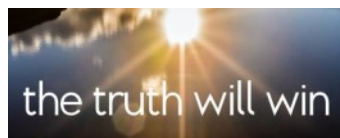




4 Years Old
with 1000s of
Readers



& will not be
supressed

Free
Press
Est 2021 Facts & Integrity

EXTRA

ISSUE 83 Extra

Calamity Council - Stated Wrong Ward for Election

Mistake NOT noticed by Staff or Cllrs
No Apology from any Cllr
Reluctance to Extend Deadline



Following the resignation of another Town Councillor (David Frame), Wetherby Town Council stated on their Facebook page and posted on social media (with an audience of 10s of 1000s) that 10 residents must take action to get an election in North Wetherby. The vacancy is actually in West Wetherby.



Ultimately Responsible - Town Clerk, Dianne Rickaby. Her response on next page.



Only opinion: 'unfortunate'

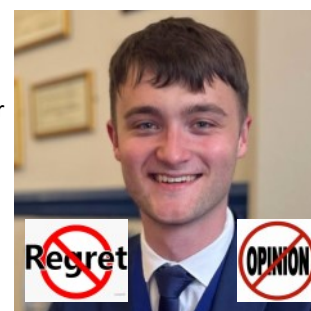
Cllr Norma Harrington (Con)
Her response on next page

Residents of that ward had only 2 days to contact Leeds City Council instead of 14. A resident discovered this serious error, not a Councillor or Council staff. As a result of it, the Free Press spread the wrong information to 1000s more on social media. We naturally asked for an extension to the deadline, which was initially ignored.

We asked long-standing Councillor Norma Harrington who is also Chair of the Staffing Cttee for her view on misleading 1000s of residents and any actions she will take to get an extension. She responded with an email containing no such actions, no opinion, no apology and no explanation of why she or her 13 colleagues did not notice such a large error.

We also sent the same email to spokesperson for the Council, Mayor Cllr Connor Mulhall. He is also Chair of the Comms Cttee and this was clearly a serious communications error. He did not respond at all.

The Town Clerk called the error a 'typo' and expressed no regret in the first response she sent us. On social media, she said sorry 'for the confusion'.



Mayor Connor Mulhall (Con)
and Chair of Comms Cttee

It's Happened Before! They Don't Learn From Their Mistakes

This Council again proves it is far from 'open and accountable', minimising such an important error. A Councillor has told us it's happened before in a previous election. So we asked Cllr Harrington for details of this previous error. She ignored our request for this information. We must therefore be suspicious and ask whether there is a deliberate policy to mislead residents (to make it more likely they will choose their own person and save money/hassle on an election). We asked her if this was the case and she ignored the issue altogether in her first response. In her second she said there was no such policy. Whatever the truth, it's clear that 2 senior Councillors will never use words like 'sorry' for the Council's mistakes, either individually or on behalf of all Councillors. Why?



They didn't learn in Jaws either

The Election in West Wetherby WILL GO AHEAD. Enough residents called for one. Date to be announced



If Wetherby Town Council had a culture of openness & accountability at all times, we would not need to publish an 'Extra' like this. We ask them to please address our issues properly and take full individual responsibility for mistakes, instead of trying to minimise them. Please stop being so defensive all the time and, in the case of one senior Cllr, responding like a robot. We will then start to respect and trust you.

Where everyone is
responsible, no one is
really responsible.

Thank You to our 1000s of Readers

Please send your News, Views & Events to:
WetherbyFreePress@PM.me

Town Clerk Response

"Hi Paul

I was made aware of this late last night, but I have to advise that the original notice displayed on our website did indeed have the correct information as did the notices on the notice boards.

Facebook is an additional tool to the communication regime and is not considered as the legal entity, it is a conduit to advertise daily updates.

The error was a typo and was not intentional by anyone at WTC.

I have asked electoral services at LCC if they require WTC to extend the notice of vacancy."

In response the Editor said he believed the website was incorrect as well because of an email he sent to a Councillor BEFORE the error was noticed by anybody. It said "From the Website" and continued to quote the Council's statement with the incorrect ward in it. He also said "Common sense and any fair-minded person would expect an extension to the deadline because of your mistake. The residents of West Wetherby had 2 days not 14 days

to register their interest in an election. Why did you / the Council not push for one?"

In response to this, the Town Clerk stated again that it was always the correct ward on the website. She added at the end "I will (sic) however ask the council if they wish to extend the notice period."



* For sale: One George Foreman Grill and one Muhammad Ali DVD set. Both boxed.

* A perfectionist walked into a bar. Apparently, it wasn't set high enough.

* What do you get when you cross a police officer with a skunk? Law and odour.

* What do toilets do when they're embarrassed? They get flushed.



* Spiders and snakes are a vital part of the eek-system.

* My wife said she's leaving me because of my obsession with tennis - and I'm too old. I said: "I'm only 40, Love."

* The official Beatles museum just extended its hours. It's now open 8 days a week.



* I got fired from my job because I kept asking customers whether they'd prefer "smoking" or "non-smoking." Apparently, the correct terms are "cremation" or "burial."



As well as the Wetherby Free Press page on **facebook** there's the Wetherby Deserves Better page too.

Both are independently run from the newsletter.



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Next Wetherby Town Council Mtg

Tues 14 Oct at 7pm

www.wetherbytowncouncil.gov.uk

If you go, please tell us your views on it.



Cllr Harrington Response

"Good evening,

The Clerk has enquired

into this issue and has posted about the error on social media and has been in touch with the electoral services department at LCC.

I understand the correct information was posted on Leeds City Council's page and they are considering the legislation to see if they need to extend the deadline.

The Clerk will post any updates on social media. Thank you"

In response the Editor noted that her email contained no actions from her about the extension, no opinion, no apology and no explanation of why she or her 13 colleagues did not notice such a large error. He asked her to confirm that the incorrect ward was publicised in a previous election and the details of it. And to confirm that this is not a deliberate strategy so that the Council can choose their own candidate.

Cllr Harrington responded "Good evening Mr Kirby

The Council have followed all procedures appropriately and have had confirmation of same from LCC. The clerk has responded by posting on social media. You will note that we had an election in recent years and two co- options which led to a mix of councillors representing the people of Wetherby. It is unfortunate that one post had a typing error in it but this has not caused any delay to the requisite number of electors writing to LCC. Their legal department was satisfied that the correct details were displayed adequately. Steps will be put in place to ensure that any posts put out are accurate in future."

My response stated that she had not addressed any of the issues I raised. I told her that she had repeated what I know already and I find it very disrespectful and frustrating. I added: "It is extremely interesting that you refuse to

a) provide any details of the previous error (which you do not deny occurred)

b) confirm that these 'errors' are not a deliberate strategy by the Council".

In her next email Cllr Harrington denied that such a strategy exists. It did not mention the previous similar error we asked about.

We also reminded Cllr Harrington that we have the luxury of having a Communications Officer so Council Tax payers should expect a very high standard of communication at all times.

£1.25 per bag

Last Brass Band on Sun 28 Sept

Lucky Ducky Duck Food

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