

city on top?



HILARY BENN (Lab, Leeds Central) - Education

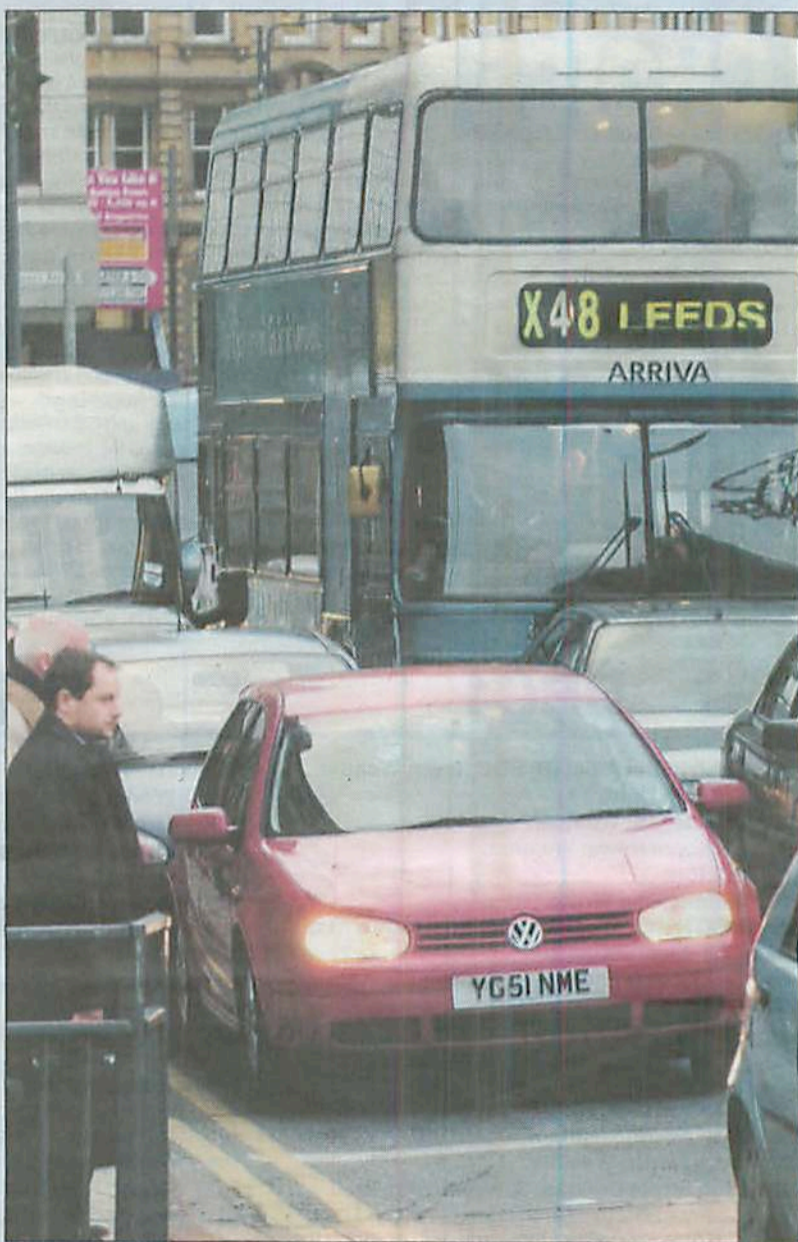


FABIAN HAMILTON (Lab, Leeds North East) - Leisure, Culture and the Creative Sector

particularly the newly-elected Conservative MPs Stuart Andrew (Pudsey) and Alec Shelbrooke (Elmet & Rothwell). "They are perfectly intelligent, sensible young men," Mr Hamilton said. Mr Shelbrooke, who is responsible for the transport portfolio, believes its more diverse political map will now make Leeds stronger. "We will drive people forward from our opposite parties. "When you have opposition parties in a city there will be competition and that competition is good for the city." By all accounts, the maiden Team Leeds meeting went well. Ian Williams, policy director at the Leeds Chamber, said: "It was very amicable. "There obviously are party differences but they all seem very willing to put those behind them and shout for the city.

United

"Maybe they recognise that possibly in the past Leeds has not had that united voice, especially when you compare it Manchester and Sheffield and Birmingham." The Chamber says the gatherings will be about "two way communication" and have offered to provide the MPs with all the expertise and briefing from the private sector that they need. Mr Williams added: "We can provide them with access to some pretty high level organisations that will have experts in certain areas. "On major transport issues there may well be an excellent transport organisation that can provide much more detailed information on a topic than they have accessed." And the MPs themselves know that the stakes are high - their constituents want this grown up approach to politics to succeed. "If we descend into party political bickering we will clearly fail and the electorate will recognise that," Mr Hamilton said.



PRESSING ISSUE: Congestion in Leeds city centre

Rival MPs agree on transport wishlist

TRANSPORT is the first area being tackled by the new Team Leeds. MPs are drawing up a transport masterplan outlining the projects needed to keep Leeds moving during the next 20 years. The document will be a wishlist of the schemes regarded as the top priorities for when the current squeeze on public spending finally ends. It was agreed to draw up the blueprint at the inaugural Team Leeds meeting. Elmet and Rothwell's Tory MP Alec Shelbrooke will be putting together the masterplan. He said: "It will be the city's ultimate transport vision and will ask 'what does Leeds need by 2030?' "The idea is that when money becomes available, it is there to be picked up off the shelf. "These might not be things that be funded now, but we can do the work on them now." He said that a similar approach was

taken by both Birmingham and Newcastle. Mr Shelbrooke said the first phase of transport improvements should be mass transit system which links the train station, city centre and Elland Road. "It will be vital if we get the 2018 World Cup and Leeds is a host city," he said.

Monorail

The document will look at the pros and cons of monorail and light rail systems and will even examine the Newcastle underground Metro network. An initial report will be prepared by December and the full document by next summer. But Mr Shelbrooke said he was making no assumptions about whether the coalition government will eventually give the green light to the under threat Leeds Trolleybus scheme.

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