saying what he's said on that,  
718 there are issues about trying to improve the connectivity across the  
719 Pennines and trying to improve the links for freight as well from  
720 Liverpool to Hull, I mean what's your thoughts generally on that?

721

722 Respondent: Well I always think that High Speed 3 should be Liverpool and major  
723 cities through to Hull and up to Newcastle, and join the lot, so I'm  
724 fully...

725

726 Interviewer: Yes, it doesn't work otherwise does it?

727

728 Respondent: No, and that – we could really make a major impact on the northern  
729 economy and create the jobs which are needed.

730

731 Interviewer: Yes.

732

733 Respondent: And one of the pleasing things, I think, is that – I've forgotten which  
734 company it is but it's one of the Japanese companies, are actually  
735 talking about a new factory up in the north east for production of  
736 trains.

737

738 Interviewer: Oh really?

739

740     Respondent:            Yes, so we'd have Bombardier in Derbyshire and a new – I'm trying to  
741                                   think which – it's one of the big international Japanese companies who  
742                                   are talking about a factory up there, and why not? The only new trains  
743                                   that have been purchased for the north – in this area in the north of  
744                                   England anyway, and I think pretty much the north of England, has  
745                                   been the electrified line from Leeds up to Skipton, you know, that's the  
746                                   Aire Valley route sort of thing. And those trains came from Portugal.

747

748     Interviewer:            Is that right?

749

750     Respondent:            Yes.

751

752     Interviewer:            It's mad isn't it?

753

754     Respondent:            We invented the bloody form of transport, you know, and we import –  
755                                   and I think that's absolutely criminal to our heritage.

756

757     Interviewer:            I went to a meeting with Downtown Business Organisation that  
758                                   operates in Leeds and Manchester and whatever, and we had a  
759                                   debate a couple of weeks ago in Leeds about devolution to Leeds and  
760                                   what will happen, and one of the things to come out of that was this  
761                                   sort of criticism that a lot of these things are being – in terms of trains,  
762                                   that we're bringing them in from abroad and it's just mad. I mean  
763                                   presumably again that opens up the other question about getting skills  
764                                   of people to do it and making sure that you've got the skills in place.  
765                                   It's a long-term issue.

766



767 Respondent: Yes, and that's important as well, because I do feel that schools are  
768 letting down the people, you know, we are not stretching children; all  
769 children should be stretched, and every child has a talent, and the  
770 schools should find that talent and encourage it, and no child should  
771 be wrote off as being not worth it, and unfortunately that does happen.

772

773 Interviewer: Yes.

774

775 Respondent: Which is why I'm absolutely over the moon about the changes which  
776 [REDACTED] Gove introduced about education; every education list – he'd  
777 shoot me for saying that, you know, I do feel that they are making a  
778 difference and if you go to these successful schools now who are  
779 getting good Ofsted's, they have strong management, strong  
780 discipline in the school and the children learn. You can see that  
781 because the results improve and that's what we should have in every  
782 school; every school should be top Ofsted rating, otherwise...

783

784 Interviewer: Yes, because education matters so much doesn't it, in terms of  
785 everything else.

786

787 Respondent: Absolutely yes.

788

789 Interviewer: And if you don't get that right...

790

791 Respondent: Child poverty etc., the best cure is to give the children a really good  
792 start in life and get them out of the habit of generations of the family  
793 not working, and get them out learning.

794

795 Interviewer: Yes.

796

797 Respondent: I feel it is the only way out of child poverty.

798

799 Interviewer: I mean it is so crucial, I mean my mum's retired now but she was a  
800 primary school teacher for 30 years, and it's such a key thing isn't it, if  
801 you don't get that right, you can't build on anything else, and it's got a  
802 sort of knock on effect.

803

804 Respondent: Yes.

805

806 Interviewer: What do you think about – just thinking about this thing about powers  
807 and about Leeds city region, just picking up in terms of education and  
808 skills, I mean do you feel at the moment that you've got enough  
809 powers in terms of skills funding? Have you got enough funding?  
810 Have you got enough powers in terms of skills to be able to lock into  
811 what you need to develop the local economy or do you need more?

812

813 Respondent: Well you can't take money from an empty pot, and if you look at the  
814 economy, you know, the national debt is increasing; every minute at  
815 the moment the national debt increases, and until we've got rid of the  
816 deficit, and we're still talking about the deficit, not the debt.

817

818 Interviewer: I know, you're right.

819

820 Respondent: And until we've got that in hand, we can't really spend too much. But,  
821 you know, again the government is looking ahead, that we can't just  
822 stand still and cut taxes, we've got to look to the future as well, which  
823 is why they're looking for this investment, and I think the north is  
824 getting a much better case than they've had in the past.



825

826 Interviewer: Yes.

827

828 Respondent: I do feel quite strongly actually that the best vehicle for some of this is  
829 the LEPs, the Leeds city region LEP, to have businessmen  
830 themselves involved, because it's great just politicians thinking that we  
831 know best, but I like to listen to people who've actually put their own  
832 money on the line, and they're sort of saying...

833

834 Interviewer: Well do you know what councillor, it's very interesting that you should  
835 say that, because first of all, I went to the Northern Futures event in  
836 Leeds last week with the deputy prime minister, one of the things to  
837 come out of that was, was that people said exactly that, the fact that it  
838 needs an entrepreneurial spirit, it needs businesses to take a risk and  
839 to drive it, and the other thing is, is that in Liverpool, we saw – we  
840 were lucky in terms of the Capital of Culture that we got back in 2008  
841 and that drove a lot in terms of regeneration and investment, and we  
842 were very lucky in terms of that.

843 But the other thing that we were lucky with, and we got it through just  
844 on the right side of the recession and the austerity issues, was the  
845 redevelopment of Liverpool One, the city centre retail stuff in  
846 Liverpool, which has brought Liverpool up, I think it was 15<sup>th</sup> in the  
847 country to 5<sup>th</sup>, in terms of the retail; it really sort of reshaped that. But, I  
848 think one of the big things that we found in Liverpool was the fact that  
849 that was private sector funding, and it really showed a confidence.  
850 Because in the past, there has been public sector funding, which is  
851 fine, but you know, it didn't give that sort of buzz to the place really.

852

853 Respondent: Yes, [REDACTED] Heseltine I think started that with pouring money into  
854 Liverpool, and it was just pouring it into a bottomless pit.

855

856 Interviewer: Yes it needs a strategy, doesn't it?

857

858 Respondent: Yes.

859

860 Interviewer: It needs a strategy and it needs the sort of partners in terms of  
861 business for it to...

862

863 Respondent: Yes, and with the backing of the community, because you've also got  
864 to have the community behind it as well.

865

866 Interviewer: Yes, just on that issue though, I mean in terms of, you've told me  
867 about the partnership work and about the importance of the LEP and  
868 the importance of business, and in terms of the council and the  
869 council's democratic mandate, you know, in all this the council stands  
870 out because it's got a democratic mandate that other people don't  
871 have.

872

873 Respondent: Yes, just under 40% of the electorate bothering to vote for us.

874

875 Interviewer: There is always that \_\_\_\_ [0:42:18] slightly better than the turnout on  
876 the police commissioners, but just on that issue, I mean do you find,  
877 first of all that that gives the council as a whole, an added legitimacy,  
878 and secondly, do partners respect that? I mean do partners respect  
879 the fact that the democratic mandate there? Does it have any impact  
880 on what you do? Just give me an idea about the community  
881 leadership stuff?

882

883 Respondent: Well, I think they do, you know, I think partners do respect, but I think  
884 partnership in [REDACTED] works because there's mutual respect.



885

886 Interviewer: Right.

887

888 Respondent: And it's all parties respect the need that we've got to work with the  
889 private sector, and our public sector colleagues; the health service,  
890 the CCG etc., you know, it's got to be partnership work and that is as  
891 well with consulting with the public as well.

892

893 Interviewer: Yes.

894

895 Respondent: And you've got to explain what's happening to the public, so that they  
896 get behind it as well, and they see the benefits of it.

897

898 Interviewer: Is it difficult to get the public interested in this stuff or are they turned  
899 on by it?

900

901 Respondent: The best example that I can say is that in our health and wellbeing  
902 board, you know, we partnership with national health service and the  
903 CCG, and I keep telling the doctors, I've said, "You really ought to lead  
904 on this because there's about 20% of the population out there believe  
905 what politicians say. 80% believe what you say."

906

907 Interviewer: Right yes, that's true.

908

909 Respondent: So, I always push on that, you know, that's just an example, they'll  
910 listen to you.

911

912 Interviewer: Yes.

913

914 Respondent: And similarly, I firmly believe that businessmen should be listened to  
915 because they know what's best for their business and what will give  
916 them encouragement to expand and create more jobs and more  
917 wealth in [REDACTED].

918

919 Interviewer: Yes, so presumably, I mean just thinking about that issue about  
920 inward investment, I mean presumably – what happens? If you get a  
921 company that wants to come to [REDACTED] and they give you a ring  
922 and say, "Councillor look, I'm looking at bringing this here, but I need  
923 X, Y, Z', I mean what happens then? Do you then sort of start having a  
924 think and having a chat with the economic development people about,  
925 have we got the site? Have we got the skills? Just give me a flavour.

926

927 Respondent: Well we like to be a bit more proactive because we try and identify  
928 sites which are going to meet the criteria of new businesses.

929

930 Interviewer: Right.

931

932 Respondent: And whether we like it or not, it's difficult to find businesses who want  
933 to invest in [REDACTED].

934

935 Interviewer: Is it really?

936

937 Respondent: Well it's so difficult to get to; the road infrastructure etc., if you're...

938

939 Interviewer: I love [REDACTED] as well, it's one of my favourite towns; I love it.



940

941 Respondent: It is, it's a superb place.

942

943 Interviewer: Yes, I got a tour of the top of the town [REDACTED] about 20 years ago and fell  
944 in love with the place.

945

946 Respondent: But if you think about it, if you were building a factory to manufacture  
947 widgets which you're going to send throughout the UK and possibly  
948 Europe, do you want to invest in a place in [REDACTED] which it's  
949 going to take you at least an hour to get to the nearest motorway no  
950 matter which way you go, or do you want to build it in Brighouse or  
951 [REDACTED] where it's five minutes up the road?

952

953 Interviewer: Right, yes.

954

955 Respondent: So we've got to look – and of course the [REDACTED] is absolutely  
956 superb, it's a fantastic place but it's a valley and there's very little flat  
957 land in a valley.

958

959 Interviewer: Yes [REDACTED] was saying this the other day, about housing, that it's difficult  
960 to sort of find anywhere to put houses.

961

962 Respondent: Yes, so you need flat land and we've got to make sure that we have  
963 land available for businesses to move to.

964

965 Interviewer: Yes, is that protected in terms of your local plan? Have you got...?

966

967 Respondent: Yes, well it's in the process of being finalised is our plan, we haven't –  
968 but we should be safe from being challenged; usually you're only  
969 challenged on the housing front. And we have...

970

971 Interviewer: Like Cheshire east this morning.

972

973 Respondent: We have certainly enough land designated for housing to meet our  
974 commitment for well over five years, already allocated.

975

976 Interviewer: Right, okay.

977

978 Respondent: In our existing development plans.

979

980 Interviewer: Yes.

981

982 Respondent: So you can never say never, but there is a good chance that nobody  
983 will be able to successfully challenge us because of that, but we still  
984 need to get our plan organised, and in that we do try and identify  
985 places where it would be suitable for businesses to be created, and if  
986 a business wants to move into [REDACTED] or expand in [REDACTED]  
987 and the place they want, if it's in greenbelt, I would say for housing,  
988 no, because we should be able to find sufficient land in Brownfield and  
989 areas which are not greenbelt, to build houses.

990

991 Interviewer: Yes.

992

993 Respondent: But if it's a business and we've got a lot of greenbelt around the M62,  
994 if they wanted something, I would go out of my way to try and ensure



995 that they got that planning permission. We'd have to go through the  
996 planning regulations etc. to justify it, but of course one of the  
997 justifications for development in greenbelt is the creation of jobs which  
998 would benefit the whole community.

999

1000 Interviewer: Are there any particular sort of – I mean presumably as leader you  
1001 would welcome a lot of investment in terms of business, but is there  
1002 any particular business that you're keen to attract in [REDACTED] Is  
1003 there any particular sector that you're looking at? Is there anything in  
1004 particular you think, "Well if I could get that, you know, it would have a  
1005 real impact"?

1006

1007 Respondent: Well I think the major thing about [REDACTED] I would say, is that we  
1008 don't want to lose [REDACTED] Banking Group.

1009

1010 Interviewer: Okay.

1011

1012 Respondent: It's one of the headquarters in [REDACTED] one of their three headquarters,  
1013 and last time I was leader, it was under serious consideration.

1014

1015 Interviewer: Because that's former [REDACTED] isn't it?

1016

1017 Respondent: Yes, the [REDACTED] Building Society, so I fought very hard to help with  
1018 other people and it was a Labour government at the time and the  
1019 minister came up on a regular basis with us to talk with [REDACTED] Banking  
1020 Group to try and ensure that we retained that presence in [REDACTED]  
1021 because that would have major impact on our local economy. They  
1022 employ more than 5,000 people in [REDACTED].

1023

1024 Interviewer: Gosh, so it is really important.

1025

1026 Respondent: Yes, but after seeing that, the one thing that I would try and  
1027 discourage is more jobs reliant on the finance industry, because if you  
1028 have all your eggs in one basket...

1029

1030 Interviewer: I understand it.

1031

1032 Respondent: So, I would welcome basically anything but I would prefer  
1033 diversification.

1034

1035 Interviewer: Okay.

1036

1037 Respondent: On the job front. And when you think, going back into [REDACTED]  
1038 heyday, we had woollen mills, we had carpet factories, we had  
1039 machine tool engineering, we had biscuits, we had sweets; McIntosh's  
1040 and Riley's. There was a good diversification of industry, you know,  
1041 and we have a good history.

1042

1043 Interviewer: It's brilliant.

1044

1045 Respondent: And one of the...

1046

1047 Interviewer: And it's such a proud place as well, I mean that's what strikes me  
1048 about it. Whenever I come to [REDACTED] whenever I come to West  
1049 Yorkshire, it stands out that there is a pride about the place, you know,  
1050 people are really proud of the history, the culture or the tradition, you  
1051 know, it's brilliant to see.



1052

1053 Respondent: Yes, I mean whenever I have opportunity to discuss with business  
1054 people who are possibly considering coming up into [REDACTED] I  
1055 always point out, if you look at the industrial record of the people of  
1056 [REDACTED] they are not militant, they actually work, usually cheaper;  
1057 it's less cost to employ people in [REDACTED] they're more loyal so you  
1058 save on training costs.

1059

1060 Interviewer: Yes.

1061

1062 Respondent: And this was all actually backed up with – when [REDACTED] actually looked  
1063 and analysed this, they agreed that they have far less staff issues...

1064

1065 Interviewer: Far less trouble here than elsewhere.

1066

1067 Respondent: In [REDACTED] they don't have to pay as much for the staff. It's not  
1068 millions of pounds but you know it's just slightly cheaper...

1069

1070 Interviewer: \_\_\_\_ [0:52:58] there's a stability in terms of the staff here.

1071

1072 Respondent: Yes, there's that loyalty, people tend to, if you get a job you stick with  
1073 that job, and you know, it used to be sort of like a job for life, and firms  
1074 respected that. The employers tend to look after the staff because  
1075 they respected that.

1076

1077 Interviewer: Yes.

1078

1079 Respondent: So you know, I think the workforce in [REDACTED] is one of our biggest  
1080 assets and we don't sell it enough.

1081

1082 Interviewer: Yes, what about tourism here, I mean as I say, you know, I've come  
1083 here for years, I've always loved it; what's the – how big is tourism in  
1084 terms of your economy here and what you do?

1085

1086 Respondent: I can't give you any exact figures off the top of my head, but it is  
1087 important; there are quite a lot of people employed in tourism of one  
1088 sort or another, and we have some real gems. Hopefully down by the  
1089 railway station we've got Eureka, the children's museum.

1090

1091 Interviewer: Yes.

1092

1093 Respondent: We've got 900 year old minster, the [REDACTED] Minster, we've got the  
1094 Square Chapel for the arts, and in 2016 we'll have the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
1095 reopening.

1096

1097 Interviewer: Yes, do you know, that is an absolute gem, I fell in love with that place  
1098 years ago when I first come here and it's absolutely brilliant.

1099

1100 Respondent: Yes.

1101

1102 Interviewer: And [REDACTED] was telling me the other day about the plans that you've got to  
1103 sort of get that back, it's fantastic.

1104



1105 Respondent: Yes, I mean a lot of people are upset because they're saying that  
1106 we're ripping up the old cobbles and the slope, do you remember the  
1107 slope?

1108

1109 Interviewer: Yes, I do.

1110

1111 Respondent: And those cobbles.

1112

1113 Interviewer: Yes.

1114

1115 Respondent: And local people sort of say, "Oh you're spoiling the heritage" and I  
1116 point out to them that when that was first opened, for quite a while  
1117 actually, for about 50 years or so of its existence, that was grass and  
1118 sheep grazed in it.

1119

1120 Interviewer: Right.

1121

1122 Respondent: And again, just going back to the – that was built by businessmen and  
1123 it was only actually operated as █████ █████ for just over 20 years and it  
1124 made its money, and it was only open two hours a week.

1125

1126 Interviewer: Is that right?

1127

1128 Respondent: Yes, on a Saturday it opened for two hours, now we believe that there  
1129 was a lot of trade done outside in the public houses etc.

1130

1131 Interviewer: Right, yes.

1132

1133 Respondent: But that only opens for two hours, and the other thing which people  
1134 often don't realise, but as you walk round it there isn't an out facing  
1135 window.

1136

1137 Interviewer: Is that right?

1138

1139 Respondent: And that was because the cloth was so valuable it reduced the risk of  
1140 breaking.

1141

1142 Interviewer: Oh my god. I mean it is – you've said about it being a gem, I mean it  
1143 really is, it's one of those places that you just think – and presumably  
1144 when it's refurbished, it's going to be a real sell isn't it?

1145

1146 Respondent: Oh yes. I mean hopefully we'll...

1147

1148 Interviewer: I'll definitely be coming back to look at it, it will be fantastic.

1149

1150 Respondent: We'll attract some good restaurants and cafes etc. in there.

1151

1152 Interviewer: Yes.

1153

1154 Respondent: Hopefully it will be open from 7.00 or 8.00 in the morning through until  
1155 midnight.

1156

1157 Interviewer: Yes.



1158

1159 Respondent: And it's not going to be...

1160

1161 Interviewer: Because ■■■ was telling me that one of the issues that you had with it  
1162 was, some of the units in there are very small in terms of getting  
1163 visitors to sort of take any interest in it.

1164

1165 Respondent: Yes, they are, I mean they were just small individual shops.

1166

1167 Interviewer: Yes, I remember going in and looking at them and stuff. But it's  
1168 brilliant, it really is, I mean you must be very proud of getting it sorted  
1169 out.

1170

1171 Respondent: Oh yes, and we'll...

1172

1173 Interviewer: And it will integrate as well won't it, in terms of in the town centre.

1174

1175 Respondent: Yes, we see that as, we actually refer to it as the town square and  
1176 hopefully we can have much more entertainment, by levelling it off, it  
1177 lends itself for so much more uses, and especially in each corner as  
1178 well, we're going to have a little amphitheatre in each corner.

1179

1180 Interviewer: Wow.

1181

1182 Respondent: You know so that you can have different things going on in four  
1183 different corners of the...

1184

- 1185 Interviewer: Yes and how long is that going to be open for in terms of the opening  
1186 hours? Is it going to be open into the evening?  
1187
- 1188 Respondent: Yes, well that's what I was saying. Hopefully it will open 7.00 or 8.00 in  
1189 the morning and stay open until midnight.  
1190
- 1191 Interviewer: Oh really, so that should give a real buzz to the town centre, because  
1192 that's part of the problem these days with places, isn't it, that 6 o'clock  
1193 comes and the place just shuts down?  
1194
- 1195 Respondent: Yes, and hopefully there will be always something going on there, I  
1196 feel that has the potential to be the Covent Garden of the north.  
1197
- 1198 Interviewer: Wow, I love that, I really do love it, I think it's brilliant and I think as  
1199 well, and I speak as a planning lawyer on this because I know there's  
1200 all these issues trying to sort these things out, but I sometimes think  
1201 that if you can bring these old buildings, part of the challenge is, not  
1202 only to use them but to integrate them with everything else that's  
1203 going on, and to sort of bring them back into modern use but to give  
1204 them a real purpose for the community.  
1205
- 1206 Respondent: Yes, and I think this is one of the good points about [REDACTED] as a  
1207 whole as well, if you look at all the towns, to a large degree we have  
1208 retained our Victorian heritage.  
1209
- 1210 Interviewer: Yes.  
1211
- 1212 Respondent: You know, our town centre, I think is absolutely superb.



1213

1214 Interviewer: It is, and the other thing that strikes me, just sort of walking round, not  
1215 only [REDACTED] but of course [REDACTED] there's a lot happened in  
1216 [REDACTED] in terms of the investment that's gone into that, and  
1217 there's just a real buzz about those places.

1218

1219 Respondent: Yes.

1220

1221 Interviewer: You know there really is. You see people going in and out and it's  
1222 busy. It's absolutely brilliant.

1223

1224 Respondent: The council actually – we've been heavily criticised for spending  
1225 £40,000 on trying to sort of publicise [REDACTED] and the way that  
1226 we've done it, we got an expert PR company and this results in sort of  
1227 marketing techniques around [REDACTED] pretty gritty, and I think it  
1228 actually sums up [REDACTED] because it is gritty and it is extremely  
1229 pretty.

1230

1231 Interviewer: But it's a living environment isn't it? You know, it's not a museum;  
1232 people are living and working there.

1233

1234 Respondent: Yes, and people are proud of it.

1235

1236 Interviewer: Yes, and rightly so.

1237

1238 Respondent: One of the problems is though that they're not particularly proud of  
1239 [REDACTED] but they're proud of [REDACTED] they're proud of [REDACTED]  
1240 [REDACTED] they're proud of villages like [REDACTED] \_\_\_\_[1:00:39].

1241

1242 Interviewer: Yes, they're brilliant.

1243

1244 Respondent: And \_\_\_\_[1:00:42] Bridge and all the way through, sort of thing.

1245

1246 Interviewer: It's brilliant, but I suppose in a sense, that that's similar with a lot of  
1247 boroughs.

1248

1249 Respondent: Yes.

1250

1251 Interviewer: I mean I read something about \_\_\_\_\_ a few weeks ago and they  
1252 said a similar thing about that; the people are proud of Huddersfield.

1253

1254 Respondent: Yes.

1255

1256 Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ you know, where did they get that from, type of thing?

1257

1258 Respondent: Yes, but I think as more people use that pretty gritty they will come to  
1259 like it, and sometimes it's good to have something which people sort  
1260 of thing, \_\_\_\_\_ and they think, "Oh pretty gritty."

1261

1262 Interviewer: Yes, it's good, it clicks doesn't it?

1263

1264 Respondent: Yes, and I think that could be a major thing for us to improve on our  
1265 tourists and on business connections and new businesses coming into  
1266 \_\_\_\_\_.



1267

1268 Interviewer: Yes.

1269

1270 Respondent: And one area which I think we are growing is in the IT sector, it's way  
1271 beyond me, I've just moved on from a quill pen.

1272

1273 Interviewer: My brother's in IT and he knows all the ins and outs and I just say, "Oh  
1274 can you sort that out?"

1275

1276 Respondent: Yes, my grandchildren show me how to use my iPhone.

1277

1278 Interviewer: What's amazing though is that they pick up on it now, don't they, so  
1279 quickly, it is literally second nature to do emails, to do – they just don't  
1280 even think of it.

1281

1282 Respondent: Last year I was in Manchester at a shop, and my wife was in the  
1283 changing rooms trying something on and there was this father and  
1284 son, and the son was three, and he was working a computer there,  
1285 you know, really flying round it and I was just fascinated by it, you  
1286 know.

1287

1288 Interviewer: Yes, how do you do it?

1289

1290 Respondent: Yes, and I was talking to the father, sort of thing, you know, and he  
1291 was sort of saying, "I thought I was quick until he came along."

1292

1293 Interviewer: It must be like learning languages though mustn't it? It must be  
1294 because if you can pick up that early, going back to education in  
1295 schools, if you can pick on that early and you get into it, so that by the  
1296 time you're three you can sit there and whiz around on the iPad and  
1297 everything else, you know, it's...

1298

1299 Respondent: Yes, and if you look where – in two language families, they learn a lot  
1300 quicker, you know, I was told a long time ago that the third language is  
1301 much easier to pick up.

1302

1303 Interviewer: Yes.

1304

1305 Respondent: But I'm afraid at my school I spent most of my French lessons stood in  
1306 the corridor, because...

1307

1308 Interviewer: You and me both.

1309

1310 Respondent: I don't think the teachers believed that somebody could be so thick.

1311

1312 Interviewer: But I think it's all about making it relevant isn't it?

1313

1314 Respondent: Oh yes.

1315

1316 Interviewer: And I think in terms of IT, today in terms of jobs, it's pretty  
1317 \_\_\_\_ [1:03:58] because I suppose even – I mean there was a report out  
1318 yesterday from the people at John Lewis that said part of the problem  
1319 – you probably saw it, part of the problem with the national economy is  
1320 that too many jobs are low level.



1321

1322 Respondent: Yes.

1323

1324 Interviewer: And I think it was something like 20% of the jobs require primary  
1325 school level attainment and the thing is they're trying to skill it up and  
1326 try and do something.

1327

1328 Respondent: Yes.

1329

1330 Interviewer: Presumably in terms of that, you know, IT is pretty central.

1331

1332 Respondent: Oh yes, I mean when you think about it now, a car mechanic needs to  
1333 be an expert on IT, because everything is done by computer now.

1334

1335 Interviewer: True.

1336

1337 Respondent: The computer tells you where the problem is.

1338

1339 Interviewer: It's true.

1340

1341 Respondent: So many things, and one criticism that I do have of the last  
1342 government is that they tried to push too many people to university,  
1343 and if you didn't go to university...

1344

1345 Interviewer: It's often said.

1346

1347 Respondent: You were a failure and then we're short of plumbers, electricians,  
1348 which are highly skilled jobs.

1349

1350 Interviewer: You're right.

1351

1352 Respondent: And car mechanics etc., you know, and the respect for those jobs was  
1353 taken away and that's why young people didn't want to go into them,  
1354 and sciences, we've never pushed sciences enough, and that really is  
1355 the future.

1356

1357 Interviewer: Yes, it's the sort of technology stuff isn't it, because I suppose if you  
1358 can lock into that, and there are all kinds of options in terms of the sort  
1359 of green stuff that's coming through as well, in terms of green  
1360 technology and everything else, it all sort of starts to link in.

1361

1362 Respondent: Yes.

1363

1364 Interviewer: But I mean just thinking about that in terms of too many people getting  
1365 degrees, if you think of it, the thing that really drives business, I  
1366 suppose, is the skills, the competences, and it's really that sort of  
1367 practical apprenticeship stuff that you need isn't it?

1368

1369 Respondent: Yes, and some of the degrees are just totally useless. One that always  
1370 sticks in my mind is in Sheffield they were running courses, degree  
1371 courses on Star Trek; I love Star Trek, but a degree.

1372

1373 Interviewer: Bloody hell.

1374



1375 Respondent: And media studies, I was told by somebody at the BBC is that if they  
1376 get a CV in and the degree is media studies it goes straight in the bin,  
1377 you know. They just consider...

1378

1379 Interviewer: The only thing I wonder about now and I don't know whether it's  
1380 \_\_\_\_[1:06:46] out or not, but I wondered about the fact that now that  
1381 there's the sort of cost element on the tuition fees that everybody is  
1382 looking at, and it's put the market at the forefront. I wonder now  
1383 whether people think twice in terms of what they do, and I wonder now  
1384 whether maybe there's a bit more of a question as well, when I leave  
1385 university I'm going to be £20,000 or £30,000 in debt, and what am I  
1386 going to have that's going to be able to allow me to go and earn  
1387 something?

1388

1389 Respondent: Yes, I think they're actually thinking of that now at 14 or 15, and they  
1390 really are planning. I know that from my grandchildren.

1391

1392 Interviewer: I think that's true.

1393

1394 Respondent: And other young people, they are planning way back there as to the  
1395 courses that they need to do and they're talking to the schools about  
1396 the – I keep calling them O levels, the GCSE's which they want to go  
1397 to, to ensure that they get the A-level courses to ensure they get the  
1398 university place that they want. Or the skills they need for whatever  
1399 they want to go through.

1400

1401 Interviewer: It's absolutely true; we've got somebody in our family at the moment  
1402 that's finishing off the A-levels, looking to go to university, and  
1403 honestly she has planned that, really much more than I ever did. I  
1404 said, "Oh I'll do whatever I'm told", but she has planned it and there's

1405 been much more thinking into it; it's absolutely amazing how people  
1406 sort of...

1407

1408 Respondent: And I think people are coming round to apprenticeships are the way  
1409 forward, and the only thing that I do disagree with some organisations  
1410 is that they're using young people, because it's not really a true  
1411 apprenticeship. I believe an apprenticeship means that you've got a  
1412 job at the end of the training period.

1413

1414 Interviewer: Yes. You've got a concern that some are just using it for cheap  
1415 labour?

1416

1417 Respondent: Yes, and there are some great young people; Cameron, she's an  
1418 apprentice, and she lives in, I think it's Pudsey.

1419

1420 Interviewer: Right.

1421

1422 Respondent: She's got a family member who works in [REDACTED] so she gets a lift, but  
1423 she got off her backside and got this job because it's what she  
1424 wanted.

1425

1426 Interviewer: Yes. That's the thing as well isn't it, and it's like everything else, when  
1427 you've got in somewhere and you've seen how it's operating, you can  
1428 learn much more from that and picking everything up from everybody  
1429 else; you learn much more from that than you ever would from reading  
1430 books. It's just the way it is, isn't it? Because if you're in that  
1431 environment and you've got people there, you sort of pick everything  
1432 up.

1433



1434 Respondent: And to be honest, even the more menial jobs, there's a lot of expertise  
1435 there, and we're not passing that expertise on to the young people of  
1436 the future.

1437

1438 Interviewer: That's true.

1439

1440 Respondent: And I know this is the case with our gardeners; people who look after  
1441 our parks etc., there's a great deal of knowledge there but they're all  
1442 getting to retirement age and there's no...

1443

1444 Interviewer: Yes, so it's trying to make those jobs really appeal to...

1445

1446 Respondent: Yes.

1447

1448 Interviewer: Yes, and I suppose the other thing as well is you speak to people like  
1449 that; they take an awful lot for granted, you know, I suppose if you  
1450 were to speak to them they'd say, "No, no it's only basic stuff", but if  
1451 you start talking to them and say, "Oh well \_\_\_\_[1:10:33]" you break it  
1452 down, there's all these things what they do, they take it for granted,  
1453 but anybody else \_\_\_\_[1:10:39].

1454

1455 Respondent: Yes, where's the best place to plant a particular flower; I'm such an  
1456 expert that Anne bans me from even weeding because I tend to leave  
1457 the weeds and pick up the flowers.

1458

1459 Interviewer: You and me both, so I couldn't touch it.

1460

1461 Respondent: I'm the other extreme, but there's so much skill in these jobs.

1462

1463 Interviewer: There is.

1464

1465 Respondent: You shouldn't downgrade anybody's job, because as I said before,  
1466 everybody has talents and it may be classed as a menial job but it  
1467 really has talents, and sometimes they make a menial job a pleasure,  
1468 not only for themselves but the people who they affect as well.

1469

1470 Interviewer: It's true.

1471

1472 Respondent: And my favourite example of that is ■■■ in ■■■ town centre, you'll  
1473 see him, he's 64 years old because he retires next year, but he  
1474 pushes the barrow round cleaning up the street. Most of the people in  
1475 the town centre know him, they talk to him, he chats back to them,  
1476 he's our best PR guy.

1477

1478 Interviewer: Yes, selling the place, yes.

1479

1480 Respondent: And they tell him, "Oh ■■■ there's a pile of rubbish just down there."  
1481 And he just goes straight down there with his barrow, cleans it up.

1482

1483 Interviewer: Sorts it out, yes.

1484

1485 Respondent: Sorts it out for them.

1486

1487 Interviewer: Yes.

1488



1489 Respondent: And I think he does a fantastic job.

1490

1491 Interviewer: That's brilliant isn't it? I mean as you say, most of these jobs, the thing  
1492 is, is that I've often thought people only realise the value of them if  
1493 they're not done.

1494

1495 Respondent: Yes.

1496

1497 Interviewer: If they're not done and then the rubbish isn't cleaned in the town  
1498 centre and the town centre is a mess, then it starts to have a knock on  
1499 effect, people don't want to go there and it gets a bad reputation, and  
1500 it's true isn't it, people behind the scenes sort of keeping everything  
1501 going.

1502

1503 Respondent: Yes, I still maintain that there shouldn't be a need for them because  
1504 we should take our rubbish home or throw them in the bins provided.

1505

1506 Interviewer: That's true.

1507

1508 Respondent: But unfortunately that will never happen.

1509

1510 Interviewer: Councillor it has been brilliant talking to you, I have really enjoyed it  
1511 firstly, it's an absolute privilege for me to come and have a chat with  
1512 you and to sort of find out what happens and how you do stuff; it really  
1513 is a privilege and I really do mean that; I'm very grateful to you. Is  
1514 there anything else that you want to add? I mean in terms of your  
1515 motivation, is there anything else that you want me to pick up on?  
1516 Because I think it's brilliant, and I think you've given a real showcase  
1517 for [REDACTED] I really do, I think it shines through.

1518

1519    Respondent:        Yes, I mean I've lived here all my life, and you talk about this  
1520                                wonderful building we're in; I like to tell people that Charles [REDACTED]  
1521                                perfected his arts in Westminster and the good people of [REDACTED]  
1522                                allowed him then to come up and build our town [REDACTED].

1523

1524    Interviewer:        Quite right, as you say, that's power in the north isn't it?

1525

1526    Respondent:        Yes, and this...

1527

1528    Interviewer:        That's the real devolution.

1529

1530    Respondent:        Yes, and this whole building cost £52,000 to build.

1531

1532    Interviewer:        Is that right?

1533

1534    Respondent:        Yes, without any modern technology.

1535

1536    Interviewer:        When was that?

1537

1538    Respondent:        It was opened in 1863, and...

1539

1540    Interviewer:        That's fantastic.

1541



1542 Respondent: Sir Charles [REDACTED] actually died whilst it was being built and his son  
1543 took over and finished it.

1544

1545 Interviewer: Is that right?

1546

1547 Respondent: Yes, but that was thanks to people like the Crossley family, famous of  
1548 course for Crossley's carpets and Dean Clough which is another  
1549 fantastic place to look at.

1550

1551 Interviewer: Yes.

1552

1553 Respondent: And the only other thing that – I mean we've talked about the  
1554 infrastructure and road transport etc., but the M62, and I remember  
1555 when the M62 was being built in the late 60's, everybody was telling  
1556 me – well not everybody, but a large proportion of the people were  
1557 saying, "That is a complete white elephant, it's a complete waste of  
1558 money", who would say that now? And this is the argument that I use  
1559 when people talk about the railways, the High Speed 2 and High  
1560 Speed 3, if you look, the biggest growth in this country came about by  
1561 the railway companies in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century that built up the  
1562 infrastructure of the railways, and perhaps one of the advantages they  
1563 had at that time is that they did not have the planning restraints that  
1564 we have now.

1565

1566 Interviewer: Yes.

1567

1568 Respondent: They just got on; they got an act of parliament and did it.

1569

1570 Interviewer: Got it done, yes.

1571

1572 Respondent: Risking their own money again for it, and more often than not they  
1573 were very successful.

1574

1575 Interviewer: Yes.

1576

1577 Respondent: And we all owe that connectivity around Great Britain to them. I think it  
1578 sort of proved beyond doubt that transport infrastructure is extremely  
1579 important and somehow we've got to sell that to the...

1580

1581 Interviewer: Yes, the powers that be.

1582

1583 Respondent: Yes, I call them dinosaurs.

1584

1585 Interviewer: Who don't see it. There's a northern directness on that. I mean I went  
1586 to a meeting a couple of weeks ago with Sir Howard Bernstein, Chief  
1587 Executive of Manchester of course, regeneration guru and everything  
1588 else, and he came over to the Liver Buildings in Liverpool to sort of  
1589 talk about HS2 or whatever else, and what he said was, he said that in  
1590 the time that we've taken to debate HS2, and of course, \_\_\_\_[1:16:57]  
1591 for a number of years yet, but he said in the time that we've taken to  
1592 debate it, China have put in three lines.

1593

1594 Respondent: Yes.

1595

1596 Interviewer: And that just says it all doesn't it really, in terms of trying to sort this  
1597 out?

1598



1599 Respondent: Yes, I think the way we do it is the correct way but perhaps it shouldn't  
1600 take quite as long, because the other good example is the third  
1601 runway at Heathrow, that has got to happen.

1602

1603 Interviewer: Yes. It's been parked now until after the election.

1604

1605 Respondent: Yes, because nobody wants it in their backyard. They know the need  
1606 for it, but I'm afraid that if you buy a house near an airport, you're  
1607 going to have planes. I have one lady up in [REDACTED] who  
1608 complains to me constantly every time she sees me about the noise of  
1609 the church bells, and I just say to her, "Well you shouldn't have bought  
1610 a house next to the church; it was there 100 years before your house  
1611 was built."

1612

1613 Interviewer: Yes, it's amazing, I mean it really is, and I must say, I think at the  
1614 moment just looking at this stuff, and looking particularly at these  
1615 debates around devolution and powers and looking at the situation  
1616 about One North and transport stuff, I'm hoping that there is now a  
1617 consensus of opinion, possibly after Scotland and \_\_\_\_ [1:18:47] there,  
1618 I'm hoping now that there'll be a consensus of opinion across the  
1619 parties to do something.

1620

1621 Respondent: Yes.

1622

1623 Interviewer: To sort it out, what might be a centralised system.

1624

1625 Respondent: Yes, I think there is agreement in the principle of devolution.

1626

1627 Interviewer: Yes.

1628

1629     Respondent:             But there are too many arguments still raging about how that comes  
1630                                     about.

1631

1632     Interviewer:             You're right.

1633

1634     Respondent:             And actually I agree with George Osborne about a lot of things but I'm  
1635                                     not a great fan of elected mayors.

1636

1637     Interviewer:             Yes.

1638

1639     Respondent:             It perhaps works in London but a model there doesn't mean to say it's  
1640                                     going to work everywhere.

1641

1642     Interviewer:             I think that this is one of the things, and I think actually that's an  
1643                                     interesting point because it was one of the points that came out of the  
1644                                     deal in Greater Manchester a couple of weeks ago, that you cannot  
1645                                     have a one size fits all; what works in one place isn't going to work in  
1646                                     another, and it's all these local dynamics in different places. I mean in  
1647                                     Merseyside, part of the problem that we have got in the Liverpool city  
1648                                     region is the fact that the history of working together is perhaps not as  
1649                                     strong as it was in Greater Manchester authorities and you've got  
1650                                     personalities which are involved in that as well.

1651                                     And I think that if there's – I suppose if there's any sort of division that  
1652                                     Whitehall mandarins can point to, to say, "You're not getting those  
1653                                     powers, you're not getting that funding", I suppose I just sort of wonder  
1654                                     whether we're going to use that as an excuse, to sort of keep  
1655                                     everything in London really.

1656



1657 Respondent: Yes, I mean that is something which I think George Osborne says loud  
1658 and clear, he doesn't actually come out directly and say it but you  
1659 know, the only game in town is elected mayors and if you don't have  
1660 an elected mayor you don't get the cash and you can't do anything  
1661 without the cash.

1662

1663 Interviewer: Yes, because it struck me from just reading that stuff in greater  
1664 Manchester in terms of the deal there, that the key thing really is the  
1665 city region, the combined authority and the sort of joint working around  
1666 that.

1667

1668 Respondent: Yes.

1669

1670 Interviewer: Rather than the thing that \_\_\_\_ [1:21:25] picked up on in terms of the  
1671 elected mayor.

1672

1673 Respondent: Yes, and this is part of the problem as well, in – I talk about West  
1674 Yorkshire; we've got the West Yorkshire combined authority which  
1675 incorporates [REDACTED] we've got the Leeds city region which incorporates  
1676 Craven, Harrogate, Selby, which are district councils of North  
1677 Yorkshire County Council.

1678

1679 Interviewer: Yes.

1680

1681 Respondent: And we've also got Barnsley.

1682

1683 Interviewer: Is Barnsley in the Leeds city region?

1684

1685 Respondent: Leeds city region, yes, and that area as well is the LEP, well I think  
1686 everything should be condensed down to the same – the West  
1687 Yorkshire combined authority as far as I believe, the best model would  
1688 be, if that was the Leeds city region as well.

1689

1690 Interviewer: I see, yes.

1691

1692 Respondent: Or incorporate, if it isn't, then incorporate the boroughs, the district  
1693 councils into it, but then they can't really then be part of North  
1694 Yorkshire because North Yorkshire would be looking to do some sort  
1695 of deal for the whole of North Yorkshire.

1696

1697 Interviewer: Yes, because they can't have, can they – am I correct in thinking,  
1698 councillor, that they can't have an area from a non-metropolitan  
1699 county as part of the combined authority? They can't have it can they?  
1700 I know there's an exception for [REDACTED].

1701

1702 Respondent: Yes, so they've already broke that rule. And, I think that's more to do  
1703 with the fact that [REDACTED] is the holding Labour area in North Yorkshire,  
1704 they wanted to join with the people in West Yorkshire who are  
1705 predominantly Labour leaders.

1706

1707 Interviewer: Right, so there's party politics at play?

1708

1709 Respondent: Yes.

1710

1711 Interviewer: It is really fascinating to sort of get your take on it councillor; I think it's  
1712 excellent in terms of what you've told me. I think it's very instructive for  
1713 me to learn about the issues around partnerships. It's very instructive



1714 to me to learn about how you get in with investments, how you bring  
1715 up the area, it really is useful to sort of pick up on this, because  
1716 working as a lawyer for the last 15 years, I've tended to think in tram  
1717 tracks about law and legal matters, and I think what our discussion  
1718 has shown and what the discussions with your colleagues has shown,  
1719 is the fact there is a much, much wider thing that's operating beyond  
1720 that.

1721 And the key thing I suppose, is this sort of \_\_\_\_[1:24:41] agenda really,  
1722 in addition to delivering your services, which you have to do, in terms  
1723 of social care and education and \_\_\_\_[1:24:51] and everything else,  
1724 which is probably sort of a day job that you've got to get right and  
1725 you've got to keep on top of, but in addition to that, from what you've  
1726 said here, you're constantly thinking about how you can improve, how  
1727 you can shape the area, how you get in with investment, how you  
1728 improve the town centre and how you can do these things. It's a  
1729 constant...

1730

1731 Respondent: Yes, but that's all the quality of life isn't it, and it's money that does  
1732 that, and if you can get it through private finance, the private sector  
1733 investing money into it, the people they employ will help to make  
1734 [REDACTED] a better place as well.

1735

1736 Interviewer: Yes, and of course I bet [REDACTED] is pretty much like Liverpool in the  
1737 sense that everybody that's been there loves it.

1738

1739 Respondent: Yes.

1740

1741 Interviewer: We always say in Liverpool that it tends to get bad press from people  
1742 who've never been, and yet it's true you know, because I go round the  
1743 country and speak to people and anybody that's been there says, "Oh  
1744 I loved it." And I trust it's the same here.

1745

1746 Respondent: Yes, I have a very good friend who comes from Liverpool and he says  
1747 there's only a few areas where if you park your car it'll come back and  
1748 there won't be any wheels on it. He said the vast majority of Liverpool  
1749 it's safe to park.

1750

1751 Interviewer: It's true, I think the thing with it is, it's pretty much like Glasgow and  
1752 Belfast for that matter; Belfast is one of my favourite cities, I love it, but  
1753 if you think of those cities as well, I mean they always get a bad  
1754 reputation, a bad press, you know, the same thing, anybody that's  
1755 been there, I mean I've been to Belfast hundreds of times, and  
1756 Glasgow as well, and whenever I go there I always get a very, very  
1757 warm welcome, Newcastle the same, you go there, it's always good.  
1758 So it's really about sort of selling the place isn't it? It's about selling the  
1759 place, keeping everything positive, and I suppose not only that, but  
1760 doing that, going back to your first point, doing that in a context, in an  
1761 environment that's tight financially.

1762 You've got to live within what you've got which gives you pressures  
1763 and constraints, but in doing that, you're still sort of making the case to  
1764 try and drive the area forward. And I think from a public service point  
1765 of view, I don't know about party politics, but from a public service  
1766 point of view, that's got to be highly commended, I mean it really has.

1767

1768 Respondent: Yes, but again I couldn't do that without the excellent staff which we  
1769 have.

1770

1771 Interviewer: Well that's true; that is true, and ■■■ said the same point to me earlier  
1772 in the week; he said exactly the same. He said the thing is – because I  
1773 asked him whether he enjoyed doing what he was doing and he said  
1774 he loved it and everything, but he made that point to me as well, he  
1775 said, "Well the thing is, I'm very fortunate in the sense that the team  
1776 that's here are brilliant; they're all committed." And I must say



1777 councillor, I've worked in about 25 or 30 different authorities because I  
1778 move round on temporary contracts; I go wherever I'm asked to go to  
1779 do whatever I need to do, and I never fail to be amazed by the public  
1780 servants that I come into contact with, which are largely sort of  
1781 planning officers, highways officers, economic development people,  
1782 housing officers, licensing people, and they really do go the extra mile.

1783 And I think particularly in the context where there's difficult financial  
1784 settlement and there are savings to be made and everything else;  
1785 people are juggling things trying to do everything, but what always sort  
1786 of strikes me, there tends to be a good will there and a lot of these  
1787 policies that I've seen tend to run on there, because the sort of public  
1788 service ethic that people want to \_\_\_\_ [1:29:05].

1789

1790 Respondent: Yes, and the same argument I used about politics where most of it is  
1791 in agreement, it goes for the staff as well, because you get the  
1792 negative part because one officer has a bad day and upsets a  
1793 member of the public, that gets the headlines.

1794

1795 Interviewer: Yes, that's right.

1796

1797 Respondent: I've always maintained that in [REDACTED] we get far more  
1798 compliments than we get complaints; I bet that's pretty much the same  
1799 throughout the country.

1800

1801 Interviewer: Yes. It's just not on the front page of the local press, is it?

1802

1803 Respondent: No, I used to beat the drum about this in the 90's when I was  
1804 chairman of leisure services, our compliments far, far outweighed the  
1805 complaints, but the \_\_\_\_ [1:29:54] would only talk about the complaints.

1806

1807 Interviewer: Yes, so you're sort of constantly fighting that battle in terms of getting  
1808 the good news story through aren't you really in terms of trying to do  
1809 it?  
1810

1811 Respondent: Yes, but good news doesn't sell papers.  
1812

1813 Interviewer: No, they don't want it. I think it's brilliant, and from my point of view, as  
1814 somebody who loves the north, loves Yorkshire, I love Lancashire too.  
1815

1816 Respondent: Well we all have our crosses to bear.  
1817

1818 Interviewer: But I think it's brilliant to see [REDACTED] on the up, I really do, I think  
1819 I'll definitely be coming back in 2016 to see \_\_\_\_[1:30:38] I'll definitely  
1820 be doing it, and I've told other people about it as well, about the  
1821 redevelopment and as far as I'm concerned, in terms of trying to get  
1822 tourists here, I'll definitely beat the drum on my side of the Pennines,  
1823 there's no doubt about it.  
1824

1825 Respondent: And hopefully we'll have a much better train system for them to come  
1826 through [REDACTED].  
1827

1828 Interviewer: Well yes that's it, I mean, I suppose the lines – I'm doing this thing, it's  
1829 at Huddersfield University so I sort of go on the other line coming  
1830 through, but you can really make that distinction between the two  
1831 lines, the fast service to Huddersfield from Manchester, and  
1832 \_\_\_\_[1:31:22]. Although that said, the scenery on that route is fantastic,  
1833 and you've got time to look at it, that's the thing.  
1834



1835 Respondent: I think the big difference is though is that you've got relatively new  
1836 trains on the Huddersfield line.

1837

1838 Interviewer: That is true.

1839

1840 Respondent: They're 30 to 40 years old on the [REDACTED].

1841

1842 Interviewer: I know.

1843

1844 Respondent: And some of them were a temporary measure to get through until new  
1845 trains could be sourced, and they're still running.

1846

1847 Interviewer: Yes, I mean one of the comments from Mr Clegg last week at that  
1848 Northern Futures thing, was about these pacer trains, and they're on a  
1849 number of lines, I mean they're on the lines over in Lancashire from  
1850 Preston to Blackpool or whatever, and honestly they are like cattle  
1851 trucks, and I suppose the other issue as well is in terms of the  
1852 investment, it's obviously going to be paid for and this was the point of  
1853 Sir Howard Bernstein, you've got to make the case for it to try and get  
1854 this stuff done. But, I suppose the other thing in terms of trains is  
1855 making them affordable as well, because that's another issue.

1856 I went to Newcastle a couple of weeks ago from Liverpool and it cost  
1857 about £175 to get a ticket and it cost about £80 to get a first class  
1858 ticket to Leeds, you know, they need to try and sort it out, but it's  
1859 about thinking long-term.

1860

1861 Respondent: Yes, but I think the transport is heavily subsidised.

1862

1863 Interviewer: Yes, oh it is.

1864

1865 Respondent: If you compare it to the cost of running a car etc., it's cheap, but  
1866 people somehow don't look at that aspect of it.

1867

1868 Interviewer: Yes.

1869

1870 Respondent: I suppose if the service is right people don't mind so much, I mean...

1871

1872 Interviewer: If there's a regular service, you know when you get there the train's  
1873 going to turn up on time, and you're going to have a comfortable, good  
1874 experience whilst on the train, but if like in [REDACTED] you go down to  
1875 catch a train at 8 o'clock to go to Leeds to work and you stand most of  
1876 the way, it's not a very pleasurable experience.

1877

1878 Respondent: No.

1879

1880 Interviewer: So it's...

1881

1882 Respondent: So you've got the problems on that commuter route into Leeds have  
1883 you as well, on the overcrowding issues?

1884

1885 Interviewer: Yes, I mean it has eased somewhat because a lot of the trains now  
1886 have three carriages; they only had two before and you really were  
1887 packed. Sometimes the train was full when it got to [REDACTED].

1888

1889 Respondent: Oh god.



1890

1891 Interviewer: Yes, I mean we see it on the lines from Liverpool to Manchester, so  
1892 you get to 7.30/8 o'clock it's just absolutely rammed, you know.

1893

1894 Respondent: Yes, but I think as well though, we've got to have an integrated  
1895 ticketing system.

1896

1897 Interviewer: Yes.

1898

1899 Respondent: Similar to London, I think the Oyster card in London is absolutely  
1900 fantastic.

1901

1902 Interviewer: Have they got something similar at the moment in West Yorkshire? Is  
1903 there something?

1904

1905 Respondent: Well it's getting there.

1906

1907 Interviewer: Yes.

1908

1909 Respondent: There's hopefully going to be integrated ticket card for the buses etc.,  
1910 and hopefully on the trains within West Yorkshire, but I should be able  
1911 to use the West Yorkshire Oyster card to go to Manchester, and the  
1912 people in Manchester should be able to use the Manchester Oyster  
1913 card to come to Leeds, because it just makes everything so easy, and  
1914 actually...

1915

1916 Interviewer: And the technology must be there mustn't it?

1917

1918     Respondent:     Well it is; it is in London. Greater London all you need is an Oyster  
1919                             card and you just swipe it as you go through the tube or the bus; it's a  
1920                             fantastic system and we should have the same.

1921

1922     Interviewer:     What's the issue councillor? I mean just while I think on; what's the  
1923                             issue in terms of bus regulation? Is there any issue about re-regulating  
1924                             the buses in terms of...

1925

1926     Respondent:     Well some do, but I'm a firm believer in competition; I think  
1927                             competition drives up standards and lowers prices.

1928

1929     Interviewer:     Yes.

1930

1931     Respondent:     When all these things were run by the councils etc., I don't think the  
1932                             service was as great, I don't think British Rail was as good as it is  
1933                             now. I think the workers at British Rail, I used to think they're  
1934                             supposed to be civil servants and they weren't civil and certainly not  
1935                             servants. And the old thing of the British Rail sandwich, it's the last  
1936                             thing in the world that you wanted, whereas now you can get some  
1937                             reasonable food on the train.

1938

1939     Interviewer:     It's true – it is true, I mean that's certainly improved, I mean we've  
1940                             noticed it I suppose most on the West Coast mainline, but also the  
1941                             East Coast mainline is quite good as well isn't it? I came up to Leeds  
1942                             last week and I was quite impressed by it.

1943

1944     Respondent:     And if you can get cross ticketing, that's – and it does work in London  
1945                             because on London...



1946

1947 Interviewer: But that would be cross ticketing not only for West Yorkshire but  
1948 presumably for Greater Manchester.

1949

1950 Respondent: Yes, but we should be able to build up the agreements between the  
1951 two, and why not?

1952

1953 Interviewer: Yes.

1954

1955 Respondent: They do it in London; if you look at all the different councils in London  
1956 and Greater London, they have their sort of subsidies sorted out  
1957 across London; you've got the different rail companies that you can  
1958 use Oyster from, no matter which station you go out of, it's usually a  
1959 different station that runs trains – a different company that runs the  
1960 main trains from there, but you can use your Oyster card on any of  
1961 those within the Greater London area. You've got the underground  
1962 which is a different system, you've got the buses in London and they  
1963 are not all London transport buses, they're individual; there are private  
1964 companies competing with London as well, the London...

1965

1966 Interviewer: Presumably as well, I mean the scale that – when you think in London,  
1967 sort of 60/70 miles out of London, it's probably a reasonable commute  
1968 for somebody to do, whereas if you look here, 70 odd miles from  
1969 Liverpool to Leeds, everybody would think it was a big effort to try and  
1970 do that.

1971

1972 Respondent: Yes, well it is because we've got a crap infrastructure.

1973

1974 Interviewer: Yes, but it's about building that infrastructure up isn't it, to be able to  
1975 sort of link in.  
1976

1977 Respondent: Yes, I mean we have a daughter who lives in Tenterden in Kent, and  
1978 from [REDACTED] we usually – because Anne doesn't like to change  
1979 platform at Leeds, it's a direct train to London, Kings Cross from  
1980 [REDACTED].  
1981

1982 Interviewer: On that ground central?  
1983

1984 Respondent: Yes, which takes three hours. If they relaxed the rules and there was  
1985 more space on the east coast line that could actually cut out  
1986 Pontefract and it would be two and a half hours to get to London and  
1987 back, journey time. That would actually improve people from [REDACTED] to  
1988 get to London on that service.  
1989

1990 Interviewer: Yes.  
1991

1992 Respondent: And then when we get to London we cross to St Pancras and within  
1993 35 minutes we're in, what's the station that we get off at in Kent? I've  
1994 forgotten what it is, but it's quite a distance down; in the car it usually  
1995 takes me about an hour from the M25 to get there.  
1996

1997 Interviewer: Ah right, so it's quite a way down.  
1998

1999 Respondent: Yes, it used to be the main station for Eurostar in Kent.  
2000

2001 Interviewer: It's not Ashford is it?



2002

2003 Respondent: Ashford, that's it; Ashford International, and then Hayley just usually  
2004 comes and picks us up.

2005

2006 Interviewer: Yes, so it's not a bad \_\_\_\_ [1:40:33].

2007

2008 Respondent: No, and that's the High Speed 1 that we go on from there.

2009

2010 Interviewer: Of course, yes.

2011

2012 Respondent: That's why, not many people have been on the High Speed 1 and see  
2013 the benefit.

2014

2015 Interviewer: I don't think I've been on it but I think I might now.

2016

2017 Respondent: It's a fantastic service and the trains are really comfortable; they're  
2018 good quality trains.

2019

2020 Interviewer: It's good, so it's all back to sorting the infrastructure stuff out isn't it?

2021

2022 Respondent: Yes.

2023

2024 Interviewer: It's fascinating; it is absolutely fascinating for me to sort of pick up on  
2025 this because the thing I think that I have found, in the last three or four  
2026 weeks speaking to people, that I didn't particularly appreciate before,  
2027 there's that with the context of all the stuff in terms of One North and

2028 all the debates around \_\_\_\_ [1:41:25] is the importance, first of all, of  
2029 sorting out infrastructure, and secondly sorting out the issue in terms  
2030 of skills, going back to your point on apprenticeships and getting that  
2031 sorted out.

2032 And it strikes me that if you do that and then sort out the issues  
2033 around digital economy, about broadband and get that sorted, but they  
2034 are really the sort of building blocks, aren't they, in terms of the long-  
2035 term – building long-term economic strength.

2036

2037 Respondent: Yes.

2038

2039 Interviewer: That's brilliant, councillor I really appreciate it, thank you very much,  
2040 absolutely fantastic.

2041

2042 Respondent: Alright, thank you.

2043

2044 Interviewer: As I say [REDACTED] have been...

2045

2046 END AUDIO

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## Annex 9C – Head of Partnerships and Democratic Services

### START AUDIO

1

2

3 Alex:

Basically what happened was I trained originally as a political scientist. I then taught myself government law. I then qualified as a lawyer and sort of moving around all these different places.

6

7

8

I then got the chance to do this Thesis in Public Administration at Huddersfield, which suits me because it's Northern and everybody is friendly, so I am happy with that.

9

10

11

12

13

14

What I am really looking to try to do, is get an understanding in terms of what happens, particularly around partnership working, questions around outsourcing, whether that works, whether it doesn't work. What kind of leadership is needed, what kind of management skills are needed. Whether we think scrutiny works or doesn't work, it is those kind of things.

15

16

17

Obviously there are different aspects of that, I can explore different aspects with different people. Just in terms of your position [REDACTED] just talk me through it, how long have you been at [REDACTED]?

18

19 [REDACTED]:

20

21

Just about seven years but only in post as Head of Democratic and Partnership Services for about four years. I have become fairly familiar with the way in which [REDACTED] operates.

22

23 Alex:

So you were Head of Legal before that?

24

25 [REDACTED]:

26

27

Yes. There are slightly different titles that are used across different authorities, but before becoming Head of Democratic, which effectively is Head of Legal as well, it is not in the title, but it should be.

28

29 Alex: It is on the list isn't it?

30

31 ■: It is yes. I was what is called Legal Services Manager, which was in  
32 charge of the Legal Services Department, then I stepped up when my  
33 predecessor moved on to Wakefield, that is ■ She  
34 was in my role before she went to Wakefield.

35

36 Alex: Oh right.

37

38 ■: She moved on, as I said, four years ago and then I stepped up. But  
39 we deleted the Legal Services Manager post, just because it was a  
40 convenient way of making a saving. So yes that is my role within  
41 ■.

42

43 Alex: Just thinking about ■ generally, what is the top priority here?  
44 I have dug out your community strategy and have been having a look  
45 at that? Is it fair to say top priority is jobs and economic regeneration?

46

47 ■: I think it is up there, but I would probably put alongside that looking  
48 after the vulnerable members of the community, both adult and  
49 children.

50 You may know that we are in intervention at the moment as far as  
51 OFSTED is concerned.

52

53 Alex: I didn't know that.

54



55 ■: Not entirely positive reports on safeguarding of children. We are  
56 hoping to come out of that as the result of the next inspection which is  
57 imminent, but we have been under that process for the last three  
58 years.

59 There is a lot of work that has been done to try to ensure that the  
60 systems and procedures and especially the front line services are  
61 bolstered. As I said, we are hoping that we will come out of that as a  
62 result of the next inspection, which will be before Christmas, we don't  
63 quite know when.

64

65 Alex: So it is on the horizon pretty soon then?

66

67 ■: Well we think it could even be, we could get the call tomorrow  
68 morning, which is the next point at which the inspection can start,  
69 because it is likely to be a four week process, so there is limited time  
70 before Christmas. But obviously that is a significant priority for the  
71 council.

72

73 Alex: How has that impacted on morale?

74

75 ■: Yes, quite significantly. The service in particular, the CYP, Children  
76 and Young People's Service, obviously it is criticism of the practice  
77 that is in place within that service, inevitably has led to concern about  
78 the morale of staff and part of the problem has been with the turnover  
79 of social work staff as well.

80

81 Alex: It is difficult, isn't it, to get people and keep them, in the current  
82 climate?

83

84 ■: Exactly. When we are in the area we are in, I am talking about West  
85 Yorkshire geographically then attracting permanent social work staff is  
86 difficult when they are in demand, and there tends to be a greater  
87 level of pay, certainly within Leeds City Council which is not too far  
88 away if you are working in this area and you can travel to those  
89 places.

90 But we have now in place some very good senior management, and  
91 as I said, we are hoping that we will be able to demonstrate that we  
92 have learned from having had the intervention in place, and the work  
93 that was undertaken, as far as that is concerned, will get us to a  
94 position where...

95

96 Alex: Is that intervention viewed as a positive in terms of a learning  
97 experience?

98

99 ■: Well I suppose it could be viewed as a positive in terms of that, but we  
100 would rather not be in intervention because the next OFSTED review  
101 can go one of two ways. It could place us out of intervention. I  
102 suppose three ways - maintain intervention or the government could  
103 say, "Well you haven't demonstrated that you are able to do what you  
104 need to do without further intervention and we are going to take it  
105 over."

106 Now that would be very, very unwelcome, just because of the financial  
107 cost of it. But you can imagine that if that did happen, the effect on  
108 morale would be devastating. Yes, I mean that is the worst case  
109 scenario.

110

111 Alex: I mean Children's Services, all this business around Rotherham and  
112 everything else, it is a very difficult area anyway. It is a very difficult  
113 area and it is one of these situations where you have got public  
114 servants in terms of social workers, who are very, very committed to it.



115 Quite often it is pretty much a thankless task. They don't go into it for  
116 the money, they go into it because there is a calling there.

117 It can be very difficult and I think if you look at some of these areas  
118 like Rotherham, the day after all that happened, sort of working on the  
119 ground, had to get up and come out the next morning and carry on.

120

121 ■: Exactly, yes, it is not easy to do.

122

123 Alex: It is difficult. Are you content that in terms of corporate leadership on  
124 that, that it is what you expect it to be?

125

126 ■: It is, I think we certainly have had a period where the OFSTED reports  
127 indicated that perhaps there was a lack of understanding and  
128 ownership about the corporate parenting role that I have. But that has  
129 been addressed and certainly the Corporate Leadership Team of  
130 which I am a member. So there is the Chief Exec, the five Directors,  
131 one of whom is the Director of CYP, Head of Finance and myself, sit  
132 on the council's Corporate Leadership Team.

133 We are regularly briefed by the Director about the progress that is  
134 being made and concerns and the need for there to be a better  
135 understanding across all Directorates of the input they could have in  
136 helping with the issues faced by the CYP Department.

137 It is not something that just affects that service, it affects us all. So  
138 there is a good understanding of that and we all do what we can to  
139 help and give support to ■.

140

141 Alex: It is difficult as well trying to get people into those Director posts in  
142 terms of Children's Services, from what I have heard, it is near  
143 impossible.

144

145 ■: Well it is, Somerset have just lost their Director and yes, I was only  
146 speaking to ■ at the back end of last week, he is our  
147 Director of CYP about the fact that yes, there are severe shortages  
148 amongst senior well positioned Directors, for picking up the type of  
149 issues that are being experienced through many local authorities,  
150 because of things that have happened at ■ Somerset,  
151 Rotherham, where is next? That is the concern.

152

153 Alex: It is interesting because I read last week that the Chief Executive of  
154 Doncaster, Jo Miller made the point about Chief Executives that  
155 weren't engaged on the Children's Services they shouldn't be in the  
156 job, she said. So they are making the point that it was regardless of  
157 the background that anybody had, that that was a crucial issue.

158

159 ■: I would be amazed if there was any Chief Exec in any authority these  
160 days with everything that is happening around child sexual exploitation  
161 and the safeguarding generally, if they weren't fully on top of that part  
162 of their brief, they would have to be.

163 I know ■ our Chief Exec certainly is. She is very au fait with  
164 issues that we have.

165

166 Alex: Just thinking about Children's Services on the one side, health and  
167 social care, questions around jobs that are linked to infrastructure and  
168 skills and sorting the economy out. All these things are interlinked  
169 aren't they and presumably you can only get a result on those through  
170 partnership work, is that fair to say?

171

172 ■: I think you are right, increasingly I think these days local authorities  
173 are very unlikely to be able to deliver these major initiatives working in  
174 isolation. We just don't have the budget a lot of the time for doing that.



175 And because of the greater integration that is taking place with health  
176 and with other authorities it wouldn't make a great deal of sense for us  
177 to do things on our own, because we would be either repeating things  
178 that have been done elsewhere within the health service for example,  
179 or operating in isolation and possibly having a counter effect on  
180 something that is taking place within a neighbouring authority.

181 You may be aware Alex that West Yorkshire recently set up a  
182 combined authority?

183

184 Alex: Yes.

185

186 ■: That was in April of this year and that includes ■ as well. The need  
187 to understand quite where that sits as far as regeneration, economic  
188 development, planning infrastructure, transport infrastructure, it is  
189 massively significant and not quite understood yet, as to what  
190 influence it will have across what is regarded as Leeds City region, so  
191 not just the West Yorkshire authorities but wider authorities across the  
192 area.

193

194 Alex: Of course everybody is looking over the Pennines now at the situation  
195 in Greater Manchester after last week.

196

197 ■: Well yes, if you think back, I forget when it was, that Manchester had  
198 its referendum on appointing a Mayor, the appetite for doing that was  
199 practically zero. But the discussion that is taking place at the moment,  
200 because it is Greater Manchester as opposed to Manchester is much  
201 more positive.

202 But yes, there is an absolute understanding that we can't act alone,  
203 we don't have the resources that we used to have to do that, even if  
204 we wanted to, it wouldn't be sensible to do that.

205 Collaboration and partnership working is very much at the forefront of  
206 what we think about when we are doing anything.

207

208 Alex: You do lots of stuff through your Local Strategic Partnerships?

209

210 ■: That is not in existence any longer, it is the Health and Wellbeing  
211 Board that has absorbed what used to be the LSP. So there has been  
212 a shift in emphasis to an extent, which focuses on, I think the Health  
213 and Wellbeing Board is – it's a title that results in there being a  
214 misunderstanding of what its role is, because of health, it tends to be  
215 the case that people think it is to do with just our partnership with the  
216 NHS.

217 Whilst there is a massive part of that with the Clinical Commissioning  
218 Group, the wellbeing element of it brings in a great many other things  
219 that impact upon how the community within ■ needs to be  
220 looked after.

221 If you think about when you are planning road schemes etc., well the  
222 way those are laid out can impact upon whether people have a greater  
223 desire to cycle to work or to walk to work. Which is all to do with health  
224 and wellbeing, because if you want to try to make an environment in  
225 which that could contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

226 But if you are not creating the basic infrastructure which allows people  
227 to think about doing that, and everyone has to jump in a car to get  
228 where they want to go, that is not good.

229

230 Alex: This is the thing, the more you think about this stuff, the more you  
231 realise how it links into everything else. There is nothing that seems to  
232 stand on its own.

233

234 ■: Well no that is right and I think public health coming into the local  
235 authority, I was only talking about this this morning, that trying to



236 embed the public health ethos across all aspects of the authority is  
237 difficult. Because it is a relatively new concept for us to have public  
238 health come back into the responsibility of local government.

239 But when you start to stop and think about the remit that we then have  
240 as being responsible for public health, well you can argue that it  
241 impacts upon practically everything that we do, and whether there is  
242 an understanding yet across all departments of the council that you  
243 need to have one of your checklists being, "What is the impact on  
244 public health?"

245 Now they won't apply to everything but when you are talking about  
246 sustainable transport for example, the vast majority of people that use  
247 the public transport system, the buses within [REDACTED] are  
248 schoolchildren, going back and forth to school.

249 How do we make sure that that is something that results in there being  
250 some health benefit to children, rather than having them constantly on  
251 buses, is there a better way of doing it? Can they cycle to school? Can  
252 they walk to school? So all of that.

253

254 Alex: Presumably it is important to try to think of that so as particularly in  
255 towns where the financial settlement is tight and probably getting  
256 tighter for everybody, there is a chance to bring down some knock on  
257 costs, whether it is in terms of healthcare or whatever it is down the  
258 road?

259

260 [REDACTED]: Well we hope so, because obviously, I forget what the context of the  
261 report was I heard on the radio this morning, but it was talking about, I  
262 think it was actually back in the last week, about obesity and the  
263 bariatric treatment that is afforded to people who have gastric bands  
264 fitted.

265 The argument for doing that is to say, "Well if you prevent the  
266 problems that result from obesity further down the track, and you do



267 the preventative stuff and spend money at the front end, you are  
268 saving money by not having to have the treatment.”

269 It is the same for the local authority, if we can do things at the front  
270 end of the system, again going back to children, preventing childhood  
271 obesity, but also stopping smoking for example, that is our  
272 responsibility within the local authority is to try to have an impact on  
273 that. Teenage pregnancies, all of those things, if we don't spend the  
274 money at the front end, the preventative stuff, we are just storing up  
275 problems for ourselves further down the track.

276

277 Alex: Presumably part of the issue is to get it across to the powers that be  
278 that it is worth putting that money in now, even though you are not  
279 going to see a pay-out for maybe 20 years down the line?

280

281 [REDACTED]: It is that long term. We have got an initiative within [REDACTED] at the  
282 moment for 20 mile per hour zones across a good chunk of the  
283 borough. Now that is designed to try and improve road safety. It will  
284 also create the environment hopefully when more children will be  
285 encouraged to walk and to cycle, because of the reduced traffic  
286 speed.

287 There is also some evidence that the benefit of the air quality will be  
288 enhanced, although there are studies which indicate that that is yet to  
289 be proven if you have cars going slower it doesn't necessarily mean  
290 that the pollution is improved. Some argument is that it is increased  
291 because it is not running the engine at an efficient speed, but the jury  
292 is out on that.

293 So yes, all those things require some fairly long term thinking and that  
294 doesn't always apply to, not just local politicians but national  
295 politicians.

296

297 Alex: While we are just thinking about long term thinking, I attended a  
298 meeting last week with Sir Howard Bernstein, Chief Executive of



299 Manchester, regeneration guru, and he was quite candid about it. He  
300 said the present system is bust, in terms of Whitehall designing what it  
301 is happening to local authorities, deciding from on high. Too much  
302 centralisation, too much control, really going down this agenda about it  
303 is combined authorities in terms of devolution of powers, sort of  
304 pushing powers down.

305 Is it fair to say that if there are moves in that direction, because we  
306 always see that after the General Election and whether politicians go  
307 cold on the idea somewhere down the line. But if there is moves in  
308 that direction, is it fair to say that that might do something to try to deal  
309 with this short term, long term issue?

310

311 ■: You would hope so. I was heavily involved in the work behind setting  
312 up the combined authority, advising not just ■ but also our  
313 West Yorkshire partners.

314 I attended a number of discussions about what the combined authority  
315 (a) was going to be empowered to undertake initially, but what it was  
316 going to have to be prepared to contemplate undertaking as part of its  
317 ethos for being set up, years down the track.

318 One of the things that is within the powers of the combined authority,  
319 which is not yet fully understood, is economic regeneration and  
320 development, but also planning.

321 I think that the way in which the combined authorities will work, is that  
322 they will take on a greater regional responsibility for the regional  
323 planning that needs to take place. I am talking not just about planning  
324 issues themselves, but about transport infrastructure.

325

326 Alex: That needs a higher level doesn't it?

327

328 ■: Well arguably it does.

329

330 Alex: It is pretty strange, because you sort of think back to the 1980s when  
331 the metropolitan county councils were abolished, we have almost  
332 come back full circle.

333

334 ■: One of the things that local politicians are wary about is the  
335 description that has been applied to the combined authority that it will  
336 become West Yorkshire County Council again, which we moved away  
337 from.

338 But I think that if it restricts itself to those issues, that is, as I said  
339 infrastructure, regional developments and planning, and then it will  
340 almost inevitably have to leave the other areas of local government to  
341 the district councils. So for example ■ will still have to be  
342 responsible then for adult and children's safeguarding, housing and all  
343 the other stuff would go to the combined authority.

344 Whether that is something that will happen within, I don't think it will  
345 happen within the short term, but maybe ten years down the line, who  
346 knows? It will be interesting to see what happens in Manchester,  
347 because I think that will be regarded within Leeds as, "If Manchester is  
348 doing that, why shouldn't we?"

349

350 Alex: I think that Leeds is regarded as the next one to come on track. ■  
351 Clegg said last week that Leeds was the next one, Sheffield, they  
352 were the next.

353

354 ■: He would say Sheffield.

355

356 Alex: Yes, he would say Sheffield, that they were the next ones.

357 Of course in Liverpool we had difficulties with the combined authority  
358 because there is, whereas in Manchester there has been this  
359 collaboration which has gone on for years, through AGMA and the ten  
360 local authorities.



361 In Merseyside we have got severe problems about guarding turf and  
362 personalities.

363

364 ■: And that is a fundamental obstacle because if you can't get that right,  
365 you are not going to get the co-operation that you need. There needs  
366 to be that recognition of not protecting a locality but the wider region.

367

368 Alex: What about the spatial planning issue in terms of the combined  
369 authority? I spoke to the leader of ■ last week, and they have  
370 the debate down there with ■ and they have got problems  
371 down there with the West Midlands authorities working together,  
372 because they don't talk to each other, and there is all that sort of stuff  
373 going on.

374 He said to me that one of the basic problems he had with that was that  
375 planning issues for ■ being decided by ■ Is there a  
376 similar issue here? Can you see it being decided in Leeds or  
377 ■?

378

379 ■: There will be. The discussions that have taken place, we had to be  
380 very careful throughout all of the, not negotiations but all of the  
381 planning on the governance structures for the combined authority, to  
382 ensure that as part of the requirement for central government that the  
383 combined authority had the power to deal with planning issues, that it  
384 wasn't something that was given a high profile.

385 I know the ■ members, it probably stands true for all of the  
386 West Yorkshire members, there was just no appetite at this stage for  
387 them to give up their ability to determine what happens within their  
388 own region on planning issues.

389 That will be I think a significant obstacle to overcome, because if you  
390 look at an area like ■ it is a very distinct area.

391

392 Alex: It is, one of my favourite areas I must say. I love it. I first visited here  
393 about 20 years ago when I was a student at Liverpool University. I  
394 used to travel around [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] it is  
395 a brilliant place.

396

397 [REDACTED]: It is and it has got quite distinctive, even within the fairly, well it is not a  
398 small area, but you have quite distinctive areas which have their own  
399 character. Even within [REDACTED] you look at the upper valley,  
400 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] the Fell Tops, very, very different from  
401 [REDACTED] and from Brighouse.

402 Now you can imagine therefore that trying to get an understanding of  
403 what is going to benefit those communities by way of planning  
404 applications, local politicians would regard giving the power to  
405 determine an application that sits in one of those areas to somebody  
406 sitting in Leeds, without the understanding of the local knowledge, as  
407 being an incredibly difficult hurdle to overcome.

408 Where is it you live Nancy?

409

410 Nancy: Huddersfield.

411

412 [REDACTED]: Huddersfield, so you travel into [REDACTED]?

413

414 Nancy: Yes.

415

416 [REDACTED]: Do you know [REDACTED] that well? Do you spend most of your leisure  
417 time presumably over in Huddersfield?

418



419 Nancy: Well it depends, because my friends are all from [REDACTED] so that  
420 means coming to [REDACTED] But I live on the outskirts of Huddersfield,  
421 but more near [REDACTED] and Brighouse.

422

423 [REDACTED]: I see, so towards the [REDACTED] boundary.

424

425 Nancy: It is not like you have to go through Huddersfield, so it is not so bad,  
426 but with family it is more Huddersfield areas for leisure but with friends  
427 it's more [REDACTED].

428

429 [REDACTED]: I don't live in [REDACTED] so I get to know the area mostly from going  
430 out to meetings through work. But the way I describe [REDACTED] as  
431 being quite distinctive, that area of the Brighouse and [REDACTED] areas,  
432 is very, very different from [REDACTED].

433

434 Nancy: Yes.

435

436 [REDACTED]: [REDACTED] has got this reputation as being quite a cookie sort of  
437 place.

438

439 Alex: It has been gentrified hasn't it? I went there about 18 months ago and  
440 I hadn't been there for a number of years and I was amazed at the  
441 way they had...

442

443 [REDACTED]: Do you get to go to [REDACTED] at all, or is it too far?

444

445 Nancy: It is quite far, but I have been quite a few times.

446

447 Alex: It is worth the trip isn't it?

448 (Laughter)

449

450 Nancy: It is different, real different.

451

452 ■: So you can imagine, the local politicians have a very keen affinity with  
453 the local area, and I have heard it said that the last thing that they  
454 would want to do is give up the control that they have over what  
455 happens in that area.

456

457 Alex: I can understand.

458

459 ■: They will get criticised...

460

461 Alex: All politics is local isn't it again?

462 (Laughter)

463

464 ■: Yes, and where does that sit then with the combined authority with the  
465 Localism Act, which is designed to try to give a greater control to local  
466 neighbourhoods for their own planning regime. Neighbourhood plans  
467 which dictate to some extent the sort of development that  
468 neighbourhoods want to see within their area.

469 Well if you are doing that how can you possibly...?

470

471 Alex: I am not sure that was ever thought through.



472 (Laughter)

473

474 ■: Well how does it sit with the combined authority model then? If you  
475 take special planning, as you said, and put it in a big regional  
476 authority, that works very well for the economic industrial parks etc.,  
477 where do you site those? Where are the best transport links for putting  
478 up the next industrial park? That is sensible.

479 I guarantee that everyone will say, "Well not near us please." So yes,  
480 there are certainly tensions that will have to be explored as part of  
481 that.

482

483 Alex: Just touching on that, just thinking about partnerships generally and  
484 the combined authority, in terms of challenges in terms of leadership,  
485 how do you see that? It is not going to be an easy ride is it? Any of  
486 this stuff, nothing is easy.

487

488 ■: It has been quite a tame ride thus far. The combined authority meets, I  
489 don't think it has the profile that it needs to have just yet. It isn't  
490 scrutinised in the way that I thought it might be, and that is possibly  
491 because at the moment it isn't making any controversial decisions,  
492 despite the fact that it has a certain level of power that has been given  
493 to it.

494 Whether the announcement that David Cameron made this morning  
495 about £15bn transport fund and where that will then have to be  
496 decided. Because you can imagine, all the authorities within West  
497 Yorkshire and ■ will have their pet schemes.

498 We have one which tries to improve the transport link between ■  
499 and Huddersfield, going up on the A629, the big one that goes up the  
500 hill.

501 So there is a view that we will have within [REDACTED] of that, whatever  
502 money comes to us from that fund will need to be spent on improving  
503 the transport [REDACTED] links between ourselves and Huddersfield.

504 But there will be an argument in Leeds that there are better schemes  
505 placed there, similarly in [REDACTED] We are desperate within  
506 [REDACTED] for an upgrade of the electrified rail line and a better link  
507 between ourselves, Leeds and Manchester. But that has been  
508 something that has been talked about for some time, it is what we  
509 would want.

510

511 Alex: How crucial is that?

512

513 [REDACTED]: I think it is absolutely vital.

514

515 Alex: It takes ages to trundle through on that train across the Pennines  
516 doesn't it?

517 (Laughter)

518

519 [REDACTED]: It does, and if you talk to the politicians about it, they have, to be fair to  
520 them, have both political persuasions, Labour and Conservative have  
521 been arguing consistently that that is a scheme that needs to be the  
522 top of the list of priorities.

523 Yes, who knows where that will go, we need an enhanced and  
524 upgraded station and platforms within [REDACTED] but all of that is a lot  
525 of money. You are talking about tens of millions of pounds of schemes  
526 to do that.

527 But with that, if you are upgrading your transport infrastructure then  
528 you have to be prepared to upgrade your industrial infrastructure as  
529 well and have...



530

531 Alex: So you have got it all linked in again.

532

533 ■: Yes, you are not going to have part of those designed if you increased  
534 the transport you are going to bring hopefully economic regeneration  
535 and inward investment into the area. Well you have got to put it  
536 somewhere, so you can't consistently say we want the transport links  
537 but we don't want to have the factories or the sheds.

538

539 Alex: Presumably if you get that you have then got the issue of, "How do we  
540 skill people up to take these jobs?"

541

542 ■: Well there is that, and also where do you put the people by way of  
543 housing? Because ■ it's geographical, topographical profile,  
544 it is not brilliant. You are talking about the further up the manor you go,  
545 you have got valleys which are difficult to place any form of significant  
546 levels of housing.

547 So there are all those different issues at play.

548

549 Alex: What is your travel to work area like at ■ Does it rely on  
550 Greater Manchester? Or is it Leeds? What is the pattern?

551

552 ■: It is coming in more from Leeds than from Manchester. I don't think  
553 Manchester is something that feeds into us a great deal, because it is  
554 not that easy to get to. If you are travelling by car it is a nightmare on  
555 the M62.

556 The rail link is not brilliant, so I think we are not a massive inward  
557 attractor of commuters. A lot of people travel out from ■ to  
558 go and work elsewhere. So the more we can improve our transport the

559 better we can be by way of attracting people to come into [REDACTED]  
560 but we have to give them jobs to do that.

561

562 Alex: What is the situation in terms of HS2 and [REDACTED]?

563

564 [REDACTED]: We benefit from it but there won't be a direct spur coming in to us, as  
565 far as I am aware. Yes, we will hopefully benefit from it.

566

567 Alex: You are sort of in the middle of that 'Y' aren't you?

568

569 [REDACTED]: It will bypass us to an extent, unless we get our own upgrade as part  
570 of our electrification of the [REDACTED] it's called. So we would  
571 need that on the back of HS2.

572

573 Alex: And that HS3 that was being talked about, about a new line across the  
574 Pennines, that wasn't going to come to [REDACTED] at all presumably?

575

576 [REDACTED]: No.

577

578 Alex: So the crucial thing is to upgrade that [REDACTED]?

579

580 [REDACTED]: Absolutely.

581

582 Alex: It is interesting how all these things link together isn't it?

583



584 ■: Well yes, it is a massive jigsaw, it is trying to get a handle of how it all  
585 pans out and yes the responsibility that we have as a council for trying  
586 to knit that all together.

587

588 Alex: Just on that point about responsibility, thinking about community  
589 leadership and the 2000 Act and all that, and thinking about how the  
590 council sits with partnerships. How important is that community  
591 leadership role, given that the council is the only one in it that has got  
592 any democratic identity?

593

594 ■: Interesting point because one of the things that has become apparent  
595 with the budget cuts that have been effected over the last two, three,  
596 four years and will continue to be effected over the next two, three,  
597 four years, is trying to move away from the council being regarded as  
598 the body of first resort.

599 In other words, if something was to go wrong within a family then at  
600 the moment it is the case of, well it is the council that will be the body  
601 that you turn to, to sort it out. Quite often what we would like perhaps  
602 to move towards being is an authority or a body that signposts people  
603 to where they can get help and not being the organisation that  
604 provides that.

605 That is a difficult position to get to because like it or not local  
606 government has that role and for it to start moving away from that and  
607 become a commissioner is changing a cultural way of looking at things  
608 and you also then need to also have in place the organisations to  
609 whom you can signpost people.

610 That is going to take a fairly marked shift in how funding is set up to  
611 allow that. So for example, if you have got people who come with, as  
612 the population increasingly gets older, the services that we provide for  
613 vulnerable adults and care home facilities and all of the rest of it, like  
614 residential homes etc., should we be the organisation that is seen as  
615 capable of providing that? Or do we just try to make sure that there

616 are either the voluntary sector or private organisations that provide  
617 that, but we just signpost people off to that?

618

619 Alex: Presumably, given the tight financial settlement that everybody is  
620 working within, I suppose there is a question whether down the line  
621 you will get local authorities only delivering statutory services and  
622 nothing else?

623

624 ■: I forget the graph of doom that was being talked about.

625

626 Alex: The graph of doom yes.

627

628 ■: Was one that depicted the spend on just adult social services alone,  
629 because of the increasing population, expanding to take up the whole  
630 of the predicted budget that was available for local authorities.

631 Well I think that has been criticised to some extent for the way in  
632 which it was depicted, because it won't happen that way. But there is  
633 an element of truth in that, that because we have a population that we  
634 know is going to get older and increase and with the increases in  
635 medical help, people are living longer and living with more problems  
636 unfortunately. The money is going to have to come from somewhere,  
637 so there are some very, very difficult questions to be answered.

638 Your generation Nancy will inherit a great deal of the problems that  
639 are currently there and I have got two sons who are not much older  
640 than you and I do worry about what we are handing on to you,  
641 because, not to worry...

642 (Laughter)

643

644 Alex: Don't get depressed over it.



645

646 ■: You know there will be significant challenges that you have with the  
647 demographics alone, depicting that there will be fewer people of your  
648 age to provide for the income, the taxes that then are spent on looking  
649 after a population that in 20 years' time, getting old and etc.

650

651 Alex: This stuff is not cheap either is it? When you are talking about social  
652 care it really isn't cheap. I suppose if you have got a declining  
653 population. I know the other authorities have said to me that the  
654 problem that they have got is their population hollows out, particularly  
655 in the North of England, whereby they will lose people.

656 They all come up here to University and then once they are 21 they all  
657 disappear down South. Then they all come back later on.

658 The difficulty is that you will lose that sort of economic productiveness  
659 in terms of trying to sort it out.

660

661 ■: It is not all doom and gloom.

662

663 Alex: No, it's not. I think in reality I think a lot of places like ■ need  
664 to build on is about the attractiveness of the place to live really. With a  
665 lot of these Northern places they are very good culturally, they are  
666 very good in terms of the character and trying to promote that.

667

668 ■: Yes let's keep that secret, we don't want all the Southerners coming  
669 up.

670

671 Alex: That's right, we won't tell them you see.

672 (Laughter)

673 But the thing about it is, it is a bit like Liverpool, it gets a bad press  
674 from everybody who has never been, and when you speak to people  
675 who have been they love it, we sort of get used to that.

676 It is very interesting to get your views on this, I am really grateful and I  
677 am grateful for your input as well in terms of what happens in  
678 Huddersfield, how you view the links between the two areas.

679 I am very much getting the impression that partnerships are the way  
680 forward and there is not really any way out of that. We are in a difficult  
681 situation that we might have to re-think issues about governance, we  
682 might have to re-think issues about scrutiny and there might be a  
683 debate about structures but to underline it all is that it is going to work  
684 in partnership.

685 Presumably in terms of outsourcing services, is it fair to say, because I  
686 did not have this view when I started out on this, but from speaking to  
687 people, is it fair to say now that nobody cares about that issue that  
688 much, provided the services are provided, providing you sort out the  
689 contract management stuff.

690 Is it as ideological as it once was? Because when all this stuff was  
691 brought in in the 1980s it was all politically viewed.

692

693 ■: I think within this area, within West Yorkshire there is a greater desire  
694 to ensure that we collaborate amongst ourselves as much as we  
695 possibly can.

696

697 Alex: In terms of shared services and stuff?

698

699 ■: Yes, before we look at outsourcing. Now that isn't to say that I don't  
700 think there is any ideological concern about outsourcing, but I think  
701 there is a recognition that we can create efficiencies, (a) within  
702 individual authorities first, before we get to a position where we can  
703 say, "Okay, we recognise that we haven't been doing this particular



704 area of work in as efficient a way as possible, let's make sure that we  
705 put that right."

706 Then if there is an opportunity for then saying, "Now that we have  
707 made the savings for ourselves, is there a way of doing it, or having it  
708 done better and cheaper?"

709 We are not handing over a vastly inefficient system to a private  
710 organisation and they come in and say, "Thanks very much, we will  
711 make all these savings for ourselves, and provide you with a service  
712 that you could have provided yourself if you had had the time and  
713 effort."

714 We are doing that within [REDACTED] recognising that we need to do  
715 that.

716 But then the next step of that is to say, "Having done that and having  
717 created the efficiencies ourselves, is there an opportunity to  
718 collaborate with a neighbouring authority on economies of scale for  
719 things such as the payroll systems that we all operate, HR services,  
720 transport, repair work, legal services. Can we provide those things  
721 better by having greater collaboration?"

722 Only then do you get to a position where you say, "If we can't or if  
723 there is no appetite for doing that, is it something that we would then  
724 look at outsourcing?"

725 I don't think there is any concern about outsourcing...

726

727 Alex: From an ideological point of view?

728

729 [REDACTED]: No, I think politicians though would want to ensure that we have done  
730 all we can first to make sure that we are as efficient as we possibly  
731 can be, and that has certainly happened within [REDACTED] with our,  
732 what is called facilities management system. So things like looking  
733 after the buildings and the security systems that we have. Cleaning of  
734 the buildings, repairs and maintenance for example.



735 What we recognised for ourselves was that we had, over the years  
736 developed an inefficient way of doing that, because we allowed, quite  
737 a strange way where we had our estate managed.

738 If a building was being used by a Directorate then it was that  
739 Directorate that was responsible for that building. So you then had a  
740 vast number of buildings across the authority being looked after the  
741 Economy and Environment Department, by the Communities  
742 Directorate, by CYP, by Adult Health and Social Care.

743 It wasn't always the case that they would talk to each other about  
744 getting in one contractor. So for example, for the disposal of  
745 confidential waste, you might have as many as a dozen separate  
746 contractors coming into the authority dealing with our confidential  
747 waste, because each Directorate, responsible for a building was going  
748 out and procuring their own.

749 Now we have put a vast number of those things right, but that applied  
750 across things like the provision of hand towels in the toilets across the  
751 authority. Well we had, I am not exaggerating, probably upwards of a  
752 dozen different suppliers. Well you can't begin to negotiate a sensible  
753 contract that way.

754 We knew why, and the debate we had internally within the authority  
755 was, recognising that we have that inefficient system, is it better to go  
756 out and procure what was called a total FM package to get an outside  
757 provider to come and say, "We can do all of that for you."

758 The concern I expressed, amongst a number of other people was that,  
759 "You are just handing over the savings to that external provider,  
760 because we know we are inefficient. Therefore let us make the  
761 savings ourselves by rationalising all our contracts, ending a number  
762 of the systems in place where local contractors had a certain level of  
763 business provided to them. Well can they provider more by doing it for  
764 a bigger number of properties within the authority?"

765 We are on with that and we have got to a position now where I think  
766 we are ready to think about whether we should be going and looking  
767 for a better solution now, having created those efficiencies ourselves.



768

769 Alex: What is the situation about contract management? Are you pleased  
770 with it?

771

772 ■: No.

773

774 Alex: We all look at the situation about Southwest One and causing a 3,000  
775 paying contract and all that.

776

777 ■: Again it is one of those issues that I don't think local government has  
778 been good at doing, where you negotiate, it can be a multi-million  
779 pound contract and you then put the contract on the ■ and very  
780 rarely pull it off, to ensure that you hold the contractor to the provisions  
781 of the contract.

782

783 Alex: When the legal department gets a ring.

784

785 ■: Yes, when it goes wrong. I think we are getting better at doing that  
786 and what Alex is talking about Nancy is where you have, well certainly  
787 it will be the same within Huddersfield, that you have – most people  
788 when you talk about services provided by the council think about bin  
789 collection. That is the one thing where everyone has a bin collected.

790

791 Alex: That's the thing you know, the bins and the burials. Somebody once  
792 said to me, "We don't trust you with anything else, it is bins and burials  
793 and that is it."

794

795 ■: The other thing, sorry to lower the tone, is cleaning up dog poo, that is  
796 the other thing we do. But on the bin collection, within ■ a  
797 seven year contract, you are talking about maybe a £60m contract, so  
798 significant amounts of money for collecting rubbish.

799 The work that goes into the writing of that contract, our contract for our  
800 waste collection service is up for renewal in August of 2016, so just  
801 over two years away. We are already starting the work now on writing  
802 the contract, or the processes that it will have to take in, so that come  
803 August 2016 we can give it to whichever contractor wins it.

804 When you are talking about a contract that can be as big as this, and  
805 within that contract there will be detailed provisions for how they go  
806 about providing the service, at what cost and what are the penalties  
807 for example if they don't get it right, if they miss collections, if they  
808 don't provide a certain amount of recycling.

809 What Alex is talking about is that quite often the contract management  
810 just doesn't happen.

811

812 Alex: You let them off the hook basically?

813

814 ■: Yes, you allow a contractor to get in and do it, they miss collections  
815 and you go, "It is okay, you will get it right next time." Over the years  
816 what local authorities have not been good at doing is holding  
817 contractors to account.

818 In the private sector it happens where the bottom line is, the profit that  
819 is made, somebody asking a company to provide a service to them,  
820 will say, "You have to provide that service, that is what we pay you to  
821 do. If you don't get it right we are either going to ■ you for damages  
822 for not getting it right, or tell you to get it right." Local authorities have  
823 not been good at doing that and we need to get better.

824 I think there is a recognition we need to get better.

825



826 Alex: I think that message is pretty much coming to me across the board, in  
827 terms of lessons to be learned, that is one thing that everybody needs  
828 to try and catch up on.

829

830 ■: I will give you an example of where we recognise it needs to happen.  
831 We have just let our £20m construction contract for the refurbishment  
832 of the ■ ■.

833

834 Alex: I love that building. I have just had a look at it now actually on the way  
835 in, it is fantastic isn't it?

836

837 ■: There is a new library going to be built towards the bottom end of that,  
838 so the combined spend on a brand new library, which looks fantastic  
839 on paper, the whole thing will look fantastic when it is built, and the  
840 refurbishment of the ■ ■ we are looking at about a £20m to  
841 £22m spend in total.

842 Again that is work that has taken two and a half years to get to this  
843 point. What we recognised was that we have got a construction  
844 partner who is going to be expected to receive that amount of money  
845 in providing to us a refurbished ■ ■ and a new library.

846 We have just appointed, which we have often done, a Contract  
847 Manager for managing that contract. So whilst we have got a lot of  
848 people who have been involved in the process of getting us to where  
849 we need to get to, what we now have is a specialist in saying, "I am  
850 going to keep an eye on whether the contractor is providing exactly  
851 what is expected of it within the contract."

852

853 Alex: That is a massive step forward in terms of local authorities isn't it?

854

855 ■: Well it is because, and you have probably been in the ■ ■ it is  
856 an iconic building.

857

858 Alex: Oh it is brilliant. I loved it 20 years ago when I first saw it.

859

860 ■: But it was underused, what did happen in there really?

861

862 Alex: There were empty units in there wasn't there?

863

864 ■: Yes, because of the size of those units. They were designed originally  
865 for the display of wool by merchants going in, that is why the wool  
866 shops is called what it was, because the traders would go into the  
867 ■ ■ in the right sort of areas, and put on their display, the wool  
868 that they had for sale.

869

870 Alex: The character of the place, it is wonderful isn't it?

871

872 ■: But the problems that created because of the size of those units, they  
873 are not brilliant to try to get other retailers to come in there, is very  
874 difficult, just because of the size of the units.

875 We are hoping it will be very, very different when it re-opens in  
876 summer of 2016.

877

878 Alex: Summer of 2016?

879

880 ■: That is the plan.

881



882 Alex: I will definitely make sure that I come back over to have a look at it. I  
883 think it is brilliant, it is one of those jewel in the crown things isn't it?

884

885 [REDACTED]: Well hopefully my description of our Project Manager will mean that it  
886 is on track and on time and on budget.

887 (Laughter)

888

889 Nancy: Are you going to make it look more modern?

890

891 [REDACTED]: To some extent. Obviously it is a listed building, so there is a limited  
892 extent to what you can do with it. But the link between the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
893 and the library, which will look a very modern looking building, but  
894 hopefully, I think in architectural terms it is sympathetic to the [REDACTED]  
895 [REDACTED].

896 The Central Piazza will hopefully be a much more useable space than  
897 it is now. It will have areas for seating and for relaxing and the shops  
898 around it and the restaurants around the outside will hopefully bring  
899 people in, so that you will want to go there, as opposed to just walking  
900 through it and occasionally going to an activity, you will want to go  
901 there as a destination.

902 With it linked to the library as well and to the Square Chapel, which is  
903 just below it, they are on with doing their own extension as well. So  
904 that whole area should be fantastic.

905

906 Alex: It is really about bringing these buildings back to life isn't it, making  
907 sure that they have got a use and that they don't just decay and it is  
908 about keeping them.

909

910 ■: Well there is an architectural book that is out there, which is a coffee  
911 table book, which talks about the ■ ■ as being one of the 20  
912 most important public squares in the world, architecturally.

913

914 Alex: I knew it was fantastic.

915 (Laughter)

916

917 ■: Well if you think if that was in an Italian city it would be fantastic.

918

919 Alex: Yes, you are right. It is a real showcase.

920

921 ■: Well let us hope that that is money well spent, because it is a lot of  
922 money to spend on it, but hopefully it will be worth it.

923

924 Alex: Just one other question. In terms of, if we are moving towards this  
925 model of a commissioning authority, what does that say to you about  
926 accountability in general terms? It raises an issue doesn't it?

927

928 ■: It does, it is interesting. That is one view, whether it will happen,  
929 obviously a great many things need to fit into place for that to happen,  
930 both political will and an element of realism as to what local authorities  
931 can provide.

932 Accountability, yes, because we have often had the discussion that if  
933 you think about the ability that we have as an authority to undertake  
934 what are known as community asset transfers of buildings. We have  
935 done a number within ■ so the concern that is expressed  
936 quite often by politicians though is that if you transfer an asset or  
937 transfer a service into a trust model for example, the general public  
938 won't understand that nuance and will still regard it as the council.



939 So if we are a commissioning authority will there be still a tendency for  
940 people to regard the council as being responsible for something, even  
941 though it isn't our responsibility, it has been transferred into a trust.

942 Politicians will be anxious about that, because they won't thank the  
943 system for providing them with the perception of accountability but not  
944 actual responsibility or not actual control over what is happening.

945 So getting that model right is going to be difficult. Then, if it is  
946 accountability, well at the moment we are fairly open and transparent  
947 about the local government system.

948 If you start creating trusts or separate companies, I suppose there are  
949 two questions, do they need to understand what the systems are?  
950 And, so long as the systems work does there have to be that level of  
951 accountability that exists at the moment? Who knows?

952

953 Alex: Presumably you will only get that question asked if something goes  
954 wrong, and then suddenly [Crosstalk 0:56:23] somebody to blame.

955

956 ■: That's the problem, if everything works well...

957

958 Alex: Nobody cares do they?

959

960 ■: No, it is when it goes wrong people look to say, "Whose fault is this?  
961 Who is responsible for it? Who is to blame for it?"

962 You do need to have those clear lines of accountability, clear lines of  
963 governance. But yes, it only ever becomes important...

964

965 Alex: Yes, you get the contracts out when there is a problem?

966

967     ■■■:                    Yes.

968

969     Alex:                    Final question, I have asked everybody, despite all the challenges I  
970                                presume you enjoy it, in terms of what you do?

971

972     ■■■:                    I love it. I like coming to work.

973

974     Alex:                    What is your motivation? Public service?

975

976     ■■■:                    It is seeing things delivered. I mean the combined authority was one,  
977                                the ■■■ ■■■ A great deal of what I do personally is behind the  
978                                scenes and I am not one for looking for the recognition from that,  
979                                because I get a quiet satisfaction in knowing the contribution I have  
980                                made to something.

981                                But hopefully yes, the work that I have put in personally in dealing with  
982                                some of the big issues that we have, will allow things to develop.

983                                My role as being the Chief Legal Officer for the Council means that a  
984                                great deal of the decisions that are taken have an input from me, and  
985                                that requires sometimes a fairly challenging weighing up of issues and  
986                                being prepared to be pragmatic. But also being prepared to take  
987                                responsibility for saying, "No that can't happen."

988

989     Alex:                    That is not always easy is it?

990

991     ■■■:                    No it is not.

992



993 Alex: That is not always easy. I have worked in authorities where  
994 sometimes that has been a difficulty in terms of, on occasions [cloud  
995 0:58:31] departments not wanting to take legal advice. You do get it.  
996

997 ■: Well exactly, you do and that is part of why I enjoy the job that I do,  
998 because no two days are the same. I can come into work thinking, "I  
999 have got this, this, this and this to do." Something will happen, which  
1000 creates an interesting problem to solve.  
1001

1002 Alex: So before you get on to your list, you have got three other things to  
1003 do?  
1004

1005 ■: You don't even put onto the list, it just doesn't happen. There are days  
1006 where that happens and it is exhilarating, because of what happens.  
1007 If anyone says that local government is boring, they have either never  
1008 worked in local government or they have and they didn't...  
1009

1010 Alex: Didn't embrace it?  
1011

1012 ■: Exactly. As I said, I thoroughly enjoy coming to work and that is  
1013 helped by the fact that the teams which I am responsible for are very  
1014 committed to what they do. There is a level of responsibility that they  
1015 want to make a difference and do the best that they can do.  
1016 I think the old perception of local government as being an easy ride  
1017 has long gone.  
1018

1019 Alex: I think you are right. I have probably been around about 25 to 30  
1020 different authorities now, in some different places and they have all  
1021 got their own challenges and their own issues and their own problems,

1022 and there are always difficulties. Particularly in the last three or four  
1023 years, with the budget cuts that are going around, you have seen how  
1024 difficult it has been.

1025 Particularly in terms of morale and stuff. But the thing that has really  
1026 struck me is that public servants that I have come across, whether  
1027 they are the planning officers, housing officers, environmental health  
1028 people, high risk people, is that they really all go over and above to be  
1029 able to try to deliver a service.

1030 Sometimes it is in a situation where there is a difficult backdrop but  
1031 they really have still done it. That is pretty much a similar thing really  
1032 that drives me, as a public service.

1033

1034 ■: We see it increasingly where there have been cuts across staff and  
1035 the level of work required hasn't reduced and therefore people  
1036 increasingly step up to cover the extra work involved.

1037 You see it regularly where people are working over and above what is  
1038 required of them just to get the job done.

1039

1040 Alex: That is true. I think a lot of authorities rely on goodwill to get the job  
1041 done.

1042

1043 ■: Yes and the vast majority of time people are prepared to put that in,  
1044 because they enjoy what they do, which is great.

1045

1046 Alex: Very grateful to you both for that, I think it is fantastic. Really useful to  
1047 get an insight from somebody who is dealing with it rather than just  
1048 reading books, what I am supposed to say. Very, very useful.

1049

1050 ■: Good. So have you got meetings set up with the Chief Executive?



1051

1052 Alex: Yes I have, I am seeing your Scrutiny Officer tomorrow.

1053

1054 [REDACTED]: Okay, which one?

1055

1056 Alex: [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

1057

1058 [REDACTED]: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] yes.

1059

1060 Alex: I am seeing your Council Leader on Thursday and I am seeing your  
1061 Chief Executive on Friday, so it is going to be a good week.

1062

1063 [REDACTED]: Well hopefully you will get a different but similar perspective from  
1064 those three. I am sure there will be fascinating discussions, as all  
1065 three of them have been in local government for some time and I can  
1066 guarantee you will have a good three meetings.

1067

1068 Alex: It is brilliant. It really is good for me to get around and speak to people.

1069

1070 [REDACTED]: So when can we read your Thesis?

1071

1072 Alex: It might bore you to death, that is the only problem.

1073 (Laughter)

1074 I am looking to complete it in the spring, so hopefully at the moment I  
1075 have got a target hand in date for March 17<sup>th</sup>, so I am hoping to crack  
1076 on.

1077

1078 ■: So any significance with that being St. Patrick's Day?

1079

1080 Alex: It is, it is, that is my plan at the moment, I don't want it to slip, I want to  
1081 try to get it in. But thanks to your efforts and your assistance I should  
1082 be able to do it.

1083 Any excuse to come to ■ as well.

1084 (Laughter)

1085

1086 ■: Good, I am glad we could help.

1087

1088 Alex: Thank you very much sir, thank you.

1089

1090 END AUDIO

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1092

1093



## Annex 9D – Scrutiny Interview

1 START AUDIO

2

3 Interviewer: That's on.

4

5 Respondent: Just to remind me, what do you do? What is it for?

6

7 Interviewer: What it is is I'm doing a course at Huddersfield University on public  
8 administration. I'm looking in particular at local authorities, how they  
9 work, governance on the one side and accountability on the other.

10 On the governance side I'm looking at things like outsourcing of  
11 partnerships and what happens, because it's all more complicated  
12 than it used to be of course, and on the accountability side I'm looking  
13 at scrutiny. It's really on that scrutiny that I just want to pick your  
14 brains. Basically, I've spoken to...

15

16 Respondent: Have you been to any other authorities?

17

18 Interviewer: I have; I have. I've been to one authority down in the West Midlands,  
19 who were very helpful. I'm seeing yourselves and I'm seeing another  
20 authority in the West Yorkshire area, so hopefully at the end of it I'll  
21 have three, which should give me a good idea in terms of what  
22 happens.

23

24 Respondent: Yes.

25

- 26 Interviewer: Just in terms of scrutiny, I've had a bit of a look at stuff on your  
27 website just to get an idea of what goes on. Just talk me through, if  
28 you can, just in terms of the operation of it. You've got five scrutiny  
29 panels, is that correct?
- 30
- 31 Respondent: We've got five scrutiny panels, yes. They more or less match the  
32 structure of the council, which there are pluses and minuses about, I  
33 think – possibly more minuses than plus. I think you end up... If you  
34 have a structure of scrutiny panels that matches the officer structure of  
35 the council, then it's harder to move away from the old committee  
36 model, I think.
- 37
- 38 Interviewer: Yes.
- 39
- 40 Respondent: It also gives perhaps disproportionate influence to the director, so I'm  
41 always quite keen when we can manage to get the Director of  
42 Economy and Environment to report to a different scrutiny panel about  
43 a particular issue – not that I want to make his life a misery, but it gets  
44 him out of his comfort zone. You can get too cosy otherwise, or there's  
45 a risk of being too cosy.
- 46
- 47 Interviewer: I suppose as well that a lot of these issues – I was talking to ■■■  
48 yesterday about social care stuff and talking about jobs and  
49 regeneration – the thing is that all these issues link in, don't they?  
50 They all link together. If you look at jobs, you need to look at  
51 infrastructure and skills.
- 52
- 53 Respondent: Absolutely.
- 54
- 55 Interviewer: They all sort of tie in, really.



56

57 Respondent: Just to give you a current example, our Economy and Environment  
58 Scrutiny Panel has decided to look at public health and the  
59 environment, so they're looking at air quality and what we do about air  
60 quality in terms of people's health, so that's public health. It's a really  
61 good example of something that cuts across both sides.

62

63 Interviewer: Yes.

64

65 Respondent: We've got five scrutiny panels. They more or less have seven  
66 members on each. That's not exactly consistent, but it is seven for  
67 four of them. When we first... Myself, and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] slightly  
68 strangely, all started work at the same time. The 18 months before,  
69 they had established a three-strong scrutiny support team and all  
70 three members of the team left at the same time.

71

72 Interviewer: Really?

73

74 Respondent: As far as I can tell, not for any bad reasons (Laughter).

75

76 Interviewer: Yes.

77

78 Respondent: The head, she got promoted and got a job in [REDACTED] as it happened.

79

80 Interviewer: It happens, doesn't it?

81

82 Respondent: The second one left to go round the world with her husband – or her  
83 boyfriend, I think, her boyfriend at that time – and the third one was  
84 actually seconded into the post and went back to his substantive post.

85

86 Interviewer: It doesn't take long to lose the team when that happens, does it?  
87 (Laughter)

88

89 Respondent: No, I know. We were all appointed in... I started at the end of  
90 September 2009, and at the time they met every three weeks, which  
91 in my view was far too – well, was too often.

92

93 Interviewer: Yes. Yes, because when you finish one you're right on the next one.

94

95 Respondent: Exactly, you're just on a treadmill, really, and what becomes important  
96 is the meetings and not what the meetings are doing.

97

98 Interviewer: Yes, good point, actually, yes.

99

100 Respondent: It took us about two years, two-and-a-half years perhaps, to persuade  
101 them that they should meet less often. In fact, when we first started  
102 saying it, they said, "We used to meet fortnightly." Given you've got to  
103 get the papers out eight days in advance, you just...

104

105 Interviewer: Yes, it's just mad. You just go from one to the next, to the next.

106

107 Respondent: We've worked hard to get them – and they now meet... It's quite  
108 interesting, actually: I say they meet 10 times a year, or they'd have  
109 10 scheduled meetings year; my immediate boss, who works for ■■■



110 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who's the Head of Democratic... Who's the  
111 Democratic Services Manager, he says they meet twice a cycle,  
112 because his head is in cycles.

113 This is [REDACTED]s. [REDACTED] document has got a cycle through nine weeks  
114 or so of all the meetings. I've said to [REDACTED] "You don't need to think in  
115 terms of cycles with scrutiny, because we don't report into council."  
116 There's Council at the bottom.

117

118 Interviewer: I see; I see.

119

120 Respondent: He has all these... What happens is you start with planning on 5<sup>th</sup>  
121 August and then you get through to council in October.

122

123 Interviewer: This cycle business, then, is in terms of the council meetings?

124

125 Respondent: They're all the council meetings.

126

127 Interviewer: I'm with you; I'm with you.

128

129 Respondent: But we've got it... Actually, to be fair, what does happen is that we set  
130 up 10 meetings, we occasionally cancel one because there's no need  
131 to have it, but equally more often we set up an additional meeting  
132 when a particular issue crops up.

133

134 Interviewer: Right, so there is some flexibility on that in terms of what you need to  
135 do.

136

137 Respondent: There's flexibility on that, but what we try and do, with a degree of  
138 success, is get them to... We feel that some of the best value they  
139 add is by doing detailed reviews.

140

141 Interviewer: I was going to ask you that.

142

143 Respondent: That means that we do work outside formal meetings.

144

145 Interviewer: Yes.

146

147 Respondent: Actually, at one level I would have – this is probably far too radical for  
148 [REDACTED] – I'd have four meetings a year. I'd say, "Let's fix four  
149 meetings and then let's design a work plan around what you want to  
150 do," which might mean three more formal meetings, it might mean  
151 visits to other authorities, it might mean interviewing.

152

153 Interviewer: These are sort of the wider policy stuff in terms of scrutiny reviews  
154 you're talking about with the...?

155

156 Respondent: Yes.

157

158 Interviewer: There have been some important ones done, haven't there? I saw one  
159 that was done on economic regeneration, one that was done on  
160 children's social care. There have been a few good ones done.

161

162 Respondent: There's been a few. The one that I'm proudest of, because I did it or I  
163 worked on it, was we did just some work on dementia and we got the  
164 report printed up quite nicely.



165

166 Interviewer: That's a crosscutting issue if ever there was one, isn't it?

167

168 Respondent: A crosscutting issue. That was one that the members... What we do  
169 with council is we stick them in a committee room and expect them to  
170 be interested. Why would you be interested? With the dementia report  
171 we took them up to a social work office about a mile and a half up the  
172 road up there, we [set out a day's 0:07:38] programme, and we had  
173 lunch with people with dementia in a day centre and they met one or  
174 two, actually, quite inspirational NHS staff.

175

176

177

178

179

180

181 That report, it doesn't say anything that Surrey, or Suffolk, or Sandwell  
182 haven't said about dementia; it's not original work, but it drew  
183 emphasis to it and those recommendations got built into the Joint  
184 Dementia Strategy.

185

186 Interviewer: Presumably, by doing that and by taking people to have that time in  
187 terms of getting involved with people with that issue, presumably that  
188 was a big learning curve for members and they could really pick up on  
189 it.

190

191 Respondent: Yes.

192

193 Interviewer: I suppose if you've done something like that, you remember it, don't  
194 you? It locks in your mind, doesn't it, rather than just reading papers in  
195 a committee room or something?

196

197 Respondent: Yes. There obviously is a place for the committee room, but I don't  
198 think we do enough of it. There are some authorities' scrutiny  
199 functions who do nothing but that; that's what they've got...

200

201 Interviewer: In terms of the policy stuff?

202

203 Respondent: Yes. Where was it? I heard a talk from my equivalent in... It wasn't  
204 Buckinghamshire, but it was round that way and they did...

205

206 Interviewer: It's all down south, isn't it? (Laughter)

207

208 Respondent: They did something like 25 one-day inquiries a year. That's what their  
209 work programme was, so they would meet and they'd say, "We want  
210 to look at council tax collection rates," or children with special  
211 educational needs, or whatever it was, and they would get witnesses  
212 lined up, spend four or five hours questioning people and talking to  
213 them, and then they would write a report. That's what they did; they'd  
214 highlighted particular issues.

215

216 Interviewer: Yes.

217

218 Respondent: I think one of the... Is this okay? I'm not talking off track?

219



220 Interviewer: No, it's brilliant. It's very, very useful for me to get an insight into it,  
221 because what I was surprised about when I spoke to another authority  
222 was that they said to me that in terms of scrutiny the policy function  
223 was probably the most important. That was a surprise to me.

224

225 Respondent: I think in some respects it is, because that's where you can say  
226 something, whereas we... It's a shorthand. We call that the 'overview'.  
227 Overview, scrutiny; that's overview, scrutiny. Scrutiny is looking at  
228 things that have been done.

229 If they have been done, it's important; it is important, but things that  
230 have been done, I would rather that the scrutiny panels told the  
231 Cabinet what they think the Cabinet ought to be doing than told the  
232 Cabinet they didn't like what they had done.

233

234 Interviewer: Yes.

235

236 Respondent: You do both.

237

238 Interviewer: The overview side of it, then, the policy is sort of feeding into the wider  
239 debate before they actually take the decisions, and hopefully it would  
240 be a real deep, considered view, like with this. It should be [a sort of,  
241 you know] [Crosstalk 0:11:07].

242

243 Respondent: Yes. I wouldn't want to overstate how...

244

245 Interviewer: These issues aren't simple, are they?

246

247 Respondent: No.

248

249 Interviewer: It takes some thinking about and working out.

250

251 Respondent: I wouldn't want to overstate it, but I saw... What did I see Brighton had  
252 done? Brighton had done some stuff. Yes – and sometimes you can  
253 shine a light on something that perhaps isn't at the top of everybody's  
254 agenda – in Brighton they've just a report in Brighton; they had an  
255 issue about... It was about stag and hen parties, and people going  
256 down for stag and hen parties predominantly and hiring/renting big  
257 flats designed for the purpose. What was happening was people  
258 having a great time in Brighton – fantastic, that's really good – but  
259 late-night drinking.

260

261 Interviewer: [Coming home \_\_\_\_ time] [Crosstalk 0:11:56], yes (Laughter).

262

263 Respondent: Noise, predominantly noise. I remember I had a glance at their report  
264 and local residents saying, "There was a stripper," a male stripper in  
265 the street at 3 o'clock in the morning with a dozen women baying at  
266 him, while you're trying to get your kiddie to sleep.

267

268 Interviewer: Yes, [that's not good, is it? 0:12:13].

269

270 Respondent: It wasn't something that was, as far as I could see, on top of the  
271 council's agenda. Some local residents had raised the issue and the  
272 scrutiny panel said, "Okay, let's go and talk to the businesses that rent  
273 out these flats, because they're bringing people in, they're bringing  
274 money into the city. Let's also talk to residents."

275 I think the other thing that you have to do with councillors is you have  
276 to remember they're councillors and not officers. Whilst that's a really  
277 good, considered report, it doesn't have reams of data in there; it's



278                                   councillors saying, “We’ve looked at this and something should be  
279                                   done. This is an important issue.”

280

281   Interviewer:               It’s putting it on the agenda, really.

282

283   Respondent:               It’s putting it on the agenda.

284

285   Interviewer:               Yes.

286

287   Respondent:               Tonight, we’ve actually got the Adults, Health and Social Care  
288                                   Scrutiny Panel tonight, and we’ve got a presentation from a woman  
289                                   about becoming a dementia-friendly borough. She’s been seconded to  
290                                   Alzheimer’s to work on that and one of our recommendations was we  
291                                   should become a dementia-friendly borough, so that’s quite satisfying.  
292                                   That’s three years old now, two-and-a-half years old – three years old.  
293                                   You can have that.

294

295   Interviewer:               Can I have this to have a look at?

296

297   Respondent:               You can have that, yes.

298

299   Interviewer:               Because that would be really interesting to look at that, because of the  
300                                   crosscutting nature of it and because it raises so many other issues in  
301                                   terms of trying to resolve that. Presumably, the other thing is that if  
302                                   you get to some way of resolving that, then presumably it’s got a  
303                                   positive knock-on effect across the board.

304

305 Respondent: It does. As I say, I wouldn't want to... Most of our work is actually  
306 done in the committee rooms in committee meetings. [It stills away  
307 0:13:49] and [REDACTED] is quite a traditional council. We've tried to do  
308 things to break them away from that.

309 A lot of scrutiny, the way that the scrutiny panel's work – and I guess  
310 this sort of leads into the accountability a bit – is there are three...  
311 There's a little triumvirate of the chair of the scrutiny panel, the director  
312 of the services that is predominantly being scrutinised, and us three,  
313 the scrutiny officer. Those are the three people probably who have  
314 most influence over what happens.

315

316 Interviewer: Yes.

317

318 Respondent: When [the 0:14:27] communities, the Communities Scrutiny Panel, the  
319 director is a guy called [REDACTED] who is possibly our most imaginative  
320 and radical – in style, not in politics – radical in style director. He's the  
321 one who does Twitter, more than any of the others (Laughter). He's  
322 the one who led on our council's contribution to the Tour de France  
323 and stuff like that.

324 At one stage we had this woman, [REDACTED] who's actually a lecturer at I  
325 think it's [REDACTED] [REDACTED] chaired the Communities Scrutiny  
326 Panel. She's a lecturer and so she would say, in the middle of a  
327 committee meeting, in Committee Room B, our formal committee  
328 room, she'd say, "Let's split into three groups and have a quarter of an  
329 hour's discussion about..." They did work on domestic violence, so the  
330 victim's perspective or the police and domestic... Whatever she'd  
331 picked up.

332

333 Interviewer: Yes.

334



335 Respondent: She'd say, "Okay, two councillors and one officer; two councillors, one  
336 officer." She'd do what she'd do with a bunch of students.

337

338 Interviewer: Yes. It got a debate going.

339

340 Respondent: It got them talking.

341

342 Interviewer: Yes, it's good.

343

344 Respondent: The committee clerk, [who are 0:15:40] my close colleagues but  
345 they're very traditional, was going, "How do I minute this?" [REDACTED] who  
346 [we] worked with, the guy in there, [REDACTED] said, "Don't. You do not need  
347 to minute it." "Yes, but it's a proper meeting." "You can't minute it,  
348 there are three groups talking. Just put your pen down and have a  
349 rest." That's not wild; that's just doing what you do in a training  
350 session with staff, isn't it?

351

352 Interviewer: Yes.

353

354 Respondent: "Let's just spent 10 minutes talking about this and we'll come together  
355 again."

356

357 Interviewer: It's sort of generating ideas, isn't it?

358

359 Respondent: You try to break them up from... Seventy per cent – I don't what per  
360 cent – 70% of our work is still an officer report to a committee meeting.

361

362 Interviewer: Do they tend to question that? If you put an officer report on, do you  
363 ever get people...? Do you get people questioning it to the extent  
364 of...? Presumably, when you put a report you've got to be... You've  
365 got to make sure it's all well documented and researched and  
366 everything; do you get people questioning the facts behind it?

367

368 Respondent: Yes, sometimes.

369

370 Interviewer: Or do they just accept what you put in?

371

372 Respondent: Sometimes. I think in [REDACTED] – I'm giving you some of the  
373 strengths – [REDACTED] is a traditional council and actually sometimes  
374 the scrutiny councillors in public don't like criticising the council, as  
375 they see it, even though that's their role.

376

377 Interviewer: Yes.

378

379 Respondent: Certainly me, and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] part of our role we feel is to stir  
380 things up a bit, is to say, "Ask some questions."

381

382 Interviewer: Because presumably, under the 2000 act, scrutiny really is your only  
383 check and balance, isn't it?

384

385 Respondent: It is your check and balance.

386

387 Interviewer: Unless you stir it up a bit, you're not going to get...

388



389 Respondent: Absolutely, and that's where the good... We get some councillors who  
390 turn up and they haven't read their papers. We get some councillors...

391

392 Interviewer: It often happens, doesn't it? (Laughter)

393

394 Respondent: We get some councillors who turn up and they don't really want to be  
395 there, but we get some who are good and ask good questions.

396

397 Interviewer: Is it easy to attract councillors to serve on scrutiny, or is it difficult?

398

399 Respondent: I don't think that's a question that... The whips appoint to the scrutiny  
400 panels.

401

402 Interviewer: \_\_\_\_[0:18:06], yes.

403

404 Respondent: I think there are people who are enthusiastic about particular aspects  
405 and will ask to go on a... They're interested in children's services, or  
406 they're interested in the economy or whatever, so there's a degree of  
407 selection. One of the weaknesses with our system, I think, in  
408 \_\_\_\_\_ is that other councils have a scrutiny coordination  
409 committee.

410

411 Interviewer: Yes, they do.

412

413 Respondent: Again, if you look at the guidance from the acts, that's recommended.  
414 We don't, so we have no... What that gives you is... Like \_\_\_\_\_ for  
415 example, which I work closely with \_\_\_\_\_ on... I'll tell you why. I  
416 work closely with \_\_\_\_\_ because we share an acute hospital trust

417 and I [work to 0:19:02] support health. [You've got a minute?] Shall we  
418 go into the...?

419

420 Interviewer: Yes.

421

422 Respondent: [We'll go into the ■■■■.

423

424 Interviewer: You were telling me about ■■■■ how you worked closely in terms  
425 of the -

426

427 Respondent: I was using them as an example because if you have a, this is only my  
428 observation because I've never worked anywhere that's had one but  
429 you have a lead councillor who's responsible for scrutiny, who's  
430 responsible for making sure it does its job.

431 We have meetings of the five scrutiny chairs and their deputies but it  
432 has no status. It does have a bit of influence but...

433 You've got a formal committee and some councils have the scrutiny  
434 committee that keeps an oversight and coordination of the work plans  
435 of the others, and sometimes it's the only time where calling is done,  
436 and we'll do things like oversee training for members and stuff like  
437 that.

438 What happens, we have these meetings, the scrutiny chairs and I  
439 chair them and that doesn't feel right. For pragmatic reasons we don't  
440 appoint a chair to that meeting because you just end up trying to work  
441 out who's going to chair it.

442 This is probably a little arrogant of us but some councillors' viewpoint  
443 is a chair of that group will dominate it and you don't want that to  
444 happen.



445 If he'd been given that role by council, then that would be right. I  
446 spend all my time on health and the health scrutiny function is the  
447 particular, because you know we have particular powers of health  
448 scrutiny.

449

450 Interviewer: Is that the major thing that you're involved in at the minute?

451

452 Respondent: For about two and a half years, there's been a strategy review of  
453 health and social care services, and in February, three of the provider  
454 trusts, three of the provider organisations produced what they called  
455 the Strategic Outline Case that had five models for the provision of  
456 predominantly acute hospital care across half of Huddersfield and  
457 [REDACTED].

458 Their preferred option that they stated at that time was that  
459 Huddersfield [REDACTED] Infirmary would become what they call and  
460 unplanned site and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Hospital would become a  
461 planned site [and what that meant, in shorthand, was 0:03:03] that we  
462 wouldn't have A&E in [REDACTED]

463 There would be some minor injuries unit cover at the hospital but there  
464 wouldn't be an accident and emergency -

465

466 Interviewer: That will be in Huddersfield? Did that cause a row?

467

468 Respondent: Yes, absolutely. Significant local anger. Actually just starting to write  
469 the report up. The council set up something called the People's  
470 Commission which is like having a set with scrutiny power.

471 It was very political, I think they just wanted to do something different,  
472 and they set it up and I got asked to support that as well.

473

474 Interviewer: Who was on that?

475

476 Respondent: Six different councillors who aren't necessarily on scrutiny. Some of  
477 the more senior councillors, and they decided to appointment an  
478 independent chair, so we've got an independent as the chair of it, a  
479 guy called Professor [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who's from Oxford Brookes  
480 University, and six councillors.

481 We've got a formal meeting tomorrow, an informal meeting with him  
482 on Thursday when we're hoping that they will reach some  
483 conclusions.

484

485 Interviewer: That's an ad hoc committee just to deal with that issue?

486

487 Respondent: Ad hoc, just one issue. When I first saw the council resolution, I said,  
488 "That's what scrutiny does, why have they done that? We've got  
489 scrutiny to do that."

490 People are still saying: why are yo doing it this way? I think just by  
491 doing something a bit different, it's made a bit more of an impact. This  
492 is very low key publicity but we've publicised it, we've got a logo and  
493 we've done some printing.

494

495 Interviewer: That takes views from people, pretty much operating in a similar way  
496 to what scrutiny will do in terms of getting views -

497

498 Respondent: Yes. We had nine locality meetings where we met with -

499

500 Interviewer: Oh, so it goes out and about across the -

501



502 Respondent: We went out and met, we went to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] We  
503 had low attendances, we were disappointed by the attendances.

504

505 Interviewer: It's often the problem when you're trying to get people to -

506

507 Respondent: We picked the wrong times for some of the meetings, but what  
508 happened was there was a bit of consultation overload or fatigue,  
509 because the health service had been out consulting, but we sent out  
510 the councillors, we didn't send out middle ranking officers which is  
511 what the health service did.

512 What we had was effectively seven, two of them were so badly  
513 attended there was hardly anybody there at all, but seven focus  
514 groups. We didn't set out to have focus groups. They all lasted two  
515 hours.

516

517 Interviewer: Shows you it's a key issue then, doesn't it?

518

519 Respondent: I said seven rather than nine because two of the meetings only had  
520 one person, so you can discount those. I remember one at [REDACTED]  
521 [REDACTED] where there were eight people but the debate went on for two  
522 hours, and at the end of it, one of the people who was presenting quite  
523 a challenge to the council said how much she'd enjoyed it.

524 People at the end of it said they really enjoyed -

525

526 Interviewer: There was a real input then from the people? It wasn't simply a case  
527 of councillors or officers deciding something, there was a real input  
528 from people on the ground about giving the views on those issues?  
529 I've not heard of that before.

530

531 Respondent: Apart from the fact it's not a scrutiny panel but it is doing scrutiny  
532 work, it's an interesting case.

533

534 Interviewer: It is.

535

536 Respondent: People came and said, "Don't close our A&E," but after they'd said  
537 that and we started talking to them, they started talking about general  
538 practice. They were talking about GPs.

539 Actually, the issue for a lot of people was their GP services, access to  
540 it predominantly. Yes, they came back to a fact that Huddersfield  
541 seems a long way away if you're living in [REDACTED] or  
542 [REDACTED] end, and how safe was it to travel longer distances and  
543 this, that and the other.

544 But actually, we talked about general practice. Although the headline  
545 was accident and emergency, what people wanted to talk about was  
546 about how the GPs worked.

547 We're meeting with them on Thursday to draw some conclusions and  
548 myself and Professor [REDACTED] are going to say to the six councillors, I  
549 hope we are because this is what we planned, "Do you accept there's  
550 a case for change?" If you don't accept there's a case for change,  
551 you're going against what NHS England are saying. You're going  
552 against what the Keogh Report says. You're going against what our  
553 clinical commissioning groups say.

554

555 Interviewer: Sort of establish that principle before it goes any further?

556

557 Respondent: Some of the people who've come to the locality events don't want any  
558 change. They're saying, "It ain't broke, don't fix it," but the national  
559 policy imperative, and partly financially driven, is broke, it does need  
560 fixing.



561 A&E units aren't meeting their targets of dealing with people in four  
562 hours.

563

564 Interviewer: Is the plan then to put a report together which takes into account what  
565 the people have said when they've gone out and about on these -

566

567 Respondent: Yes, it will take account of what they've said but it will be the  
568 councillors and Professor [REDACTED] analysis at the end of the day.

569

570 Interviewer: What will happen to that report? Once that's gone, where does that  
571 go?

572

573 Respondent: That is an interesting question. It's one we haven't quite worked out  
574 because there's a slight difference of opinion. It was a special meeting  
575 of the council, an extraordinary meeting of the council was called to  
576 set up the People's Commission.

577 My view, which is mirroring something that [REDACTED] the chief executive  
578 said some months ago is we should have a second special meeting of  
579 council.

580

581 Interviewer: So it might go back to that?

582

583 Respondent: It goes back to full council. We ended up with a timetable that actually  
584 finishes this week, and then there's a meeting for them to agree their  
585 final report.

586 We would have taken it to council in December, my advice was I  
587 haven't got time to write a decent report in that time. Writing a poor  
588 report would undermine what we've done.

589 I'm hoping I can write a good report.

590

591 Interviewer: It takes time -

592

593 Respondent: It takes time, and it's an iterative process. The next council meeting  
594 after December is in February which is where they're discussing next  
595 year's budget proposals. We don't want to mix this up with that highly  
596 criticised debate.

597 So let's have a special meeting of the council. The leader of the  
598 council thinks it should go to the health and wellbeing board first. The  
599 health and wellbeing board has got NHS membership as well as  
600 council membership.

601 I think giving its first excursion to a place where we might be making  
602 quite strong recommendations to the clinical commissioning group  
603 means it could start with a row, and better to go to the council and for  
604 the council to endorse the whole thing.

605 Then say to the health and wellbeing board, "You take four of these  
606 recommendations." The council asks the health and wellbeing board  
607 to take four of these recommendations.

608 I've got an email in this morning. We've got a couple of campaign  
609 groups who are very critical of this approach. Their view is that the  
610 People's Commission has no statutory position which we use in  
611 scrutiny.

612

613 Interviewer: How are they losing out on it though if you're not using scrutiny?  
614 They're not losing out -

615

616 Respondent: What this woman, [REDACTED] and her colleagues, it's unfair to  
617 say it's their prime concern, they're very concerned about privatisation



618 of the NHS. They want to avoid all opportunities for privatisation, so  
619 they're going on that line.

620 Their view is that the scrutiny panel has statutory powers to call in the  
621 NHS and has statutory powers to get information out of the NHS and  
622 the People's Commission doesn't, and they think we're not using our  
623 statutory powers properly. That's their view.

624 My view is that they're hanging something on, yes, there is a statutory  
625 power and I think if we ended up not being happy that we were getting  
626 information, then we've got two options.

627 Actually, the current legislation, we've got two options. One is the  
628 council can decide how it fulfils its health scrutiny function, and could  
629 give People's Commission the powers. That's one option, that might  
630 be a bit traumatic.

631 The other is to say, "This isn't working, pass it to scrutiny.

632

633 Interviewer: Then scrutiny could pick up on the work that had been done?

634

635 Respondent: I find it quite strange that they're picking up almost on this  
636 constitutional issue, The People's Commission has asked without any  
637 statutory powers the chief officer of the Clinical Commissioning Group  
638 to attend and give evidence, and he has.

639 They've asked the chief executive of the acute trust to attend and give  
640 evidence, and he has.

641 We've asked Yorkshire Ambulance Service to come and give  
642 evidence without any statutory powers, and they have.

643

644 Interviewer: So there's been cooperation across the board?

645

646 Respondent: If they said, "No, you've got no powers to ask us," we'd do a press  
647 release. We'd say, "We asked Yorkshire Ambulance Service to come  
648 and tell us about keeping people safe, and they wouldn't talk to us."

649 Do you remember when *Have I Got News For You* did the tub of lard  
650 with [REDACTED] Hattersley?

651

652 Interviewer: Yes.

653

654 Respondent: You put a tub of lard on the table and say, "We invited [REDACTED] Hattersley  
655 and we've got a tub of lard." You say, "We invited the Yorkshire  
656 Ambulance Service and they couldn't even bother to come and talk to  
657 us about keeping people safe."

658

659 Interviewer: On that wider point because that's very interesting to get an insight  
660 into what happens, particularly on the health side of things. It's  
661 fascinating for me to pick up on this.

662 In terms of the question about who scrutiny can compel, am I correct  
663 in thinking that the present legislation allows you to compel cabinet  
664 members, officers on the council, and then there's other legislation in  
665 terms of health, police?

666

667 Respondent: Yes.

668

669 Interviewer: Say you've got shared services for instance, or if for instance, you've  
670 got outsourced services, how do you deal with that? Have you ever  
671 had a private company where you've asked them to come in and save  
672 you outsourced services and they've said, "No, we're not doing it" or  
673 has everybody generally been cooperative?

674



675 Respondent: There are several answers to that question. I can't think of an instance  
676 when someone has said, "No, I won't come." We've had one or two  
677 instances where people have found it really difficult to make a date,  
678 but they haven't said no.

679

680 Interviewer: Like Tony Blair appearing before the Arms to Iraq, quite happy to  
681 appear but trying to find the day, couldn't quite do it.

682

683 Respondent: We use a number of mantras, clichés, evidence from a variety of  
684 sources, scrutiny ought to take evidence from a variety of sources.  
685 Sometimes it's quite hard to persuade councillors. Sometimes they're  
686 content to hear from the director and I don't think we've been  
687 ambitious enough in who we've called in.

688 I'm talking about health and social care because that's the scrutiny  
689 panel I support more. We've just revised our contracts, hub care is  
690 provided by private organisations in [REDACTED] predominantly. Hardly  
691 any is in-house, it's all contracted out.

692

693 Interviewer: That's adult social care, is it?

694

695 Respondent: Yes, that's carers going into old people's homes and cooking them a  
696 meal or bathing them or whatever support they need.

697

698 Interviewer: That's all outsourced, you say?

699

700 Respondent: 90% of it is outsourced. It's been a service that has been subject to  
701 criticism, not just in [REDACTED] but up and down the country for doing  
702 visits for 15 minutes, for paying people off for zero based contracts.

703 The workers who are on minimum wage or thereabouts not being paid  
704 travel time.

705

706 Interviewer: Yes, I've heard of this before, so they're chipping off the time of the  
707 people who are going -

708

709 Respondent: Yes. They've got a task which is going and taking them medication,  
710 and they rush in without shutting the front door to save time.

711 They're probably few and far between. We're changing the contracts.  
712 What we've done in [REDACTED] is we had about 15 providers. We've  
713 reduced it to 3 based on a locality, so we're giving more business to 3  
714 companies, and we're trying to pay them on outcomes rather than  
715 inputs.

716 Rather than saying, "We're paying for 1,000 hours a week, we're  
717 paying you to take these people from A to B to get them more  
718 independence," or whatever it might be.

719

720 Interviewer: Is that difficult to measure in terms of the contract?

721

722 Respondent: Yes, it is difficult to measure, but what you can get is you've got bigger  
723 organisations which become more professional. We're encouraging  
724 them to pay the living wage. We're encouraging them to do these  
725 things -

726

727 Interviewer: I presume everybody's looking for an outcome, you either get the  
728 outcome or you don't. If you don't get it, then you're on the rack for it.

729



730 Respondent: By and large, councillors are happy with this approach, but in March I  
731 think it is, we're going to get those three companies to come and meet  
732 the scrutiny panel.

733

734 Interviewer: Are they quite happy to do that?

735

736 Respondent: I don't think they know yet, but they will be because the  
737 commissioning side of the council will say you're going to come.

738 My experience is, A) people see the advantages in talking about what  
739 they do, and B) they like doing it. If you feel you're doing a good job  
740 and someone says, "Come and talk to me about the job you do," you  
741 go along and do it.

742

743 Interviewer: You're quite happy to do it, yes. Presumably as well there's a  
744 commercial interest for them because if they don't cooperate -

745

746 Respondent: We ought to do more of it across the [REDACTED] Someone said to us the  
747 biggest employer in [REDACTED] is [REDACTED] Bank, the old [REDACTED] Building  
748 Society. What happens, I think there are 6,000 people in [REDACTED]  
749 working for [REDACTED] Bank.

750 If [REDACTED] Bank goes down as it nearly did in 2008 or even in the crash,  
751 the town goes down, but we've never got [REDACTED] in. We should be  
752 talking to [REDACTED] in scrutiny, and we haven't done that yet.

753

754 Interviewer: Yes, because the impact of their operation will be so large.

755

756 Respondent: Also, it's not just about calling them in, they might say to us, "If we're  
757 going to stay in [REDACTED] what the council's got to get better at is A, B,  
758 C and D." They can give messages back.

759

760 Interviewer: That feeds in to the economic development stuff, doesn't it, in terms of  
761 trying to keep people here and keep jobs?

762

763 Respondent: [REDACTED] the [REDACTED] guy in there, has done work on domestic violence with  
764 the community's scrutiny panel and they've called in, they've talked to  
765 victims of domestic violence, they've talked to voluntary organisations,  
766 womens organisations, and that's just valuable for them to hear that  
767 stuff. They've talked to the police as well.

768 I can't remember where it was but one scrutiny function, they had a  
769 much more formal way of working out what should be on the work  
770 plan than we have, and they had some criteria.

771 One of their criteria is interesting. At one level you say that's a bit silly  
772 because you ought to do the boring stuff, but if it isn't interesting, you  
773 won't get -

774

775 Interviewer: You won't get anybody to, no, it's true. I suppose if several of the  
776 councillors as well, if they're not interested in something, you need  
777 somebody who's going to get into it.

778

779 Respondent: One of the things about scrutiny is that people forget, we forget,  
780 councillors forget, is because it's not running the show it doesn't have  
781 to be comprehensive.

782 Let's pick a different example, our scrutiny panel on children, in  
783 children's services we've got a problem with our social care for  
784 children. We've got government intervention, we have governance.

785

786 Interviewer: [REDACTED] was telling me yesterday there's an issue. Is that children's  
787 services itself that's got the issue in terms of the intervention?



788

789 Respondent: Yes. So that scrutiny panel should give disproportionate attention to  
790 social care for children as opposed to education. It's not got to ignore  
791 education, and certainly some councillors have been very astute and  
792 said, "We're in trouble on social care for children because we took our  
793 eye off the ball. Let's not take our eye off the ball on education."

794 If you looked at the budgets, you'd spend 80% of your time on  
795 education and 20% on social care because that's the money that's  
796 spent. I'm guessing, it's maybe 70-30, but you ought to be looking at  
797 particular aspects of social care.

798 We don't need to look at residential care for children and young  
799 people to the same extent as social work services because the  
800 residential care hasn't been criticised enough -

801

802 Interviewer: So it's really a case of retaining a degree of flexibility so as you can  
803 put what was going to be as limited resource, really direct it to where  
804 it's most needed to get the best outcome that you can?

805

806 Respondent: Yes, if you can. When I go back to what I was saying at the beginning  
807 of our discussions, if the director has too much power in setting the  
808 agenda, then there is a temptation for them to direct you away from  
809 things they don't want scrutinising.

810

811 Interviewer: Yes.

812

813 Respondent: The most Machiavellian will do that deliberately and the least  
814 Machiavellian will do that almost by default. Our director of children's  
815 services who I think is a success, and he came in after we got the  
816 Ofsted, he says, "I've got all these mechanisms set up to look at social  
817 care, it's duplication and I want the scrutiny panel to look at A, B, C, D  
818 and E."

819 We're going, "Whoa, hang on." If you start setting agenda and the  
820 scrutiny panel doesn't look at the right things...

821 I hope you don't mind me telling you this as it happens because I'm  
822 sure you're not a shrinking violet.

823 When we had the Ofsted on social care for children, the government  
824 insisted we set up an improvement board with external bodies.

825 After a period of time, one of the scrutiny panel members on children's  
826 rang me up and said, "I want the scrutiny panel to do a detailed review  
827 into social care for children. How do we go about that?"

828 I said, "First of all we talk to the chair of the scrutiny panel," which we  
829 did. I drafted a recommendation for them if they wanted to do it. I  
830 didn't go to that meeting, I think [REDACTED] was at that meeting, and they  
831 passed this recommendation setting up a review.

832 The next morning the chief executive who wasn't [REDACTED] it was a  
833 previous chief executive, came into my office uninvited, which he's  
834 quite entitled to do, he's the chief executive, but he'd never done  
835 before, and he said, "What happened last night at scrutiny, [REDACTED]"

836 I explained and I told him what I wrote, and he said, "Yes, I thought  
837 you might have drafted that. I'm going to stop this. We're not doing  
838 this review, [REDACTED] we're going to stop it," and he walked out.

839 I thought if he stops this review going ahead, I can't do scrutiny again,  
840 because the scrutiny members are just going to say, "Oh, the chief  
841 executive decides."

842

843 Interviewer: I understand, yes.

844

845 Respondent: Also bearing in mind I've got a mortgage, we went ahead, and he  
846 came in again. He came to see me three times in my office did the  
847 chief executive.



848 The second time, this is the most pressure I've had in [REDACTED] from  
849 senior officers, he said, "You go and tell Councillor Raistrick," who was  
850 the chair, "we've got an improvement board doing this," and he's  
851 jabbing his finger at me like this, he's not actually jabbing it but he's  
852 that close.

853 "You go and tell Councillor Raistrick we've got an improvement board.  
854 This is duplication. It's going to make us look stupid in front of the  
855 government and he's got to stop his review."

856 I went to see Councillor Raistrick, I toned it down. I said, "[REDACTED] is  
857 concerned that this is duplication and we've got an improvement  
858 board that's doing this work." I took him through the arguments.

859 [REDACTED] Raistrick said to me, "How long have we had an improvement  
860 board, [REDACTED] I said, "It'll be 18 months now, [REDACTED] He said, "Well, it  
861 isn't fucking working."

862 We're doing our review. We did the review.

863

864 Interviewer: That's the principle, isn't it, in terms of who's deciding what --

865

866 Respondent: Yes, the councillors decide. It isn't fucking working, we're doing the  
867 review. We did the review. [REDACTED] said to me, "If this thing's going  
868 ahead, you're going to get minimal cooperation from officers. I'm not  
869 having my officers wasting their time."

870

871 Interviewer: Really?

872

873 Respondent: We didn't get minimal cooperation because the new director realised it  
874 was worthwhile investing the time, but they talked to [REDACTED] and we  
875 had the meeting in one of the meeting rooms upstairs and there was  
876 me and a committee administrator and somebody else.

877                   █████ said, “I want the officers to leave. Yes, █████ I want you to  
878                   leave, and you, you leave.” He gave them a bollocking for what they  
879                   were doing, completely counterproductive because those members  
880                   came out livid.

881

882   Interviewer:           It’ll make them more determined.

883

884   Respondent:           They came into my office and told me exactly what he’d said, so doing  
885                   it confidentially isn’t going to work, and it just made them more  
886                   determined.

887                   These 51 people in these pictures, they’re nice as pie until you  
888                   actually tell them they can’t do what they want to do.

889                   I tell that story about █████ because that’s right. When you look at all  
890                   the bits of work that I feel, not all of them, some of the bits of work that  
891                   I feel least proud about are where probably I’ve been a bit too  
892                   compromising and tried to balance officer and members because what  
893                   happens is no one’s satisfied.

894                   The councillors aren’t satisfied that they’re doing proper scrutiny, and  
895                   the officers have still had to come and talk about something they’re  
896                   uncomfortable about doing.

897                   I was talking to someone from the health service the other week and I  
898                   said I’m a broker. He said, “I know you are.” That’s what our role is, it  
899                   is brokerage.

900                   Like this guy █████ Raistrick, we had quite a lot of problems with him,  
901                   with his style. He worked with █████ at that time, and he would say, “Go  
902                   and find this out for me, █████ and █████ would dutifully do that,  
903                   probably with not sufficient, “What do you want to know?”

904                   So it would go through to the director of children’s services to do  
905                   something or do nothing, and then █████ would send a reminder three  
906                   days later.



907 So we ended up with a row. There's a nice story of the two of them  
908 sitting in that room together. [REDACTED] phoned up and said, "I want the last  
909 five years outturn reports on the budget for children's services put,  
910 [REDACTED]"

911 [REDACTED] starts, this is between us, writing an email to get this from the  
912 director of children's services, and [REDACTED] says, "We can get those  
913 ourselves, [REDACTED] we don't need to bother the director of children's  
914 services. We can get that." Two advantages to that, one is we don't  
915 bother the director of children's services who is a busy man. Secondly,  
916 he doesn't know we're doing it, we're helping the scrutiny process get  
917 informed.

918 Thirdly, why does he want it? Is he asking for the right documents, as  
919 an amateur? If he actually tells us what he wants to know, then we  
920 can help get him -

921 Rather than give him 5 documents that are 30 pages long, we can do  
922 the analysis and give him 5 figures. That's why independent support  
923 for scrutiny...

924 It's a funny function. You've got the chief executive who's my manager  
925 coming in to tell me - I'm almost the only person in the council if he  
926 says stop I don't have to do it, because if I do stop, he's my manager  
927 for pay and rations.

928 In terms of what we've do, it's got to be with the councillors. If we get it  
929 wrong, [REDACTED] at one stage in this bit of work with children's services,  
930 rang up Ofsted directly, by this time [REDACTED] that chief executive's left,  
931 he actually works in health service at the moment, and [REDACTED] was  
932 here.

933 [REDACTED] said something, to use some phrase which is like, "You're  
934 independent within the council but not of the council." Our relationship  
935 with Ofsted is a really important relationship and we can't have  
936 scrutiny officers going independently to Ofsted.

937 I'm not sure that she was right but it's a nuance, isn't it? You've got to  
938 think of the bigger picture. If we were so aggressive that we called in

939 cabinet members and officers and gave them a right kicking every  
940 month, it just wouldn't work.

941

942 Interviewer: It loses its impact.

943

944 Respondent: Not many councillors are skilled enough or have the time to do it  
945 themselves. They have many skills, that's not denying their skills.  
946 Some of them do. There's a guy in Leeds called [REDACTED]  
947 chaired the Yorkshire and Humber joint health scrutiny panel.

948 He got majorly obsessed. You'd get emails from [REDACTED]  
949 [REDACTED] at 1:00 in the morning about bits of data he was trying to get off  
950 NHS England, but he had the commitment. He was an academic, he  
951 was a just recently retired university lecturer, so he had the resource,  
952 and he did a really good scrutiny job, probably through his obsession.

953 Can't do it all the time, can't do it on every issue, and the point, I'm  
954 telling you stuff that you'd know I'm sure, but the point of having  
955 councillors is that it is the butcher, the baker and candlestick maker.  
956 You don't want people who are intellectuals all the time. You want  
957 people who understand what people who live around them think and  
958 want -

959

960 Interviewer: What about the resources issue here? I was amazed, I went to see,  
961 sat in a public scrutiny last week -

962

963 Respondent: Who did you talk to there, Tim Gilley?

964

965 Interviewer: I spoke to [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

966

967 Respondent: [REDACTED] Yes, I know him.



968

969 Interviewer: I was going to speak to Jessica [Crowle 0:33:28] then I spoke to ■■■  
970 and it was very good, ■■■ is very helpful to me. One of the things that  
971 amazed me was that I looked at their annual report and I saw that the  
972 discretionary budget for scrutiny is a matter of a couple of thousand a  
973 year.

974 I was amazed it was that low. I know there've been staff cutbacks but  
975 I'm amazed it was that low. What's the situation here? You guys are  
976 all beavering away, you're trying to sort this out.

977

978 Respondent: We spend relatively little on top of our salaries. We're three full time  
979 workers. The bulk of the spend on scrutiny is three full time workers,  
980 the special allowances for the chairs of the scrutiny panels and the  
981 administration around running meetings.

982 We don't spend it but we could spend about 8,000.

983

984 Interviewer: Is that enough for what you need?

985

986 Respondent: If there was something really major that cropped up and we had to  
987 make a case for more, I think we might get it. It's almost like: why  
988 have we got three scrutiny officers, why haven't we got six, why  
989 haven't we got two?

990 The councillor sets the level of -

991

992 Interviewer: Yes, and you've got to try and live within -

993

994 Respondent: So we're quite parsimonious. Four years ago perhaps we decided we  
995 wanted to look at the council's medium term financial strategy. The  
996 only person who understands the medium term financial strategy in

997 depth is the head of financial services who's the guy we're  
998 scrutinising.

999 We got an external guy at £1,000 to help us with that process because  
1000 we didn't see how we could do that bit of work just taking advice from  
1001 [REDACTED] who was the head of finance at that time.

1002 Pete's a great guy and honest, but -

1003

1004 Interviewer: It's about maintaining that distance, isn't it?

1005

1006 Respondent: He's not going to say it's a bit of bad work, is he? He's not going to  
1007 say it's saving on the edge of financial rectitude. He's not going to say  
1008 that stuff, so you need to take an outside look. We pay for that.

1009

1010 Interviewer: It's as and when something comes up that you might need to do it,  
1011 then you'll pay for it?

1012

1013 Respondent: The thing that we like to do, [REDACTED] did a work on biomass boilers, the  
1014 green stuff, and he took some councillors on a trip to Barnsley where  
1015 they've done some stuff.

1016 Paying for a coach or a minibus and some lunch, that is really  
1017 valuable to take members out. We don't go very far, I've been to  
1018 [REDACTED] to talk to the people who run their sports services because  
1019 they've got a particular relationship on sports services that we were  
1020 looking at.

1021 At one stage, they've probably changed now, in [REDACTED] we used  
1022 to have a massive scrutiny team. They had a chief officer leading it.  
1023 They had someone on 100 grand.

1024

1025 Interviewer: They've got 12 or something down there.



1026

1027 Respondent: Yes, they used to have 30 or 25. What the council said was, "We  
1028 serve a million people." It's a really big council.

1029 I don't think in the scheme of things you can justify that. [REDACTED]

1030 [REDACTED]

1031 [REDACTED]

1032 [REDACTED]

1033 [REDACTED]

1034 [REDACTED] and myself in particular, [REDACTED] less so, have done one or two bits  
1035 of work that effectively are policy development. Or we're a resource  
1036 that's around and it's not scrutiny.

1037 [REDACTED] just done a [REDACTED] of work on how we could webcast our  
1038 council meetings, nothing to do with scrutiny particularly. It has a bit of  
1039 an impact on scrutiny because we might webcast scrutiny, but [REDACTED]  
1040 a resource. He's been used, he's written the report, he took it to  
1041 governance and business committee last night, been thanked for his  
1042 work and he's been asked to do some more work.

1043 [REDACTED] is looking at how she can pull together a little policy function  
1044 that will include us. We're up for that. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] don't know  
1045 about it properly, [REDACTED] knows a little bit because he's picked it up  
1046 from other sources.

1047 We're up for that because in times of cuts, if the chief executive says,  
1048 "This is how I'm going to organise things," you usually go along with  
1049 that, but the question is: can you retain your independent support to  
1050 the scrutiny panels when you're helping the cabinet develop a bit of  
1051 policy?

1052

1053 Interviewer: Yes.

1054

1055 Respondent: I think you have to just take hats off and put hats on, because I don't  
1056 think we've got the luxury. Every time we have cuts, every year, you

1057 think there are three of us and they're cutting services to vulnerable  
1058 old people and they're not mending the potholes in the roads properly.

1059

1060 Interviewer: This is the thing, isn't it? I think as well that, you'll know this better than  
1061 I do, there's a tendency sometimes to see scrutiny as a relatively easy  
1062 target in terms of resources. When you've got all this other stuff going  
1063 on in terms of social care and stuff, frontline services [Cross talk  
1064 0:39:27].

1065

1066 Respondent: If you said to me, "Could we do it with two scrutiny officers, it's a bit  
1067 like I said to you before, the council sets its own level. I think one  
1068 would be a big ask.

1069 What I've said to [REDACTED] is I think we could do it with four scrutiny  
1070 panels, not five. You've still got the same number of issues to  
1071 scrutinise, it doesn't matter how many committees you've got, you've  
1072 still got roads and people and buildings and planning and all that sort  
1073 of stuff, but we could do it more efficiently with four scrutiny panels  
1074 across a relatively small council.

1075 Could we do it with two of us rather than three of us, or two and a half  
1076 of us rather than three of us? Yes, we could, we just do less. [Cross  
1077 talk 0:40:20].

1078 The other thing, the cynics, [REDACTED] actually said this, you might have  
1079 to ask her when you meet [REDACTED] once you've settled the cabinet,  
1080 what are the rest of the councillors going to do?

1081 To some extent, our role is keeping them busy. Does it justify  
1082 spending £100,000 or whatever we get on salaries, 3 people, to keep  
1083 people busy? Probably not, so you try and get some value out of it,  
1084 but there is a little bit around you have a cabinet of 7 and there are 51  
1085 councillors. What do the other 44 do?

1086



1087 Interviewer: You say that, but speaking to people, even now that is a big issue. All  
1088 these years after the 2000 culling, it is still a big issue, because of  
1089 course, previously on the committee system, some places have gone  
1090 back to them. In terms of that, at least there was always something for  
1091 councillors to do.

1092 Now, it's a sort of community leadership stuff and it's scrutiny, but all  
1093 the stuff I've seen on it seems to suggest that backbench members, to  
1094 use that term, feel like second best -

1095

1096 Respondent: There was a Labour minister who was chair of a select committee and  
1097 wrote a book, wrote his diaries, and he was also a junior minister, [REDACTED]  
1098 bloke, I can't remember his name but he wrote some really  
1099 entertaining diaries, I've got them at home.

1100 He said he would rather be the chair of a select committee than a  
1101 junior minister because you have more influence. If you're a junior  
1102 minister you're sent to visit a factory in Wigan. There's nothing wrong  
1103 with Wigan, but...

1104

1105 Interviewer: Nothing wrong with Wigan for the tape.

1106

1107 Respondent: If you're a select committee chair, what was he called? The diaries,  
1108 they're very entertaining, he's got a nice story in his diaries and his  
1109 name will come back to me as I'm talking.

1110 He's gone to some conference about something he doesn't know  
1111 anything about. He's got a speech that's been written for him, he's  
1112 glanced through it and he stands up at 9:30 to open this conference,  
1113 and he says, "What happens when you're a junior minister is you get  
1114 someone writing a speech for you. It says all the right things, it's  
1115 usually worthy and it's usually turgid and it's invariably boring."

1116 Throws it down, speaks off the cuff for 20 minutes. At the end of that  
1117 session, the press officer for the department starts walking towards

1118 him. The press officer works for Alastair Campbell, so he's thinking,  
1119 "Oh, shit, I'm really in trouble now."

1120 The press officer walks over, the mouthpiece of Alastair Campbell, the  
1121 second or third most powerful man in the government, and the press  
1122 officer says, "That was really good, that was really lively, it went down  
1123 a treat. Well done, that was great."

1124 So phew, and then this minister, whose name will come back to me,  
1125 says, "Tell me, who wrote the speech?" and the guy said, "Oh, he's  
1126 over there." He was actually in the audience having heard his work  
1127 that he'd been crafting for weeks described as turgid and boring.

1128

1129 Interviewer: The thing is though you do see that. I've been into politics 30-odd  
1130 years, I watch all the ins and outs of everything, and you see it  
1131 sometimes, particularly in some of these regional parliaments.

1132 I watch a lot of the goings on at Stormont and you see ministers  
1133 standing up there, Martin McGuinness with a speech, and he's  
1134 reading this stuff out that the civil servants have given him and you're  
1135 thinking, "Bloody hell, is anybody going to put a bit of life into this?"

1136

1137 Respondent: [REDACTED] Mullin, that's the guy's name.

1138

1139 Interviewer: Oh, [REDACTED] Mullin? Yes.

1140

1141 Respondent: As soon as I started Googling him, I remembered.

1142

1143 Interviewer: He was very effective of course on the Home select committee. He  
1144 was one of the most effective ones we've seen.

1145



1146 Respondent: If you go to the Centre for Public Scrutiny annual conference which I  
1147 try to do, one of us goes and we always try and get a couple of  
1148 members to go.

1149 Up and down the country there might be 20, perhaps more, but a  
1150 number of scrutiny chairs who really recognise what it can do, and  
1151 they do it well, very well. I don't think we've got any here. We've had  
1152 glimpses of it, but you see people who -

1153

1154 Interviewer: Where are the best places for scrutiny in terms of authority? Are you  
1155 able to name names?

1156

1157 Respondent: Tameside used to be a number of years ago. We went to visit  
1158 Tameside, we thought they might actually slightly oversell what they  
1159 did. I couldn't tell you but...

1160 We'd done some work on health, on a Yorkshire and Humber joint  
1161 scrutiny committee. It started with cardiac services for children and  
1162 there was a major controversy here because, to cut a long story short,  
1163 a review was going to close the Leeds unit.

1164

1165 Interviewer: Yes, I remember.

1166

1167 Respondent: Kids from Leeds were going to have to go to Newcastle. This is where  
1168 this guy [REDACTED] the major obsession was chairing it.

1169 I used to go sit at the back to observe these meetings because we  
1170 had a council there, and [REDACTED] a woman called [REDACTED] who's a  
1171 Conservative councillor, it's interesting, [REDACTED] hasn't been  
1172 Conservative controlled, it's been a hung council, but they put a  
1173 Conservative onto this because she's good. They're really not  
1174 bothered by the fact that she's a Conservative.

1175                    Actually for two or three meetings I didn't think she was, it just never  
1176                    occurred to me she was a Conservative, she'd come from [REDACTED].

1177                    [REDACTED] has read her papers, and sometimes the papers on this scrutiny  
1178                    panel, this scrutiny committee are 100 pages, 150 pages long. She's  
1179                    read the papers, she's pursued issues, she's asked good questions.

1180

1181    Interviewer:            Makes a difference, doesn't it?

1182

1183    Respondent:            So you see people like [REDACTED] On that committee there was [REDACTED]  
1184                    from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from Wakefield who was older. [REDACTED]  
1185                    [REDACTED 0:47:08] read the papers, not quite as intellectually bright as  
1186                    [REDACTED] Labour, but a proper politician, and Betty would just pursue the  
1187                    issues, and Betty and [REDACTED] sat next to each other, Tory, Labour,  
1188                    because they weren't there to do Tory Labour stuff.

1189

1190    Interviewer:            I suppose that's the thing, isn't it? When you're looking at scrutiny, I  
1191                    suppose really what you're after is people who are going to read the  
1192                    stuff, take an interest in it, get to grips with the issues and really try  
1193                    and pursue it to get an answer or get a start of an answer, but to get  
1194                    something. It's more that than the party political knockabouts.

1195

1196    Respondent:            Yes. There's nothing wrong with a bit of party political from time to  
1197                    time.

1198

1199    Interviewer:            No, I'm a great fan of it.

1200

1201    Respondent:            There's a guy who used to train on scrutiny, he was a former  
1202                    councillor, and he was Labour, party member. There's nothing that's



1203 more fun than having a pop at the Tories. He's be talking to Tories  
1204 and vice versa, but you don't do that -

1205 What I think can sometimes be very powerful in scrutiny is a councillor  
1206 who has, I went on one Yorkshire and Humber training session and  
1207 the councillor told me, he was from Rotherham, and an old guard  
1208 councillor from Rotherham, old Labour, been a Labour councillor for  
1209 30 years, said, "Get this son an obsession."

1210 In other words, find something to focus on, because you can't do  
1211 everything. Get this son an obsession.

1212 I worked with a councillor called [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] who was  
1213 a Labour councillor who subsequently resigned from the Labour Party  
1214 because of the Iraq war and stayed just Independent who was more  
1215 green than the Greens.

1216 Whatever the issue was, [REDACTED] would ask about solar panels, or [REDACTED]  
1217 would ask about water runoff or whatever. What that did is it  
1218 sharpened up the officers, because if [REDACTED] -

1219

1220 Interviewer: If they're going to ask about it -

1221

1222 Respondent: He's going to ask about it. We could be talking about sport and he'd  
1223 find a green element to it, and that's fine because the officers thought,  
1224 "Oh, Christ, [REDACTED] on that committee, I'd better..."

1225 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] here who is a Conservative. There's [REDACTED] he's on the  
1226 right of the Conservative Party, [REDACTED]  
1227 [REDACTED]

1228 If you start talking about European grants, he'll go onto a bit of a rant.  
1229 In my personal view, it's not a particularly thoughtful rant, but again,  
1230 don't casually say, "We've been working with the EU on this," because  
1231 [REDACTED] will come in with his views and present that challenge.

1232 He said some things in some settings that I find difficult but he's  
1233 actually quite fearless. I worked closely with a Conservative councillor

1234 last year and she said, "You don't need to worry about [REDACTED] following  
1235 the line because he doesn't follow the Conservative Party lines. He  
1236 just does what he wants."

1237 His most sort of difficult times have sometimes been emails that have  
1238 been lubricated by a decent Merlot, and he also did something that  
1239 was actually outrageous which was about three years ago in a full  
1240 council meeting.

1241 A petition was presented by some trade unions predominantly who  
1242 were outraged enough to want to protect their members' jobs. [REDACTED]  
1243 walks to the front of the council chamber and picked up a petition and  
1244 tore it up. That's out of order, and he got bollocked for it.

1245 In a sense, I disagree with him in his sentiments entirely, but he's got  
1246 some spirit. [Cross talk 0:51:10] waving the mace around.

1247

1248 Interviewer: This is very true. There was a news article from Stormont a couple of  
1249 weeks ago to say that the speaker there, he's taken too tough a line  
1250 on members of that assembly and suspending them for going against  
1251 various rules and whatever.

1252 It leads to this question about if you're going to sanitise everything,  
1253 there's going to be no spirit there, there's going to be no argument. It's  
1254 a balance, isn't it? You do need these people, you want a bit of colour  
1255 into it -

1256

1257 Respondent: I think so.

1258

1259 Interviewer: Plus it makes people take notice, and this is the whole problem in  
1260 terms of politics across the board. There's argument now that all the  
1261 parties say the same thing, they all do the same thing, that there's no  
1262 difference, they all take the party line, it's all media, it's all spin.

1263 You need people. If you think of the people that you're remembering in  
1264 terms of the policy, you think of Enoch Powell and Tony Benn, you



1265 think of these big figures. You don't think of somebody who's just  
1266 sitting in a ministerial chair for two years to get a job.

1267

1268 Respondent: Talking about that sort of thing, and I know we've gone around lots of  
1269 things, some of my best experiences in scrutiny have been where we  
1270 have engaged with the public, and we engage with the public because  
1271 it's on issues that are important to them.

1272 Two or three years ago, the council consulted on introducing dog  
1273 control orders. ■■■■ calls them doggie asbos. ■■■■ and the  
1274 letters' pages of the paper are split between dog owners and  
1275 predominantly people who use sports fields and parks, so dog poo on  
1276 the sports field.

1277 "We spend three quarters of an hour cleaning up the football field so  
1278 our nine years old can run around safely."

1279 Dog owners are saying, "Actually, most of us are responsible. It's a  
1280 small, irresponsible minority that are not going to change, whatever  
1281 you do."

1282 We had a meeting of the economy and environment scrutiny panel  
1283 where 25 perhaps members of the public came, and the cabinet  
1284 member at the time who's actually one of our most astute politicians, a  
1285 guy called ■■■■ ■■■■ who's a Labour councillor, that's ■■■■.

1286 He used to write plays for Radio 3 and Radio 4. He's an interesting  
1287 character. We had these two camps. We had the dog owners. We had  
1288 one woman who stood up and said, "I train dogs for a living, that's my  
1289 job. I go to the park, I've got to let them off a leash, that's the job.  
1290 That's how I make my living."

1291 We had the sports people saying, "We have this problem." ■■■■ was  
1292 able to explain that the dog control orders would not stop dogs being  
1293 taken off their leash in every park, this is what it means, it's different.

1294 It was a passionate but rational discussion, and I believe that the dog  
1295 control orders were amended to a degree following that discussion.



1296 Those people, it wasn't set up as a consultation exercise, we use this  
1297 somewhat trite phrase which is, "Scrutiny is a meeting in public, not a  
1298 public meeting," but there's some truth in it, it's not there for the public  
1299 to come and shout, it's there for the public to come and observe, hold  
1300 to account the councillors for what they're doing as well as councillors  
1301 holding other people to account.

1302 This woman [REDACTED] that's writing to us about health and her  
1303 comrades as they probably are, were saying, "We're going to hold you  
1304 to account for doing your job properly."

1305 When I worked in [REDACTED] I worked in [REDACTED] for many years, there  
1306 was an issue about, there's a theatre in an area of [REDACTED] called  
1307 Little Germany, Chapel Street, it's a sort of community theatre.

1308

1309 Interviewer: I know where it is, yes.

1310

1311 Respondent: It was in financial difficulties, this is 10 years ago now, and the scrutiny  
1312 panel decides to have a look at it, and we decided the best place to  
1313 have the scrutiny panel meeting would be in the theatre.

1314 This was only one item on the agenda, there were four other items on  
1315 the agenda, I had to go for another item. Turned up to theatre,  
1316 because it was run by volunteers, they'd forgotten to put the heating  
1317 on in the theatre and it was ice cold.

1318 So the meeting was held in the bar, the bar wasn't open unfortunately,  
1319 and there was a table in the middle with the councillors on it and  
1320 people with an interest in the theatre had turned up in their hordes to  
1321 come and lobby, have their say, maybe 100 people.

1322 It's the only meeting I've been to where I've sat on the floor because  
1323 there weren't enough chairs, so I let members of the public sit.

1324 The guy who chaired it, he went through the way the meeting was  
1325 going to be run, then he said, "We're going to have a presentation,  
1326 we're going to take evidence from these, then councillors are going to



1327 ask questions, and then the public can ask questions. That's how  
1328 we're going to structure it."

1329 After about a minute, a member of the public puts her hand up and  
1330 [REDACTED] says, Councillor [Mod 0:56:54], "I explained to you, you're going  
1331 to get a chance later on." She said, "We can't hear."

1332 At which point, the councillors picked up the tables, moved them to the  
1333 middle of the bar, rearranged the room and put themselves in a place  
1334 where they could be heard. It was brilliant. It was proper politics as  
1335 theatre in a theatre.

1336

1337 Interviewer: Doesn't that really bring it to life though? Fantastic.

1338

1339 Respondent: We had people who ran drama classes for disabled kids and actors  
1340 and things. The difficulty with that, and I'll put it sort of crudely, is mob  
1341 rule. Actually, the theatre wasn't financially viable, and 100 people  
1342 coming and saying it was a great thing didn't make it financially viable.

1343 The tough thing for councillors in scrutiny is to say, "We've heard all  
1344 that. We still think something's got to be done about the finances."

1345

1346 Interviewer: It's a bit like your NHS issue.

1347

1348 Respondent: On the accident and emergency. If we actually had a vote, the people  
1349 of [REDACTED] would say, "Don't change our A&E," and a lot of the  
1350 evidence is saying it isn't working very well. People are going to A&E  
1351 who don't need to go. We can't recruit sufficient consultants and  
1352 senior staff for A&E, we're covering it with locums which a lot of  
1353 evidence says is less safe than having permanent staff. You know all  
1354 the arguments, da-da-da.

1355

1356 Interviewer: Yes.

1357

1358 Respondent: If I write a report that says people want to keep their A&E, the health  
1359 service is going to say, "Thank you very much for your report," and  
1360 carry on exactly as they are.

1361 I'm mildly obsessed by this. You've got [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Hospital built  
1362 with a PFI.

1363

1364 Interviewer: It's PFI, is it?

1365

1366 Respondent: It's PFI and it's about 14 years old. We've got Huddersfield [REDACTED]  
1367 Infirmary, 50 years old, looks like [REDACTED] Soame 0:59:05] was involved  
1368 in it. It's a horrible ugly building, scruffy, with fitted above hospitals.

1369 What the acute hospital trust is saying is our preferred option is to  
1370 have the on plan site at Huddersfield, we'll have to spend £150 million  
1371 on doing the building up and reduce the number of beds at [REDACTED]  
1372 from 400 to 87.

1373 So [REDACTED] en masse are saying that's madness. New building, old  
1374 building. We're paying £10 million a year interest on the PFI and  
1375 you're going to reduce that -

1376

1377 Interviewer: They're not cheap those PFI deals.

1378

1379 Respondent: - from 400 to 87? I think our report, and the members will decide,  
1380 should say we really need convincing from a financial basis that this  
1381 will be the better option. I think I can see the argument for doing it.

1382 The argument is that the building at Huddersfield is not fit for purpose  
1383 and has got to be changed. This will be the acute trust's side of it.  
1384 We've got to do something about that building.



1385                    Anyway, they've said to us there's more space on the site, we can  
1386                    rebuild a block without shutting the hospital, rebuild a block, knock  
1387                    down the old block. Rebuild a block, knock down the old block.

1388                    You can't in [REDACTED] it doesn't work.

1389

1390    Interviewer:            Can't you?

1391

1392    Respondent:            Anyway, the PFI deal was a really bad deal and unpicking it won't  
1393                    work. So there's a pragmatic response, and the people of Huddersfield  
1394                    get their - and [REDACTED] because they'll be going to use it, get a  
1395                    better hospital in Huddersfield.

1396                    So we don't say no change, we say, "Really convince us that this is  
1397                    the right way to go," because the people in [REDACTED] are not  
1398                    convinced that our spanking new hospital -

1399

1400    Interviewer:            That you're paying for on the PFI?

1401

1402    Respondent:            We will be paying for another 50, 45 years.

1403

1404    Interviewer:            It's this balance between the politics and evidence based policy.

1405

1406    Respondent:            This is the report that they produced about the hospitals. It's called the  
1407                    Strategic Outline Case. It has many flaws.

1408

1409    Interviewer:            Is that on a website?

1410

- 1411 Respondent: Yes, you can find that. Here are the two hospitals. That's a  
1412 photograph of [REDACTED] Hospital. That's an architect's  
1413 impression, that's not a photograph, because it's such a scruffy  
1414 building, they didn't want to present that as the site.
- 1415 Imagine that, you're from Liverpool, you know about tower blocks. My  
1416 best friend at college was from Knowsley.
- 1417
- 1418 Interviewer: Ah, right.
- 1419
- 1420 Respondent: Imagine that as a scruffy building rather than this, and that is what it  
1421 looks like. This is the one that they're going to reduce from 400 beds  
1422 to 87, if they get their way. I don't think they will get their way exactly  
1423 like that.
- 1424
- 1425 Interviewer: Seeing from what you say, the thing needs to be backed up, doesn't  
1426 it?
- 1427
- 1428 Respondent: So the scrutiny, because what we're doing is scrutiny even though it's  
1429 not a scrutiny, would be to say we haven't been convinced by your  
1430 financial model. Not only us, the commissioners say that they're not  
1431 convinced by it. The head of the Clinical Commissioning Group has  
1432 said, "We don't see how it works out financially."
- 1433
- 1434 Interviewer: You need to make the case.
- 1435
- 1436 Respondent: You end up with different vocabulary being used. To a hospital  
1437 manager, A&E, it seems to me, this is my observation, is about heart  
1438 attacks and strokes and people dying from major traffic accidents. For  
1439 the members of the public who came to our events, it's about what



1440 happens when your daughter falls off her bike. That's what they mean  
1441 by A&E.

1442

1443 Interviewer: That's right, and it's the fear factor as well. It's a case of: what do I do  
1444 if?

1445

1446 Respondent: What happens now and has happened for a number of years is if you  
1447 have a major heart attack in any part of [REDACTED] you don't go to  
1448 [REDACTED] Hospital, you don't go to Huddersfield Hospital, you go to  
1449 Leeds anyway. It's already happening.

1450 The specialist services are in Leeds. If you have a stroke in  
1451 [REDACTED] or Huddersfield and you live in Huddersfield, you go to  
1452 [REDACTED] because that's where the stroke unit is, it's already  
1453 happening.

1454 I think the People's Commission has accepted if you're about to die,  
1455 go to where the specialist is, it doesn't matter, well, make sure it  
1456 doesn't matter if it's a longer journey.

1457

1458 Interviewer: Yes.

1459

1460 Respondent: Do you remember the footballer who collapsed at Spurs for -

1461

1462 Interviewer: I do.

1463

1464 Respondent: The story about that is that there was a consultant watching the game,  
1465 heart surgeon, went onto the ground, went into the ambulance with  
1466 him, and the ambulance drove past three hospitals in London because  
1467 the consultant knew where the best place to go was.

1468                                So the journey time's longer, the outcome is -  
1469

1470    Interviewer:                I suppose it's this issue about convincing people that the journey time  
1471                                isn't going to be a problem.  
1472

1473    Respondent:                Yes, and that's a hard job.  
1474

1475    Interviewer:                Instinctively you think, "If I can get somewhere within five minutes  
1476                                rather half an hour or something -"  
1477

1478    Respondent:                This is where scrutiny is a good place to rehearse arguments. The  
1479                                health people say the treatment starts when the ambulance arrives.  
1480                                We've got skilled paramedics in the ambulance, the treatment starts  
1481                                when the ambulance arrives.  
1482                                You need to get to the specialist service and the journey time isn't so  
1483                                critical. It is critical and it's critical for different conditions.  
1484                                There's one, it sounds ridiculous but they said this in one bit of  
1485                                research I read, it's critical for drowning. Well, of course it bloody is.  
1486                                You can't wait an hour for a doctor if you're drowning.  
1487                                What the people are saying to us is, A) we're really not convinced,  
1488                                convince us. Secondly, once you're there, we want to visit our  
1489                                relatives.  
1490

1491    Interviewer:                That's the other point of course.  
1492

1493    Respondent:                Most people in acute hospital are now over 65, so their wives and  
1494                                husbands and carers and nearest and dearest are over 65. It's not  
1495                                universally true obviously, but it's an older population.



1496

1497 Interviewer: There's a question around getting to visit where -

1498

1499 Respondent: If your husband's in Huddersfield Hospital and it's three buses, and it's  
1500 three buses to Huddersfield Hospital from anywhere in [REDACTED]  
1501 except for here where you can get two buses.

1502 If you live in the centre of [REDACTED] -

1503

1504 Interviewer: You're all right.

1505

1506 Respondent: It's still two buses every day, twice a day if you want to visit twice a  
1507 day. What happens is usually neighbours rally around and they give  
1508 you a lift, and it's a balance. None of us can have a hospital on our  
1509 street corner.

1510

1511 Interviewer: It's a balance, you're right, it's difficult.

1512

1513 Respondent: It's a balance, so that's where the scrutiny process, when it works  
1514 well, should be rehearsing those arguments in public. The in public bit  
1515 is really important.

1516

1517 Interviewer: It's fascinating. I'm really grateful to you.

1518

1519 Respondent: I'm worried I'm giving you all the best examples because actually,  
1520 some of it we go, "Oh, bloody hell, look at this agenda, it's terribly  
1521 boring." It's not really that impact.

1522

1523 Interviewer: The thing that's common to me from it is that first of all there's a real  
1524 determination on behalf of scrutiny to get to grips with some of these  
1525 issues. These issues, you mentioned about the situation with A&E, it's  
1526 a difficult issue. You mentioned about the dementia stuff. It's not easy  
1527 stuff but it requires somebody to do the thinking and to involve people  
1528 in what the solutions are, and although they're not easy you need to  
1529 try and start that work and get it moving.

1530 What you've said is interesting because if somebody had said to me  
1531 even six weeks ago, "Scrutiny, what's the main thing?" I'd have said  
1532 scrutinising decisions that comes from cabinet.

1533 From what you're saying to me, yes, it does do that and that is  
1534 important, but you've also got this other stuff which the main overview  
1535 stuff in terms of policy.

1536

1537 Respondent: Scrutinising decisions of cabinet is an important safeguard. When I  
1538 worked at [REDACTED] we used to talk about you'd call a decision in,  
1539 you'd take it to scrutiny, you'd take it back to the executive as they  
1540 called in in [REDACTED].

1541 The executive always made a recommendation in response. "Point A:  
1542 The Executive thanks such-and-such a scrutiny panel for all its work in  
1543 this issue. Point B: Piss off." Obviously not phrased like that but -

1544

1545 Interviewer: That was the gist.

1546

1547 Respondent: All you've done is delayed something for 4 weeks 90% of the time. In  
1548 the middle of that you've got a director usually because I think we still  
1549 call the officers to account more than the cabinet members which is a  
1550 flaw and we've got them to come in public to explain their decision.

1551 This is benefitting it but predominantly, you're too late. I'll give you this  
1552 example. I love my subjects, I'm going on about it.

1553



1554 Interviewer: It's absolutely fascinating for me to hear, I'm really grateful.

1555

1556 Respondent: When I worked in [REDACTED] there was an issue about Ilkley Moor, the  
1557 management of Ilkley Moor which is within [REDACTED] Council District.

1558 The cabinet, the executive member at the time was a Conservative, it  
1559 was a Conservative run authority at the time, Anne [REDACTED] and  
1560 Anne [REDACTED] said, "I'm not bringing my report on Ilkley Moor to  
1561 scrutiny, I'm not bringing it. We'll take it to executive. If you don't like it,  
1562 call it in."

1563 The chair of the scrutiny panel said, "I want a discussion at scrutiny  
1564 before it goes to executive," so there's a challenge and I'm the little  
1565 scrutiny officer and the director is saying, "I'm doing what Anne  
1566 [REDACTED] says, we're not bringing you a report," and it's my job to  
1567 try and support scrutiny.

1568 Eventually I said, "We don't want your report with your  
1569 recommendations, we want a discussion. It's not about the report, it's  
1570 about the issue." Eventually they came very reluctantly, and the  
1571 director, a guy who I liked called Allan Mannering, he brought two  
1572 PowerPoint slides which I think was intended to be an insult to the  
1573 scrutiny panel.

1574 It's meant to be, "All right, you've made us come - two slides."

1575

1576 Interviewer: That's all you're getting.

1577

1578 Respondent: The first slide talked about the issues, bracken was an issue on Ilkley  
1579 Moor. Grouse shooting is an issue on Ilkley Moor. Maintaining the  
1580 buildings the council owns is an issue on Ilkley Moor, and four or five  
1581 others I can't remember.

1582 The options, which was you could sell it, you could invest in it, he gave  
1583 them exactly what the scrutiny panel needed for a proper discussion.

1584

1585 Interviewer: Oh, that really opened up the debate because you have the basics to  
1586 run through it all? Fascinating.

1587

1588 Respondent: An hour later, Anne [REDACTED] is walking away with more or less  
1589 cross party support for where she's going. Why was she so reluctant  
1590 to bring it? Because the politics meant she didn't want to give them the  
1591 press release.

1592 She wanted to say, "I have come in and saved Ilkley Moor. I use that  
1593 as an example: don't write a 30-page report. Come and tell us what  
1594 you're thinking about. The scrutiny panel can say, "Have you thought  
1595 about this? Have you thought about that?"

1596 Then if you're clever as an officer, you write your report for cabinet  
1597 that says, "We've talked to the scrutiny panel, they were very helpful,  
1598 they gave us some really good suggestions and we've built them into  
1599 our proposal."

1600

1601 Interviewer: So it incorporates it?

1602

1603 Respondent: That makes it a lot harder for the scrutiny panel to call it in. Sometimes  
1604 what you get when you get those discussions, we had one, I think it  
1605 was a calling, the cabinet changed, reduced the opening hours in  
1606 some of our customer access points in the towns other than [REDACTED] as  
1607 a cut, as a saving.

1608

1609 Interviewer: The one-stop shops?

1610

1611 Respondent: Where you go to pay your council tax or to make a query about a  
1612 service or whatever. They shut them, they changed them from five-



1613 day a week to three-day a week and they had a schedule. I can't  
1614 remember where it's a calling or whether it came before it went to  
1615 cabinet, but they took it to the councillors, and the councillors by and  
1616 large accepted that we had to make savings. They accepted the case.

1617 One of them said, I think it was Brighouse, "You're suggesting  
1618 Monday, Wednesday and Thursday open?" The officer said yes, that's  
1619 right, and this is a Brighouse councillor.

1620 The Brighouse councillor said, "But it's market day on Tuesday. You're  
1621 closing it on market day." It's simple thing, isn't it, but the local  
1622 councillor -

1623

1624 Interviewer: It's local knowledge, isn't it?

1625

1626 Respondent: Someone in the office across the road where you met ■ yesterday  
1627 has been working out staff schedules without thinking about it's  
1628 market day on Tuesday, or Wednesday or Thursday, whatever it is.

1629

1630 Interviewer: That just demonstrates the need for local input in it.

1631

1632 Respondent: And pulling somebody out into the open, because at some stage,  
1633 probably someone from Brighouse who wasn't a councillor would have  
1634 said, "What, they're going to close it on market day when people do  
1635 come in?"

1636 A lot of our work passes without notice or interest. We've got a  
1637 meeting tonight, and when I first came here I found, and we still do,  
1638 we have financial monitoring reports that come every quarter to  
1639 scrutiny, and it's a waste of time, usually.

1640 I went to see the guy who's the head of finance and I said, "These  
1641 reports you're bringing, they don't say anything." He said, "Yes, I

1642 know. We need to report to the scrutiny panels, [REDACTED] I said, "But  
1643 you're not reporting, you're not saying anything."

1644 He said, "No, we need to have a process by which it can be seen that  
1645 we're putting these reports into the public arena." "You're not saying  
1646 anything." He said, "I know."

1647 So occasionally, you will get an issue out of them. It's usually not a  
1648 financial issue, it's a service issue, because they're all about services,  
1649 the financial reports are about services. We do this, so we have 20  
1650 reports a year...

1651

1652 Interviewer: It's not really telling anybody anything?

1653

1654 Respondent: It's not saying very much, it's not doing very much. Members quite like  
1655 it because they feel it's something they should keep their grip on, but  
1656 they're not keeping their grip on it because the reports don't really help  
1657 them.

1658 The first one when I came in 2009, I was supporting use of resources  
1659 that looks at legal services and financing, the central services.

1660 It was quarter 2 report. It said, let's say the budget for legal services  
1661 was £1 million. It said, "In the first 6 months of this year we've spent  
1662 £550,000 and the budget's £1 million and we will be in balance, we  
1663 will not overspend."

1664 I'm saying you spent £550,000 in 6 months and you're going to spend  
1665 £450,000 in the next 6 months where most of it is staff? "Don't ask  
1666 these questions, [REDACTED] We are publically presenting a balanced  
1667 budget."

1668 I said, "It's not being queried. How do you drop £100,000 over 6  
1669 months?" Eventually they said, "We've got some vacancies in HR and  
1670 we'll transfer money over there, that's how we'll cover it." I suppose  
1671 that came out -

1672



1673 Interviewer: It wouldn't have come out without the question.  
1674

1675 Respondent: They weren't presenting it for proper, they were really quite fed  
1676 up with me -  
1677

1678 Interviewer: Yes, asking a question.  
1679

1680 Respondent: All right, so you've got vacancies in HR. Why have we got vacancies  
1681 in HR, do we need those posts? Can we scrap them? Why don't we  
1682 scrap the posts? "Well, we need them." "If you need them, fill them."  
1683 I was doing that and the members weren't, so it was happening  
1684 behind the scenes. Some of the reports got a little bit better.  
1685 In adults health and social care, not so much recently but up until a  
1686 year ago, 18 months ago, they were overspending on residential care  
1687 for adults by £800,000 or £900,00 a year, and underspending on  
1688 home care £800,000 or £900,00 a year.  
1689 I was saying: shouldn't we be looking after people at home wherever  
1690 we can? Eventually they said to me we assess people's needs and we  
1691 need to spend more on residential care because they need residential  
1692 care. That's what we've got.  
1693 I said the only place we can get it is from home care because we can't  
1694 overspend. All right, so that did open up the debate a little bit, but that  
1695 item we'll be dealing with tonight is probably between 8:15 and 8:30,  
1696 and the members will be putting their coats on.  
1697 We rarely stick to it but what we say is that we should have meetings  
1698 that are no longer than two hours and meetings that have no more  
1699 than three substantive items on it. We don't stick to it but it's a rule of  
1700 thumb, and the reason being that if you have an item at the scrutiny  
1701 panel that takes five minutes, you haven't scrutinised it, or it's been so  
1702 trivial that -

1703

1704 Interviewer: Shouldn't have got...

1705

1706 Respondent: If you have an item that takes 40 minutes, and if you have 3 items on  
1707 an agenda, you might take an hour and 2 half hours, but if you give  
1708 something 40 minutes, it's probably set at the right level that there's  
1709 enough there to have a discussion about. It probably means that  
1710 members have given it a good go.

1711 Sometimes it means that the officer, cynically or otherwise, has  
1712 brought a 30-minute presentation. Good tactic, don't answer  
1713 questions, talk at them. I have done it myself in the past.

1714 Again, not always trying to cynically, but an element of that.

1715

1716 Interviewer: Like talking out a parliamentary bill, isn't it?

1717

1718 Respondent: I failed here because we've got five substantive items.

1719

1720 Interviewer: Might be a long night then.

1721

1722 Respondent: My thinking around this agenda: closer to home is about all the  
1723 hospital changes, and we fought hard to get the information out of  
1724 them. They actually gave me the report in writing, then withdraw it  
1725 because they didn't want it on our website, so one of our battles is to  
1726 get information out into the public arena.

1727 I think that we've neglected mental health at the scrutiny panel. The  
1728 chair agrees, and they run mental health services, so I didn't want to  
1729 knock that off when that came up.



1730 The better care funds, the health and wellbeing board asked for it to  
1731 go to scrutiny before it went to cabinet and that's going to cabinet in  
1732 December.

1733 At one level, that's a technicality but it's again some public scrutiny of  
1734 an issue.

1735 We had an outstanding item on equipment and adaptations which  
1736 members actually raised, they were concerned. This is for disabled  
1737 people, putting stair lifts in, that sort of stuff, and members want it  
1738 dealt with sooner rather than later so I couldn't postpone that.

1739 That's about waiting times, how long does it take to get a walk-in  
1740 shower -

1741

1742 Interviewer: It's always a key issue, isn't it?

1743

1744 Respondent: I think that could be quite straightforward but good scrutiny, so it gets  
1745 out into the open. Then I'd asked the women who's doing the  
1746 dementia friendly stuff to come, and I didn't want to not disappoint her  
1747 but if I'd pushed it back it would have been in February or March  
1748 because it's not going to be in December.

1749 Then we've got the revenue one, that will be 8:15, 8:30. Then we  
1750 always have the work plans to finalise when they really are putting  
1751 their coats on and I'm saying, "Hang on a minute, you need to decide  
1752 what you're doing," and they're going, "See you, [REDACTED]"

1753

1754 Interviewer: I'm really grateful to you about all of this because you have given me  
1755 such an insight this morning into scrutiny stuff. I've worked for local  
1756 authorities now for -

1757

1758 Respondent: When you talk to [REDACTED] she will tell you a different tale. I don't think  
1759 she'll disagree with anything I've said in principle, but she goes to our

1760 use of resources scrutiny panel and that's our worst resources  
1761 scrutiny group panel. It doesn't work anywhere near as well as it  
1762 should do.

1763 It's partly down to where we were about an hour and a half ago which  
1764 was it should be the most senior of the scrutiny panels and it should  
1765 be looking at the council's budget position -

1766

1767 Interviewer: Sort of corporate.

1768

1769 Respondent: But it doesn't. Over the past five years, we've probably had four  
1770 discussions about the legal services structure: how many solicitors  
1771 we've got, how many legal assistants we've got. It's just deadly, it's  
1772 not adding any value.

1773 Because it's not got that strategic look, the groups don't put their best  
1774 people on. You get a self-fulfilling prophecy.

1775 [REDACTED]

1776 [REDACTED]

1777 [REDACTED]

1778 [REDACTED]

1779 [REDACTED]

1780 He asked a question last meeting, and I thought to myself I have no  
1781 idea what he's asked. I've got absolutely no idea what he's asked, nor  
1782 has he. Eventually, the officer who was from HR, she's looking at her  
1783 boss like this. Eventually, what he wanted was any answer.

1784 So she gave an answer that wasn't the answer to his question  
1785 because no one knew what the question was and, "Thank you very  
1786 much, thank you." She just said something that was completely, it had  
1787 two or three of the words you used, she reflected it back to you but  
1788 she didn't answer your question because it made no sense.

1789 [REDACTED] will say possibly, "I turn up for use of resources, I'm not really  
1790 sure what it's actually doing."



1791 I've said to her, she's been here two years and she's probably been to  
1792 two or three other scrutiny panels, "You've seen the worst one." She's  
1793 come to one of mine and she said, "That was good, I enjoyed that,"  
1794 when we looked at an issue in some depth.

1795 What I started doing, and I don't oversell it because I think the  
1796 problem we have, we often have good discussions and it makes no  
1797 difference or it makes a marginal difference.

1798 I started doing what I call themed meetings. We had a discussion on  
1799 diabetes, the adults health and social care, where I got some people  
1800 with diabetes from Diabetes UK. We got the consultant from the  
1801 hospital, we got a range of six expert witnesses and they had a good  
1802 discussion about diabetes.

1803 It raised one or two issues but has it taken it any further? Probably,  
1804 probably not. You have a five times higher chance of getting diabetes  
1805 if you're Asian compared to being white.

1806 In [REDACTED] one of the clinical commissioning groups has a population  
1807 that's 75% Asian. They've done masses on just identifying diabetes.  
1808 Diabetes kills. People think it doesn't but it does.

1809 We've got 12% of our population is Asian. Most of them have got  
1810 diabetes. We ought to be doing something about this. People end up  
1811 getting limbs amputated because of diabetes.

1812 In a sense, the bit of work we did was about raising awareness for it,  
1813 but if you said, "Has it made any difference whatsoever?" I'd have to  
1814 say hardly any. That happens.

1815

1816 Interviewer: Is there a correct following that through to try and make sure that  
1817 when scrutiny does something and comes up with something and  
1818 does a really good in-depth [REDACTED] of work, is there any magic trick or is  
1819 there anything which you can do to try and make people take notice of  
1820 it and do something or is it too difficult?

1821



1822 Respondent: I don't think there's a magic trick. Sometimes if you do something in-  
1823 depth, you get it into people's heads, members', councillors' heads.  
1824 Someone described it as a bit of work that has a long tail. My  
1825 colleague [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] talked about that, so you imagine the  
1826 graphs going over time. It has an impact.

1827 It's not about reports, it's not about report back, it's about councillors  
1828 remembering. There's a thing in the world of dementia called the  
1829 Butterfly Scheme. It's a very simple scheme, it was devised by a  
1830 relative of someone with dementia.

1831 What happens in acute hospitals in particular is that the staff aren't  
1832 trained at working with people with dementia, and sometimes don't  
1833 identify people with dementia.

1834 If you agree and you've got dementia, or your relative agrees, there's  
1835 a butterfly emblem put on your bed and then you train your staff. So if  
1836 you haven't got a butterfly emblem and they bring you a cup of tea  
1837 around, they say, "Here's your cup of tea."

1838 If you have got a butterfly emblem they bring you a cup of tea and  
1839 make sure you drink it, because what happens is people get  
1840 dehydrated with dementia in hospitals where they're supposed to be  
1841 looked after, because the staff are busy and people with dementia are  
1842 difficult and the staff aren't trained.

1843 The Butterfly Scheme is something that struck a chord with the  
1844 councillors, and if you met our mayor, [REDACTED] now and said,  
1845 "What's the Butterfly Scheme?" she'd say, "Yes, that's what we heard  
1846 about in the dementia review, that's where there's a symbol on the  
1847 bed in hospital."

1848 So it's got a long tail. She can talk about that in the community, she  
1849 knows a bit about that.

1850 The Centre for Public Scrutiny does surveys that say: what  
1851 percentage of recommendations for scrutiny have been agreed by  
1852 cabinets?

1853



1854 Interviewer: It's not particularly the point.

1855

1856 Respondent: It's not the point, because if I wanted to get 100%, I could get 100%  
1857 on that easy. It would have no value. Do you agree with virtue? Yes  
1858 we do.

1859 The scrutiny panel is very concerned to make sure everyone gets the  
1860 best service possible. Yes, we'll have a bit of that.

1861

1862 Interviewer: It's really this longer term thinking, isn't it?

1863

1864 Respondent: Sometimes it comes with the most interesting things. There's a risk  
1865 that we set in the agenda, not the councillors, because I spend my  
1866 time thinking about, you can tell, I've been talking to you for two hours  
1867 about it. I spend my time talking about scrutiny and doing it.

1868 Ward members were fed up about planning enforcements. What  
1869 members saw was people getting away with getting retrospective  
1870 planning applications approved.

1871

1872 Interviewer: It is an issue, yes.

1873

1874 Respondent: They raised this issue and the officers came and talked to them about  
1875 it and said, "If someone's built a garden wall that we would have given  
1876 them planning permission, what do you want us to do, make them  
1877 knock it down?" The councillors said yes, because then the next  
1878 person gets away with it and the next person.

1879 They had this debate, it didn't come from us, it was members saying,  
1880 "We do our surgery. Some people say, 'The bloke across the road has  
1881 built this and he hasn't got planning.'"

1882

1883 Interviewer: It's a big issue. As a planning warder I can agree.

1884

1885 Respondent: They bought a ward issue and gave the director -

1886

1887 Interviewer: So they really brought that -

1888

1889 Respondent: - of economy and environment a hard time. The one thing that I've  
1890 observed in a council that members are expert on is planning.

1891

1892 Interviewer: Yes, I know it's true.

1893

1894 Respondent: Because it is so -

1895

1896 Interviewer: It really is true. They get people knocking on their doors -

1897

1898 Respondent: It's important to people.

1899

1900 Interviewer: It really is.

1901

1902 Respondent: They will have obviously lots of other knowledge, and they sit on the  
1903 planning and they get trained, they have to be trained for working on  
1904 planning committee. They know about predetermination and all the  
1905 rest of it.

1906

1907 Interviewer: They do.



1908

1909 Respondent: I hear them talking and I think I don't know any of this stuff. I'm not that  
1910 interested, to be honest, but I don't quite understand what they're  
1911 talking about but they know. That example was one where members  
1912 came -

1913

1914 Interviewer: I think they're making a business turn out of the -

1915

1916 Respondent: - and said, "This is a really important issue." One of the things I'm  
1917 worried about having missed, this same [REDACTED] Raistrick, three and a  
1918 half years ago when he was on the scrutiny panel for children, he said,  
1919 "I was out for a drink in [REDACTED] and there were these Asian lads  
1920 harassing a young white girl and I think they were trying to get her into  
1921 prostitution."

1922 You're out for a drink, teenagers, young people, there's the sexual  
1923 tension, there's drink, there's all the rest of it, I suspect that what we  
1924 probably missed what was a councillor reference on child sexual  
1925 exploitation.

1926 I'm not going to be called for any enquiry but he had picked up  
1927 something and we didn't quite follow it through.

1928

1929 Interviewer: I suppose it's always with the benefit of hindsight, because you look at  
1930 those issues now when you're think of Rotherham, when you think of  
1931 [REDACTED] it's easy in hindsight to look back and say maybe we  
1932 should have -

1933

1934 Respondent: But those are the things we've got to use in better scrutiny, and I use  
1935 Rotherham and the main thing I use, particularly given the work I do,  
1936 is the Francis Report about Mid Staffs Hospitals.

1937 Francis made 290 recommendations, 6 were about scrutiny. What he  
1938 said about scrutiny was you took on trust far too much what the  
1939 people responsible for running services told you.

1940 The chief executives of the hospitals were coming to scrutiny councils,  
1941 “It’s all right, it’s all okay. It’s a blip,” or whatever. He said, “You’ve not  
1942 paid attention to what people and the press were telling you.”

1943 This is just an example, again, from my personal work. A couple of  
1944 months after Francis, the local paper, a local journalist wrote an article  
1945 about CQC reports into some residential homes.

1946 The article said a resident had been found with faeces under her  
1947 fingernails. I took the report to the director of adult services and one of  
1948 the heads of service, just me, I said I think this should come to  
1949 scrutiny.

1950 They’re good, honest committee workers, managers, and they said,  
1951 “██████ these are old reports, this is 6 months old, and CQC goes in  
1952 once. Someone might have faeces under her fingernails but 20  
1953 minutes later she wouldn’t have done.”

1954

1955 Interviewer: Snapshot -

1956

1957 Respondent: I didn’t quite say, “You’re being complacent,” but I said two things to  
1958 them. One: six months isn’t an old report, it’s a new report. When does  
1959 it, you know?

1960 “Secondly, you’re not right, it’s three months old,” and they were  
1961 saying it’s about six months old. It wasn’t six months old, it was three  
1962 months old. Three months old is brand new.

1963

1964 Interviewer: You’re right.

1965



1966 Respondent: We brought the issue of quality in residential care to scrutiny because  
 1967 I was down at the Centre for Public Scrutiny and we heard from the  
 1968 scrutiny manager, my equivalent at Staffordshire County Council who  
 1969 had given evidence himself to Francis.

1970 He talked to a group of scrutiny chairs, health committee scrutiny  
 1971 chairs, and officers about his scrutiny chair of health sat effectively in  
 1972 the dock with Francis, and Francis had put up a PowerPoint with all  
 1973 the regulation that related to health overview in scrutiny and the law.

1974 “Bullet point one: Councillor [REDACTED] How have you implemented that?”  
 1975 Councillor [REDACTED] hadn't read it.

1976 “Councillor, point two, how have you implemented that? What does  
 1977 that mean for your work of your committee?” The whole room down in  
 1978 London in a local government house went white because my scrutiny  
 1979 chairs couldn't answer those questions. I hadn't advised them.

1980

1981 Interviewer: It was probably a string of different -  
 1982

1983 Respondent: I've read the regulations, I haven't read them in the last six months. I  
 1984 think I know them, I refer to them when there's a particular question.

1985 So when someone like Francis comes up, I've got a balance between  
 1986 the director of adult services, [REDACTED] I have a lot of time for her, I like her  
 1987 personally, I think she's a very skilled manager, I think she's going to  
 1988 get a bigger job somewhere else soon, she's got all this and she says,  
 1989 “It's an old report, six months old.”

1990 I've got to go on the side of saying, “Sorry, we're hauling you in front  
 1991 of scrutiny,” not using that language but, “Sorry, this is going on the  
 1992 agenda.

1993 I get paid £35,000 a year. The director of adult services gets paid  
 1994 £110,000 or £120,000 a year. I'm a minion in this setup but we've got  
 1995 to work on...

1996 [REDACTED] really good, [REDACTED] puts pressure on me, that's her job, I think  
 1997 that's right, but she's not a bully. It's a creative tension, if you like, but  
 1998 you've got to...

1999 Rotherham and Mid Staffs and the Winterbourne View which was  
 2000 about a hospital in the South West with learning disabilities where the  
 2001 BBC -

2002 Again, it wasn't councillors that found out about Winterbourne View, it  
 2003 was the BBC with a hidden camera, that scrutiny.

2004 Our press, when I see articles in our what is now sadly only a weekly  
 2005 paper about things in the council, my thought is, not is the journalist  
 2006 making mischief which he or she may be -

2007

2008 Interviewer: Check that issue just to see.

2009

2010 Respondent: - but let's check it out, it's a [REDACTED] of evidence. I've sent an article from  
 2011 the Huddersfield [REDACTED] to the members of the scrutiny panel this  
 2012 morning, just sent them the link to the Huddersfield [REDACTED] website.

2013 I think I do it more than [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] we work in different ways, but  
 2014 I'll send half a dozen articles or reports to councillors every week -

2015

2016 Interviewer: Just to keep people up-to-date with what's about, yes.

2017

2018 Respondent: Yes, stimulate their thinking. An example of something that's  
 2019 happened elsewhere. What happened in Mid Staffs was the system of  
 2020 which the scrutiny panel was very little [REDACTED] didn't listen to what  
 2021 patients and their relatives were saying, and they talk about 1,500  
 2022 unnecessary deaths.

2023

2024 Interviewer: Serious stuff.



2025

2026     Respondent:            It's always going to be serious about vulnerable elderly people and  
2027                                   children, but the same about people speeding through your village. If  
2028                                   residents say people are driving too fast through my village, you don't  
2029                                   say, "We did some checks six months ago."

2030

2031     Interviewer:            It's this issue about ringing alarm bells to get people to look at some of  
2032                                   this stuff to bring it -

2033

2034     Respondent:            Yes. I'm going to have to stop shortly but we started off talking about  
2035                                   accountability. The regulation, as you were saying, it's about holding  
2036                                   the cabinet and chief officers accountable, and it is.

2037                                   Just as an aside, I think councillors sometimes feel much more  
2038                                   comfortable having a go at a director than a fellow councillor, there but  
2039                                   for the grace of God go I.

2040                                   We had a Labour administration until July, ■■■ will have told you about  
2041                                   that, and I think the Labour scrutiny members backed off a bit over the  
2042                                   previous month, they didn't want to criticise their own cabinet member,  
2043                                   but if you get the directory, you're not criticising your own cabinet  
2044                                   member even though he or she sat next to them. It's somehow more  
2045                                   comfortable.

2046                                   Road traffic accidents is a good example, we've not dealt with this in a  
2047                                   number of years, I've not been involved for a number of years.

2048                                   They respond to road traffic accidents based on stats, so we can't do  
2049                                   anything about this road until...

2050                                   Councillors say, "What, until three people have been killed?" and the  
2051                                   officers say, "It's because we've got limited resources, we've got to put  
2052                                   our resources where the biggest risk is, and we've got to do that  
2053                                   statistically." Up to a point.

2054

2055 Interviewer: How many people have got to die before you do something to sort it  
2056 out though?  
2057

2058 Respondent: Possibly a final anecdote, this is 35 years ago, when I was single, I  
2059 shared a house with a college lecturer who was also a Labour county  
2060 councillor when we had a county council, West Yorkshire County  
2061 Council.

2062 He told me this story about some of his constituents complained about  
2063 street lighting. So he phoned up the officer concerned and said,  
2064 “We’ve got street lights out in my ward and I want them repaired.” The  
2065 officer said, “Ah, Councillor [REDACTED] do you remember 6 months ago at  
2066 the means and ways budget committee, you voted to take £30,000 out  
2067 of street lighting in Leicester?”

2068 He said, “Yes, I remember that stuff, I was there.” “Well, the  
2069 consequence of you taking out £30,000 from street lighting is that we  
2070 can’t do all the repairs. That’s what we decided to do.”

2071 Lester said, “That makes sense to me. Okay, I’ll report back to my  
2072 constituents.” There are two councillors for his ward. The other bloke  
2073 is another Labour councillor who’s been a train driver or something.  
2074 He phones up, “Street light’s out in my ward. I want them fixed,” and  
2075 the officer says, “Do you remember six months ago you took this  
2076 budget decision to take the money out?”

2077 Lester, my friend, says, “Yes, I remember this issue,” and the  
2078 councillor said, “I don’t give a bugger. Fix the street lights.” Lester said  
2079 to me, “Who was the better councillor? Who got the job done for his  
2080 constituents?”

2081 Actually, both of them are right, aren’t they, and that’s the balance. So  
2082 you’ve got to have people who say, “I don’t give a bugger, fix the  
2083 street lights,” but equally you’ve got to have officers who are robust  
2084 enough to say, “No, because you took the money away from us. Give  
2085 us the money back, we’ll fix it.”



2086 Scrutiny is one place where sometimes, not always but sometimes  
2087 you can have that -

2088

2089 Interviewer: Get that debate, yes.

2090

2091 Respondent: Get that debate going. I'm sure I've made it look and sound fantastic  
2092 compared to being sometimes very, very dull.

2093

2094 Interviewer: I'll tell you what you have done, sir. You have given me a really in-  
2095 depth insight into what happens.

2096

2097 Respondent: Or what should happen sometimes.

2098

2099 Interviewer: What you've done for me is you've really brought it to life. I could sit  
2100 there and read a load of stuff and for me it wouldn't have the same  
2101 impact in terms of what you said to me today, really.

2102 I'm really grateful to you because those issues, particularly in terms of  
2103 the health and social care stuff and the talk about public participation  
2104 and the role of members and the role of officers, you've really shone a  
2105 light onto that, I'm really grateful.

2106

2107 Respondent: You said you're passionate about politics, I'm passionate about  
2108 politics.

2109

2110 Interviewer: Yes.

2111

2112 Respondent: This guy, [REDACTED] Raistrick is an interesting character, I've talked about  
2113 him two or three times. That's [REDACTED] there. He runs the newsagent's on  
2114 Hipperholme crossroads. The director of economy and environment,  
2115 in an officer meeting he once said to me and the six or seven other  
2116 people who were there, "I'm sick of being told how to do my job by a  
2117 newsagent."

2118 The chief executive of the time, not [REDACTED] said to him two things,  
2119 "One, he didn't used to be a newsagent, he used to run a business. So  
2120 when he's talking about the economy, he used to run a business with  
2121 a seven figure turnover. Secondly, you listen to the newsagent. You  
2122 listen to the local councillor because the fact that he's a newsagent  
2123 doesn't make his opinions any less worthy. People come into the  
2124 shop."

2125

2126 Interviewer: Plus the fact people come to the shops, they'll bar the way.

2127

2128 Respondent: Officers, when we meet, "Bloody hell, Councillor So-and-so, she  
2129 hasn't got a clue, has she?" Often she hasn't, and often she's a pain in  
2130 the backside, but if you don't believe there's a role for councillors, go  
2131 and work for Heinz. We've got Nestlé's making chocolate across the  
2132 road from the railway station, go and make Mars Bars or whatever  
2133 Nestlé's make.

2134

2135 Interviewer: That taps into a wider issue. There are all these arguments these days  
2136 about how local authorities have been coming out of the private sector  
2137 and it's been commercialised and sold and everything else, but there's  
2138 a real issue in terms of public service. You could outsource and  
2139 privatise everything and let everything just be run by the private  
2140 sector.

2141 That is one view, but if you take the view that these issues in terms of  
2142 the economy, health care, public services, if you take the view that



2143 they are public policy issues and they are decided through the political  
2144 process, then there is a legitimate role for members to be evolving -

2145

2146 Respondent: Absolutely. You had all that energy about the Scottish Referendum.  
2147 Why? Because it was so important. The 16 year old kid who got the  
2148 vote for the first time in Scotland or someone who's never voted in  
2149 their life, suddenly realises that we're going to be a different country,  
2150 so you've got this energy.

2151 You then get the Manchester situation, we had an announcement last  
2152 week.

2153

2154 Interviewer: Absolutely.

2155

2156 Respondent: If you ask the technical question of people: is there any appetite for  
2157 regional government? They don't know what it is. If you ask them  
2158 whether they want an elected mayor in a referendum, they usually say  
2159 no. That's what's happened up and down the country, but if you say: is  
2160 Manchester important?

2161

2162 Interviewer: If you ask them the question and say: is the Westminster system too  
2163 centralised? Are you listened to? Do you feel distant? You'll get a  
2164 different -

2165 Scotland, I was up there a few times, I went to a meeting in Liverpool  
2166 with Alex Salmond who is probably one of the shrewdest political  
2167 operators I've seen anywhere.

2168 It was fascinating to see the energy in that debate, and I felt really  
2169 lucky, given 300 years since the union, to see that happen, and it's  
2170 clearly had a spinoff in terms of the debates in England around  
2171 powers and decentralisation and what should happen to the cities and  
2172 the counties. It's clearly given some energy to that.



2173 We'll wait and see what happens at the general election in six months  
 2174 and whether politicians lose interest, but I do tend to think that when  
 2175 you look at the situation in terms of the Greater Manchester stuff and  
 2176 to some extent what's happening here with the combined authority  
 2177 and you look at the situation in Sheffield and to some extent the  
 2178 situation that we've got in Liverpool but not as difficult there because  
 2179 we've got fragmentation amongst the authorities.

2180 It look pretty much unstoppable now. You've got the chief executive of  
 2181 Manchester City Council saying that the current system is bust in  
 2182 terms of centralisation.

2183 Maybe there's now a realisation that it's not only the local authority  
 2184 sector fighting its own corner, that really in terms of the national  
 2185 economy, you're not \_\_\_\_ [1:48:18], that it really does boost national  
 2186 economic growth to give these places the power and funding.

2187 These are proud places. Liverpool, Manchester, West Midlands, The  
 2188 North East, Yorkshire, they're real proud places, and just maybe now  
 2189 they're starting to revive and pick up on the old history when they used  
 2190 to have some powers.

2191

2192 Respondent: The LEP and the combined authority and the Leeds City Region, they  
 2193 don't set the heart racing, but people don't like the fact that the trains  
 2194 from ██████ to Manchester are 30 years old. You'll have been on one  
 2195 this morning.

2196

2197 Interviewer: Yes. I was speaking to ██████ about this yesterday; I think you're  
 2198 absolutely right. If you start talking about \_\_\_\_ [1:49:17] and devolution  
 2199 and all that, I think people switched off.

2200 The leader of Trafford Council said in a conference I was at last week,  
 2201 speaking about people don't give a stuff, that's what he said, and I  
 2202 think it's true, but if you start speaking about the fact that you can't  
 2203 regulate the buses because you've got no power to do it, because you  
 2204 can't regulate the routes you can't get people to work on time. You



- 2205 can't sort out the trains, you can't electrify the railway line, you can't  
2206 put in the infrastructure, you've got no control over the skills budgets.
- 2207 If you start talking about things like that and say because we can't sort  
2208 out the skills we can't kill people up, we can't attract industry, people  
2209 then start to look at it but it's about making that case in terms of public  
2210 policy: how do you integrate health and social care -
- 2211
- 2212 Respondent: Exactly. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are not going to compete with Leeds in  
2213 terms of the economy. That's going to be the regional centre. The  
2214 centre of Leeds is going to be an exciting big city place, and [REDACTED]  
2215 and [REDACTED] are not.
- 2216 I don't know whether it's still true but Saltaire in [REDACTED] is 15 minutes  
2217 from Leeds City Centre on the train. People from Leeds at one stage  
2218 were buying houses at Saltaire without looking at them. They'd see a  
2219 photograph of them, they knew what Saltaire was like. The houses  
2220 were cheaper than Leeds, they were 15 minutes from Leeds City  
2221 Centre on the train and Saltaire's a nice place.
- 2222 So [REDACTED] is the place where people live who work in Leeds.
- 2223
- 2224 Interviewer: This is the other thing as well. If you look at how these boundaries are,  
2225 in Liverpool now we've got a city mayor that was elected. I think  
2226 looking at it from a leadership point of view, it's probably a good thing  
2227 but the problem is the authority of that stops at the city boundary.
- 2228 In Merseyside, we've got Wirral, we've got Sefton, we've got  
2229 Knowsley, we've got -
- 2230
- 2231 Respondent: Didn't you end up with a name for the organisation that had eight titles  
2232 in it?
- 2233
- 2234 Interviewer: It was absolutely ridiculous.

2235

2236 Respondent: When it should have been called either Merseyside or Liverpool, like  
2237 Manchester.

2238

2239 Interviewer: It was absolutely ridiculous but the problem you've got is that these  
2240 days it's something like 50% of the commuters come from outside the  
2241 local authority area.

2242 You've got people who were looking at these things on false  
2243 boundaries, and one of the problems you've got now in Liverpool is  
2244 the mayor's got authority over the Liverpool City Council area, but not  
2245 over Wirral, or Knowsley or anywhere else, and that was a particular  
2246 issue.

2247 They're looking to trying and resolve the combined authority but there  
2248 have been difficulties there. It comes back to what you're saying that  
2249 there needs to be a recognition that the main cities drive it, and they  
2250 drive growth for the wider area so that if you get Leeds, which is  
2251 prosperous, it brings prosperity to [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] to [REDACTED].

2252 I think Manchester have understood that for the last 10 to 15 years  
2253 through AGMA where the 10 authorities have worked together,  
2254 whereas others haven't and the West Midlands is catching up as well.

2255

2256 Respondent: The 2000 act, rather the stuff around it talked about having cabinet  
2257 members in particular who are recognised. I think they are few and far  
2258 between but the people who are recognised are the mayors. The  
2259 Mayor of Liverpool, I can't remember his surname but he's called Joe,  
2260 isn't he?

2261

2262 Interviewer: Anderson.

2263



- 2264 Respondent: Joe Anderson. Boris and Ken. You don't even need to know their  
2265 surnames, it's Boris and Ken.  
2266
- 2267 Interviewer: It is interesting because it does give you a focal point. I was looking at  
2268 something the other day, we were talking about the 1980s and the  
2269 situation we had in Liverpool where the council refused to set a rate  
2270 and we had all the ins and outs of that.
- 2271 What they said then was everybody in Liverpool in the mid-1980s  
2272 knew who the councillors were. They all knew the councillors, they all  
2273 knew the chair of the committees, they all knew the directed the  
2274 services, the director of education.
- 2275 It's true. People in Liverpool then did know. If you ask people now,  
2276 they'd probably know the mayor but they probably wouldn't know  
2277 anybody else.  
2278
- 2279 Respondent: I know Derek Hatton, I know his name. Whether it was because you  
2280 had passion of politics...
- 2281 At one level there's a rose tinted look back really. I'll tell you who's  
2282 written interestingly, Alan Bennett has written about growing up in  
2283 Leeds. One essay I've read of his about how important the council  
2284 was to them, and the emblem of Leeds City Council was on every  
2285 lamp post.
- 2286 In the 1930s when there were municipal socialists, because it was the  
2287 council that was building the schools and the roads and the hospitals  
2288 and bringing the gas in and doing all that stuff that made such a big  
2289 change to their lives that there are points in time when that becomes a  
2290 big issue.
- 2291 Right, shall we call a halt?  
2292
- 2293 Interviewer: Thank you very much, sir, really, really do appreciate it.

2294

2295

2296

END AUDIO

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2300