



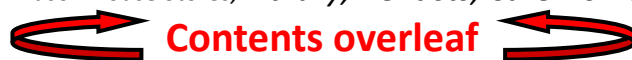
Wetherby Young Offender Institution

ISSUE 59 - until 29 March 2024

Full Issue at www.pkmarketing1.com/wetherby-free-press



Promo copies at Morrisons, Pubs, Cafés, Bob Shop, Mason House Stores, Library, Dentists, Care Homes, Churches, Hairdressers, Banks, Shops etc



Contents overleaf

Bus Blocking - After 2 Years we have



2 Cones !!!

... which don't even do the job properly. What about the other side of the road next to Mojis where most offenders park? Between them, Leeds City Council, West Yorkshire Police, Town Councillors, Leeds City Councillors, the Bus Companies and Metro/WY Combined Authority have yet to resolve this problem. WFP have made simple, inexpensive, obvious suggestions, like painting lines and putting up signs but they have not been taken up. Two years, three months and counting

Wetherby Hits National Headlines - Shocking Incidents at YO1

Wetherby Young Offenders Institution (YOI) featured heavily on national and local TV and radio, including the influential BBC Radio 4 'Today' program this week. The YOI opposite the racecourse has been severely criticised in a report for its treatment of inmates. The worst example was of a vulnerable girl being pinned down and forcefully stripped by male Officers to prevent her self-harming. This happened twice. It is reported that female staff refused to attend as they had been assaulted previously by the prisoner.

There are 165 inmates at the YOI, all aged between 15 and 18. Three of them were girls in late 2023. There are 900 incidents of self-harm each year - an average of more than two a day. These 3 girls accounted for more than half of these incidents.

Wetherby has the highest number of such incidents in England & Wales. *Cont'd on page 6*



Emma Glasbey reporting for BBC Look North

Parking Campaign Fails with an added 'Kick in the Teeth'

A campaign by Conservative Councillors to stop Labour Leeds City Council (LCC) charging motorists in two of our car parks has not been successful.

Conservative Cllr Alan Lamb was particularly vocal in his opposition to the charges, appearing on local TV to promote his campaign, see right and organising a petition and a public meeting.

There was no reaction from him on his X/Twitter feed to the LCC decision but he made a brief statement on his Facebook page. He says he "put forward an amendment, signed off as costed and robust by the Chief financial officer, that showed much better ways of saving the £100k they thing (sic) they'll raise. The biggest kick in the teeth is that they haven't even reported back the results of the consultation yet! I will keep fighting for this decision to be overturned. It is short sighted, counter productive and will be hugely damaging to Wetherby. If it goes ahead, it's inevitable they'll be back for more next year."



Cllr Lamb with ITV's Calendar in November

Comment

An alternative view which nobody else has (dared) to air, not necessarily our own. There were no politicians brave enough to speak in favour of this fairly obvious way of raising funds for vital council services, like social care for children and vulnerable adults. So we remind folks of this. Firstly, motorists nowadays EXPECT to pay for parking. Just last week a couple in the Wilderness car park asked the Editor where they have to pay. This happens fairly frequently to those of us who use that car park.

Go to Knaresborough, Otley, Harrogate etc and you pay a reasonable amount for parking, or you can find one of the many free places to leave your car. We still have free unlimited parking at the Leisure Centre / Ings, 4 hours at Cluster of Nuts, and 2 hours at Morrisons & Crossley St.

Compared to all the other costs involved in owning a car, parking is a minor one. And it may encourage people to use the buses, if the single £2 fare is cheaper than parking. Don't forget you will get the first hour free at the Wilderness and 3 hours free at Station Gardens. And it's free in the evening and Sundays (so won't affect brass band audiences). Frequent users can buy weekly tickets. The charges can be seen on page 7

There are other, far more important services under threat in our view, like our libraries, yet hardly a mention of it by

Cont'd on page 7

Don't Miss Out - Join Our Mailing List by emailing WetherbyFreePress@PM.me

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Wildlife of Wetherby Page 6

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Penny's Projects Page 7

Town Council's Feb Meeting Page 11



* What did the drummer call his twin daughters? Anna One, Anna Two

* A turtle is crossing the road when he's mugged by two snails. When the police ask him what happened, the shaken turtle replies, "I don't know. It all happened so fast."



* There's only one thing I can't deal with, and that's a deck of cards glued together



* I know a lot of good jokes



.... about umbrellas, but they usually go over people's heads

* I entered ten puns in a contest to see which would win. No pun in ten did.

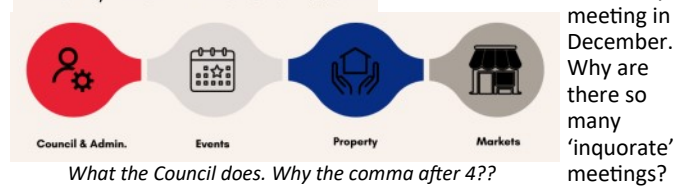
PRIVATE EYE Every 2 Weeks £1.73 subscription £2.99 in shop

Wetherby Town Council Meeting - Jan 24

No explanation why the minutes of January's meeting were put online later than usual. Nor for why the minutes of other meetings usually included were not present. They have since been added.

On page 8 we report on not one but two Markets meetings being cancelled because nobody turned up. In January not enough councillors turned up at a Communications meeting so nothing could be agreed. The same

The 4, Draft Pillars of Work for a Welcome to Wetherby meeting in December. Why are there so many 'inquate' meetings?



This time last year the Town Clerk published a table of attendance rates for each councillor. We hope to see this years soon.

£ No Discussion on Council Tax Precept at Feb meeting. Last Years went up by 80% 3

Next Meeting is Tues 12 March at 7pm at Town Hall

Lucky Duck Food

from **CANCER RESEARCH UK** & **TREASURES Toys**



Change of Operator for Knaresborough Bus

From Sunday 7 April, **Harrogate Bus Company (Transdev)** will stop running route 8. It will instead be run by **21 transport** on behalf of North Yorkshire Council (NYCC). **Transdev** tickets will no longer be valid after that date. There are currently 4 buses a day and we will keep an eye on whether this subsidised service stays at that frequency. **Transdev** says more info is on the NYCC website but we couldn't find any.



The 8 on Hallfield Lane. A pleasant ride to K'boro

Elderly Caring & Domestic Help

15 years Experience



NVQ Level 2 Qualification

References available

Call Kerry on 07876 525 589

As well as the **Wetherby Free Press** Facebook page there is the **Wetherby Deserves Better** page too.

Both are run separately from the newsletter.

Follow & Don't get FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)



Connexions Boss thinks Franchising is Inevitable



The Editor was surprised and quite chuffed to see his photo of a British-built Berlin bus in the latest *Buses*, the world's largest selling bus magazine. He looks forward to the cheque!

The image illustrated Craig Temple's view that Berlin has 'an unbelievably good transport network', something that the Editor would confirm as a frequent visitor there.

Craig says he wants to learn from operators with best practice on his travels but it isn't easy to implement it with 'the madness of running your own business in this country.'

In this Opinion Column he informs us that franchising in West Yorkshire, implemented by the Mayor with a Labour government in place, would cost £15m to set up, noting that this figure would cover all tendered services in the county for a year.

He told the team at Metro/WY Combined Authority that if they took the 64 Aberford service off them, they might as well cut his right arm off. He reminded them of the difficulties his company faces every day, like driver and mechanic shortages, road closures and schoolchildren behaviour.

He goes on to say that it is pointless to fight franchising which some see as nationalisation without compensation. It might be a good system if there is a sea change in the way

buses are funded. Bus operators must work with councils to ensure they don't lose out when it is implemented. Craig says that competition in the tendering process must be fair and accessible to all operators, unlike what happened in Manchester. He concludes that all current bus companies 'must be able to realistically bid and run the new contracts'.

Connexions operate the 923 to Otley (Mon-Fri), the 412 to York (Mon-Fri) & the X70 to Harrogate (Mon-Sat). They are based in Tockwith.

This article was sent to Craig for corrections and comment.

Wetherby to Leeds, Harrogate, Otley or York - only £4 return

No More 'Sky Class' thanks to Vandals



Introduced in November 2022, when Harrogate Bus Company (Transdev) took over the X98/99 route from First Bus, passengers enjoyed the ride in the most luxurious buses in the country. But they are to be totally withdrawn because of the damage inflicted on them, the Editor has been told by 2 drivers. All but one of the buses have been sent to Burnley. It is believed we are to have refurbished double-deckers currently used on route 36. Transdev told us last year that ridership on the X98/99 had increased 21% in a year after it first started.

This reason for withdrawal seems a bit odd but no statement from the bus company in any press release. They have cameras in their buses to catch the culprits - do they use them? It seems hard to believe that buses are less likely to be vandalised in the Burnley area than Wetherby (it seems Wetherby is not the Utopian paradise some would have us believe). And won't the vandalism still take place on the slightly less luxurious replacements?

Reminder of Bus Facts

- ◇ Transdev's route 7 to Harrogate & Leeds via B Spa was reduced to hourly from half-hourly in Nov '22
- ◇ The late night route 7 service from Harrogate at 11.30pm was cut in Nov '22. The last bus is now 10.20pm
- ◇ There is NO Saturday service to York (Connexion's route 412) or Otley (Connexion's route 923)
- ◇ There is not a single bus shelter on the Aire Road/Ainsty Road estate or on Spofforth Hill
- ◇ We have old and new WYCA/Metro bus stop flags. Many stops have dirty cases and poor information.
- ◇ WYCA/Metro have stopped printing their 7 invaluable network maps



Metro's Route Maps No Longer Printed

Cllr Andrew Batty, Chair of East Keswick Parish Council, continues to work on behalf of his residents for a better service. He says that Metro/WYCA provided him with an incorrect fact information about the early last bus from Wetherby at 22.08 and that operator *Transdev* will consider options for a later journey but no timescale was given.

Regarding the rerouting of the X98/99 going into Leeds (see Issue 58), *Transdev* claim to have done some customer engagement around this and claim this option was 'slightly favoured'. This 'engagement' was questioned by Cllr Batty. We are also sceptical about this research. Who in their right mind would want a longer journey? There is no advantage to the new route into Leeds, as the new stop in Eastgate is very close to the old one on Vicar Lane. We have seen some drivers continue to use the old route, thankfully.

Cllr Batty notes that the subsidised buses on Sunday continue to miss out East Keswick every other hour but still *Transdev* are paid the same amount to run the service, despite running less mileage. He has raised this matter at the Outer North East Leeds Town and Parish Forum where a number of Parish Council representatives raised similar concerns. Cllr Lamb, as Chair and member of the WYCA board, said *Metro/WYCA* had promised to come back with answers in June. Cllr Batty requested this be expedited as the villagers relying on buses were facing problems right now from an unreliable service, with a seriously inconveniencing evening and Sunday timetable.

He says the more passengers that contact the bus company and *Metro/WYCA* with their concerns the better:

Transdev (Harrogate Bus Company) can be contacted by email at Steve.Ottley@Transdevbus.co.uk & *Metro/WYCA* at Simon.Warburton@westyorks-ca.gov.uk & David.Keady@westyorks-ca.gov.uk



Better when First Bus ran it?

Latest Changes - Cuts & Improvements

in services mostly run by *Arriva* in Wakefield & Huddersfield, and it was stated 'these enhancements are funded by the Combined Authority through our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).' No return to half-hourly for our route 7 Harrogate - Wetherby - Boston Spa - Leeds, though.

There were some disturbing cuts in services too (including some buses run by *Arriva*). For example, the major route 508 Leeds to Halifax run by *First Bus* used to run at least every 30 minutes for decades. Now it is hourly and that is now cut to 2-hourly in the evening.

It seems Mayor Tracy Brabin does not want to help the night time economy of our major towns and cities. They are allowing drastic cuts of the last bus timings. The last journeys on the 202/203 Leeds to Huddersfield are earlier at 22.42 from Leeds (from 23.24) and 22.44 from Huddersfield (from 23.30). Likewise *Arriva's* other Leeds to Huddersfield route 229 will finish earlier at 22.35 from Leeds (from 23.10). This makes a trip to the theatre/cinema/Arena impossible.

The large number of changes made last month are a little baffling.

Improved frequencies were made



Labour Mayor Tracy Brabin

West Yorks Bus Stations - What a State!

You can tell a lot about a city by its bus station. A proud city wants to impress residents and visitors with its

customer service, information, facilities and history. Bus stations are one of *Metro/WYCA's* largest responsibility and are an important part of West Yorkshire's image. Two of their highest profile stations are currently not fit for purpose.

Bradford is currently closed due to structural issues, inconveniencing thousands of passengers, leaving them exposed to the elements during this cold, wet winter for 2 months and counting. *Metro* are keeping 'tight-lipped' about the exact details but it is reported to be crumbling



March 2015



Much worse 9 years later at Leeds Bus Station

concrete. Meanwhile the showpiece Leeds Bus Station is leaking like a sieve with buckets and barriers all over the concourse. This problem has been around for an unbelievable 9 years at least. We googled 'leaking roof Leeds bus station' and found NO articles in the local 'professional' press about this in the past year. How much is this farce costing us and when will it be fixed, Mayor Brabin and Councillors?

Unbelievably Leeds Bus Station has no map of all the routes on display, unlike Sheffield, see below. It has plenty of space on the wall but they choose not to provide this very useful information. They have made some improvements at the station in recent years as you might expect, but even now the stands do not tell you how long a journey takes. So a new visitor will see the 7 to Harrogate and get on that, not realising the 36 will get there twice as quickly. Proof that *Metro/WYCA* have little clue about basic customer needs. If anybody would like to defend *Metro's* performance, we would love to hear from you.

During a recent visit to Leicester the Editor was impressed by Leicester's central bus station. They have many boards, like the one in the image that waiting passengers can look at. It makes a clinical building more interesting and reflects well on the city. Leeds uses the free space to promote a popular bakers!

Cllr Alan Lamb is a board member of *Metro/WYCA* and we hope he will write to us with information and his views on all the bus issues we raise. He has declined to do so thus far.



Basic information that Leeds doesn't have



Leeds proud of its Greggs!



Leicester Bus Station proud of its historic market

MP Alec Shelbrooke - No Longer Allows Comments under his Tweets

Alec Shelbrooke has been our Conservative MP for nearly 14 years since May 2010.

In 2019 he won 58% of our vote beating Labour by over 17,000 votes. He was a Remainer.

From Dec '19 to 21 June 2023 he has voted 640 times out of 817 (78%) In that time he has rebelled twice against the party whip. Source - www.publicwhip.org.uk/

He refused to inform his constituents whether or not he supported Boris Johnson in the No-Confidence Vote.

Alec is one of Liz Truss' biggest supporters. As Prime Minister she promoted him to a ministerial MoD post in Sep '22, which he then quit / was sacked after 49 days, the same length of time she lasted in post.

In June 2023 Alec voted for the Privileges Committee report which stated that Boris Johnson repeatedly misled parliament ie knowingly lied about parties in Downing Street whilst the rest of us had to follow the rules. Source - www.theyworkforyou.com/

It was announced in Dec '23 that Alec was awarded the one of the highest knighthood honours; the Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire (KBE), which entitles him to be addressed as "Sir". It was given to him by Liz Truss. He has not mentioned his honour at all on his social media but has changed official images to say 'Sir Alec ...' We do not call him "Sir" as he has shown the Editor no respect as a constituent.



Hurrah! This V Old photo Alec used for years has gone

Space for Alec to Say Anything to Constituents

(Unedited, max 400 words)

Nothing received since we began 2+ years ago

alec.shelbrooke.mp@parliament.uk



17,000+ Followers.

Alec wants no discussion or comments under his Tweets. He is using the function that only allows those mentioned in the Tweet to respond. He is therefore using X/Twitter purely to provide information and

promote himself/his party - he wants no dialogue.

That is perhaps understandable with the amount of sad keyboard warriors who abuse social media to insult, offend and misinform.

But Alec, is it fair that you use the same platform to comment on others who do not have any such restrictions in place? And then deny them a right to reply?

The example on the right proves this point. Alec rarely responds to other tweets so why he responds to a dog with only 130 followers is strange. As the dog correctly points out, he cannot respond as Alec does not include the dog's username in his tweet.

We think it is hypocritical of Alec to use Twitter / X like this, you can't have it both ways.

Alec should not respond to any anonymous accounts. It encourages others to set up such accounts purely to antagonise and be offensive.



We note the use of the wilted red rose flower in Alec's posts, referring to Labour. There is enough pettyness in the world today without this. We expect better from our MPs.



Trade Body Celebrates Wetherby Young Achiever

A building materials specialist from Wetherby has been recognised for his commitment to the industry.

National trade body The Builders Merchants Federation (BMF) and Builders' Merchants News (BMN), have joined forces to identify the Top 100 Young Achievers across the multi-billion-pound building materials sector, and shine a light on the brightest stars of the future.

Simon Bracken, National Account Manager - South at The Encon Group, based in Wetherby, has been nominated for the accolade based around his achievements within his career so far, and having a positive impact in the sector.

He said: "It was certainly a big milestone which I wanted to achieve so I feel very proud to have been nominated. I'm thrilled to have been nominated as a Top 100 Young Achiever. It's great to be part of an industry where you are recognised and it's the people who are around me that inspire me to do the best I can do."

John Newcomb, Chief Executive of the BMF, said: "The BMF is an active supporter of young people working within the building materials supply sector and this initiative celebrates the contributions of those who will carry the industry forward in the future and work to make a material difference. This accolade reflects the positive influence Simon has had on the people around him and on the wider building materials industry."

The Top 100 Young Achievers will feature in a commemorative brochure and be invited to a Gala Dinner celebration and networking event at the Belfry hotel and golf resort in May.

The BMF represents more than 950 merchant and supplier companies that collectively employ more than 208,000 people in the building materials industry, performing an essential national function in distributing construction materials and home improvement products across the UK.



If you are a philanthropist 5 please help us with printing costs

Wetherby YOI Shocking Report cont'd from front page



Inspection of HMYOI Wetherby

It costs £250,000 a year to keep a child here



The Institution has 91 senior staff members which the report says, like many other YOIs is 'top heavy'. It says children held there spent too much time locked in their cells, received a poor standard of teaching and were subjected to a high rate of "pain-inducing restraint techniques".

Sensory Room

Child's Room



The report is by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, which was written after an unannounced visit in late 2023. It contains 59 pages and if you want to know exactly what goes on behind the walls and barbed wire at Wetherby YOI, you can read it at www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/. It is a disturbing and sobering read. Or for a summary, go to the BBC news report at www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-68470183.

It is great that we have an independent inspectorate, like this one for prisons. We think all of our publicly-paid for services and organisations should have unannounced visits from inspectors. It is the best way to find out what really goes on and to raise standards. This is because the knowledge that some independent person could ask you to justify your work at any time is bound to keep people on their toes. And it could make those who believe they are doing a fantastic job realise that they are deluded and they aren't in many areas. Metro / WYCA is just one we can think of that needs closer monitoring. Such inspections could detect fraud, as well as low standards by our public servants. There are a small minority of those in powerful positions in any organisation who think they are untouchable. A regular monitoring regime, including surprise visits, should flush these people out. Of course, the monitoring of our public services come way down the list of priorities when money is needed for core functions. And that is why we have such a poor service in many areas eg road potholes.

Town Hall Staff Member Complains About Editor - No Evidence Produced



The person sent an email in January to us with a complaint about the writings of the editor and the WFP.

The Editor (naively) took it at face value and sent the staff member a sympathetic and reasonable response. He said he would apologise if more examples were provided and he agreed to two of the requests in the email.

The Editor expected a response but none was forthcoming. He wrote again asking for one but there was no response.

This raised suspicions about whether the person's complaint was valid and why they wanted to impose such large restrictions on what the Editor / WFP wrote. Was it to deter the WFP from making the person and the Town Council accountable for what they do? The Editor realised that there was no substance to the complaint, as he could not find any examples to back it up. None were provided by the complainant.

The Editor wrote to the Town Clerk, Iona Taylor and explained that he found her staff member's email and non-response distressing. He points out that 'without dialogue, how can we resolve anything and move forward?' He warned her that any future emails from her staff accusing him of something without evidence is not acceptable.

The response from the Town Clerk simply referred him to the Complaints Procedure - nothing about any of the points raised.

So, this seems to be yet another public person in Wetherby who wants to restrict what we write about them. We could name the person in this article but we will not on this occasion. The point of this article is to inform people in public positions that we will not put up with this in future.

From now on we will name anyone who accuses us of something IF * they produce no evidence * make unreasonable requests (of anonymity) * we think it is in the public interest to do so. If those in authority or in the public pay don't want anything they write to be published, please do not write to us. If it is true, honest opinion or in the public interest, we have a right to publish anything unless you provide a good reason not to.

One person recently said that articles like this (about ourselves and the Wetherby Mafia) are not 'real news'. We could not disagree more - what is more important than our freedom of speech, something our countrymen died for? It is quite shameful for the town that a powerful few want to deny this basic right to the Editor and many others, without good reason.

The Editor is meeting a Town Hall staff member soon, so let's hope this will be a fresh start and the start of a reasonable dialogue with Council staff.



It is bizarre the number of times the Editor and his wife have seen these feathered friends in (supermarket) car parks. We wonder what is so attractive about these places and why other birds don't take advantage of it too. We googled it and reassuringly found that many other folk had noticed the same, but there was no definitive answer to these questions, apart from the obvious that they find food there. But why does it prefer car parks to gardens?

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) describe the Pied Wagtail as 'a delightful small, long-tailed and rather sprightly black and white bird.' It is often seen frantically wagging its tail up and down.

It eats mainly insects, but may eat seeds and household scraps in winter. This adorable bird can be seen gathering at dusk to form large roosts in city centres, apparently. Only 10% of our gardens have them as frequent visitors, according to the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)

There are half a million breeding pairs so are not in any danger in the UK.

We will continue to enjoy their presence as we head in to do our shopping.



Parking Campaign Fails

Cont'd from front page

Comment

..... any of our Councillors. We ask Cllr Lamb what his evidence is that parking charges will be 'hugely damaging' and Penny for her 'devastating effect' comment below. And we ask what is so special about Wetherby, because as we say, the majority of towns like ours charge for parking. And of course, Cllr Lamb's party could be accused of causing these charges because central government does not fund our City Councils properly. And it's relevant to remind readers that our Conservative Town Council charged us 80% more Council Tax precept last year.

We look forward to finding out exactly what the effects of these charges are after a year of their introduction. Our councillors should make sure that the number of vehicles using the Wilderness car park now and in a years time will be measured.

Penny's Projects - Pollution, Parking and Public Transport

Penny Stables is one of our three Leeds City Councillors for the Wetherby Ward. She represents the Green Party and was elected in May last year. The following also includes the work of Anna Jacobs, Green Party candidate for up-coming LCC elections She has sent us this. We will publish anything anyone sends us.



Penny.Stables@leeds.gov.uk



Air pollution is a real concern both in its increase and the effects it has in our general health.

There can be no coincidence that rates of asthma and other respiratory conditions have increased, and if we can tackle air pollution, this will hopefully decrease the burden on an already stretched NHS.

I am looking into air quality around Wetherby, and will be checking this against Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) markers at peak times and non peak times, as well as pushing for an NO2 check point on the Persimmon Building site, and looking into particulate matters.

Alongside this I am looking into the water quality of the River Wharfe, as well as noise pollution levels surrounding new building and have been investigating noise levels during night deliveries and works at a major supermarket."

The photo, right, is of two MVHR (Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery) filters, one new and one taken from a house in Wetherby on Sandringham Road after 3 months use. These should normally last several years.



MVHR filters after 3 months

Parking Charges in Wetherby

Sadly, the Council agreed to introduce parking charges at Wetherby's two long stay carparks: The Riverside (Wildreness) and the Old Station car parks, at the Budget meeting on the 21st February. I spoke at both the January and February Full Council meeting against these proposals. This is the first part of my speech:

"Lord Mayor and fellow members, I second this amendment.

Whilst I understand that due to the Government cuts in funding to councils over the last 14 years, this council is under increasing pressure to reduce costs, impacting every department, I don't believe the full impact of some of these decisions has been fully thought through.

Take for example, the impact of parking charges in the only two long term car parks in Wetherby. Yes, I don't deny that this could bring in much needed revenue to the council, but the wider impact on the economy and community has not been fully considered. The outer northeast is the only

area of the city with no train, and a limited or no bus service from nearby villages, so there is no alternative to driving for many. Workers on low incomes will not be able to afford the £12 a week, £624 for the full year.

They'll either look to work elsewhere, causing a potential shortage of employees, or look to park somewhere else that is free, clogging up town centre streets and estate roads. In addition, there are many workers who travel to Wetherby to work for free as volunteers in the many Charity shops in the town. It seems completely unfair to expect them to pay for the privilege of working to support much needed charities.

We have many visitors to our lovely market town, who travel from far and wide to visit the riverside, shops, cafes and hear the brass bands play in the summer. Where will they park? Some will pay the charge, but others will consider going somewhere else to spend their hard-earned income.

So the impact on the economy of Wetherby will be from both ends: less employees to keep the

business going and less visitors to buy the goods and services, and enjoy all the many amenities of our market town.

And then there is the impact on the community: less money in the pockets of employees, so less to spend in shops, cafes, and bars. More congestion

Proposed Charges

Wilderness Car Park

Charging hours Monday – Saturday 8am – 6pm

Up to 1 hour free, after that

Up to 1 hour 65p

Up to 2 hours £1.15

Up to 3 hours £1.65

Up to 4 hours £2.15

Up to 5 hours £2.65

Up to 6 hours £3.15

Up to 7 hours £3.65 (daily maximum)

Weekly ticket £12.15

Station Gardens Car Park

Charging hours Monday – Saturday 8am – 6pm

Up to 3 hours free

£2.15 daily charge after that

Weekly ticket £10.15

in the town centre, harder for residents to get around, more pollution, less safe roads and then the impact on where they live, with more parking on estate roads, causing inconvenience and potentially preventing access for emergency services.

And to prevent chaos and grid lock in the town centre we'll need more parking enforcement. This will mean employing another parking enforcement officer, reducing the revenue this could generate.

So, is it really worth it for £100,000 or less in this budget, given the devastating impact it will have on Wetherby Town?"

Buses

I am still working hard to try to get a better bus service for Wetherby, Boston Spa and all the villages. I recently met with a director of Transdev and discussed possible ways to improve both frequency and alternative routes. Great to hear that by July 95% of Harrogate Bus Company buses will be electric, so quieter, newer and less pollution.



Comment

See front page and above for an alternative view on parking charges.

We hope that Penny's involvement with Transdev (Harrogate Bus Company) is effective and look forward to more detail in any future reports.

Wetherby Town Council - Minutes of Feb Mtg on Last Page



Elaine Smith, Conservative

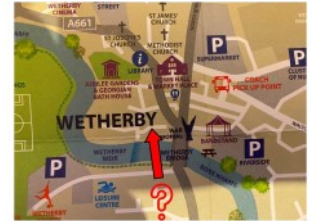
The 15 Wetherby Town Councillors are unpaid volunteers. Most are Conservative & raised our Council Tax precept by 80% in a cost-of-living crisis in 23/24, much of it to pay for new staff.

The Town Clerk is Iona Taylor. She is manager to an Assistant Clerk, a Communications & Events Officer Helena Briden, a Burials Manager and a Facilities Manager. An Operations Manager was mooted but no idea what's happened to that post.

Work is also contracted out.

Employment costs are well over £150,000 a year.

There is still no up-to-date details of Town Hall staff on their website wetherby.co.uk; no images of staff (unlike Otley) and no easy-to-find diagram showing the line management structure.



Bus Station Left Off!

This Council produced a much-needed leaflet to promote the town in Autumn 2023 (too late for Summer visitors). It took years to produce and failed in its main objective of showing Wetherby at its best and full of friendly people. It contained small poor images without a single smiling face. And the map missed out the bus station!


There is to be no immediate re-print and nobody apologised for it. For a fuller critique see Issue 54. Copies of the old leaflet were still in Renton & Parr opposite the Town Hall in March 2024.

This is just one example of why we believe this Town Council is satisfied with low standards. Another is their unattractive, uninformative, user-unfriendly website which anybody can see is vastly inferior to Otley's. It's not been changed for years.

If you think any of our criticisms are unreasonable, write to us and put forward your argument. We can then have a mature debate. The fact that Town Councillors or Staff rarely defend themselves or answer our simple questions speaks volumes. We would love to publish some positive news about this Council where they have done a really good job, exceeded expectations and used creativity & imagination. None received yet.

Opportunity for any of our Town Cllrs to Say Anything to Residents - Unedited, max 400 words. Nothing Sent

Nobody Turns Up for Markets Meeting! TWICE !! No Apologies from Cllrs



APPENDIX 7
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
MARKETS COMMITTEE

Date: Monday 6th November 2023
Time: 7.00 pm
Location: Wetherby Methodist Church, Bank Street, Wetherby, LS22 6LP


Present: None

In attendance: Iona Taylor, Clerk
Rowann Fitzpatrick, Assistant Clerk

MINUTES

1. Apologies.
Local Government Act 1972, s 85 (3)
The Markets Committee meeting at 7pm on Monday 6th November 2023 was inquorate and cancelled.

The meeting closed at 7:01pm.
These minutes were recorded and prepared by Rowann Fitzpatrick, Assistant Clerk.



APPENDIX 8
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
MARKETS COMMITTEE

Date: Monday 4th December 2023
Time: 7.00 pm
Location: Wetherby Town Hall, Market Place, Wetherby, LS22 6NE

Present: None

In attendance: Iona Taylor, Clerk
Rowann Fitzpatrick, Assistant Clerk

MINUTES

2. Apologies.
Local Government Act 1972, s 85 (3)
The Markets Committee meeting at 7pm on Monday 4th December 2023 was inquorate and cancelled.

The meeting closed at 7:01pm.
These minutes were recorded and prepared by Rowann Fitzpatrick, Assistant Clerk.

The decline of the Thursday Wetherby market has been much discussed on social media in recent times. It is the responsibility of the Town Council to run it professionally and attract stallholders all year round, not just in summer.

The Council have been far from successful in this, and no wonder, if the committee councillors don't turn up to meetings. Once is bad enough but twice on the run! What is going on?

This was a waste of the minute-taker's time, who attended to record the one-minute meetings.

The Markets Committee members are pictured, right.

Perhaps the Chair, Cllr Bradley / Town Clerk could answer these questions:

- 1 Why aren't the names of the (absent) committee members included in the mins?**
- 2 Why are there no apologies from those Cllrs?**
- 3 Did they send their apologies?**
- 4 Why is there no apology to the residents of Wetherby for any of this in subsequent minutes?**

We think this reflects poorly on the Council. It shows a lack of interest apart from anything else. And it typifies the 'never admit anything is wrong and never apologise' attitude this Council has. Different view? We'll print it.

- 4. Minutes.**
Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, para. 4(1)
- 4.1** The minutes of the Markets Committee meeting held on the *Monday 9th October 2023* as approved at Full Council on 14th November 2023 were **NOTED** and **RECEIVED**.
 - 4.2** It was **AGREED** that the minutes of the Markets Committee meeting held on the *Monday 6th November 2023* be accepted.
 - 4.3** It was **AGREED** that the minutes of the Markets Committee meeting held on *Monday 4th December 2023* be accepted.

Minutes of the 2 cancelled meetings above were 'accepted' in Jan's full Council meeting. No apologies or comment



Cllr Billie Ager-Mills, Party Unknown



Cllr Dean Buckle, Con



Cllr Paul Bradley, Con



Cllr Alex Riddell, Lab



Cllr Galan Moss, Con



Markets Committee Members

Wetherby Foodbank

March 2024 Foodbank Wish List

- Custard - tinned or cartons
- Tinned fruit
- Tinned soups
- Tinned carrots
- Tinned sweetcorn
- Tinned hot meats (stew, mince, chilli)
- Instant mash
- Tinned spaghetti
- Pot noodles/instant noodles
- Pasta'n'sauce sachets
- Squash/cordials
- Instant coffee - small jars please
- Shampoo
- Toothpaste

Thank
you!



MARCH
23/24 2024

SKIPTON AUCTION MART
BD23 1UD | SAT 10AM-4PM
SUN 9AM-4PM

ARTISAN
MADE
— UK —

CONTEMPORARY
CRAFTS TRADE SHOW

Collingham resident Katy Small made contact to inform us of this crafts show, at which she is exhibiting. Her business is called *Felted Yarns* and this is the second time Katy is attending this event.

Katy describes herself as an Artist / Maker / Teacher. She works mainly with Merino wool, using felting and embroidery to create landscape stories. Changing skies, seasons and rural scenes inspire her beautiful pictures. She is currently making wearable accessories and clothing using the same felting techniques. Katy has exhibited her work for some years and can be found at local artisan fairs and exhibitions. Her designs are also reproduced onto fine art prints and cards. At the event there will be 150+ exhibitors with a diverse collection of woodwork, jewellery, homeware, fine art, textiles, and more. If you fancy a trip to one of the best towns in Yorkshire, visit www.artisanmadeuk.com for more details. Or contact Katy at katy@felteyarns.co.uk.



TEXTILES

FELTED YARNS

Wetherby News

NEWSWATCH

We are recording the number of **general** news items about Wetherby / Boston Spa & villages. And the no. of letters/ emails from residents about the area in the published paper, now £2.10.

We do this in the hope they will wake up and take up some of our stories. Nothing so far. They are ignoring the serious issues in our great town and do not deserve to have 'Wetherby' in their title.

Issue of 22 Feb '24

News Items - 0 Letters - 0

Issue of 29 Feb '24

News Items - 0 Letters - 0

Issue of 7 Mar '24

News Items - 2 Letters - 0

Unbelievably, nothing about the Wetherby YO1 report that went national 2 days before the paper prints. Nothing about Wetherby Town Council either.



Wetherby & Area Deserves Better



JOIN US ON THURSDAY
20TH MARCH 2023 FOR OUR

#CYBERTRAINING
COMMUNITY LOCAL EVENT

6.00pm - 8.00pm

FREE Nibbles & Drinks
Listen to Cyber Experts
from the Industry

Venue: Claritas Solutions Ltd,
2 Deighton Close, Wetherby,
LS22 7GZ. RSVP

BE PART OF
SOMETHING
GREAT

Local IT company Claritas Solutions Ltd are putting on a free event with Gentium UK (cyber specialists) in aid of Martin House. They are asking for a voluntary donation for Martin House as part of their March Accumulator challenge. The event is aimed at helping local businesses

tackle the rise in cyber attacks, as well as have a bit of fun with a cyber challenge!

For more details, go to

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/helping-local-companies-prepare-for-a-potential-cyber-attack-tickets-846964071337>



After a mixed start to the season (one win and one defeat), Leeds took on Catalans Dragons at Headingley. The French side had won their first 2 games and it was a tight feisty encounter with a total of 4 sin-bins and a couple of scuffles. The Rhinos had

the upper hand at half time scoring 2 tries, both confirmed by the video ref.



Leeds First Try by pictured Ash Handley

A superb long pass from Cameron Smith set up Ash Handley to score the winning try in the corner. Result 18 - 10 to Leeds.



Leeds United are having quite a run. They are unbeaten so far this year in the Championship. 10 wins and a draw have put them in third place chasing the Tractor Boys (Ipswich) and Leicester City for an automatic promotion place. We don't think anyone could see that coming a few months ago.

The visit from lowly Stoke to Elland Road should not have been a problem and it wasn't. United were soon on top and scored after half an hour. Dan James scored a great individual goal to make it 1 - 0. It stayed that way despite another great chance for James and a bad miss for Stoke at the death. Leeds are 2 points behind 2nd place Ipswich.



Still mostly a man's game?

TV CLASH!

Leigh v Rhinos on Fri 8 Mar at 20.00 **sky sports**
 Rhinos v St Helens on Fri 15 Mar at 20.00 **sky sports**
 Castleford v Rhinos on Thurs 28 Mar at 20.00 **sky sports**

Both teams very popular with Sky Sports this month

Sheff Wed v Utd on Fri 8 Mar at 20.00 **sky sports**
 Utd v Millwall on Sun 17 Mar at 15.00 **sky sports**
 Watford v Utd on Fri 29 Mar at 20.00 **sky sports**

Your Community Newsletter Editor: Paul Kirby

CONTACT US Email: WetherbyFreePress@PM.me
 Tel: 07840 862861 Twitter/X: @wbyfreepress

Everyone mentioned in the WFP has a right to reply. The reply will be published unedited.

If facts are wrong, we will apologise publicly and correct the error. We don't do interviews, as we are part-timers and aren't trained in short-hand. We are not 'journalists' - we say what we see. Simple. We encourage everyone to write to us with their views, whatever they are. People have died for our Freedom of Expression so never be afraid to use it. You can remain anonymous if you wish. We or you cannot be sued for libel/defamation as long as what is published is:

True or Honest Opinion or in the Public Interest

Unjustifiable threats of legal action can be seen as harassment
The Editor has had 4 'Meet the Editor' events so far. None of our critics have ever turned up to have a civilised debate.

Please donate online at

www.pkmarketing1.com/wetherby-free-press

to cover printing costs *Thank you*

The British Library at Boston Spa keep copies in their catalogue. The WFP lives forever!

MAFIA



Evidence they exist in Issue 58

Speaking truth to power has made us unpopular with a few people in this town. They have orchestrated a deplorable campaign against the newsletter and the Editor. This is despite the fact we will print anything anyone sends us, including criticism of ourselves (we put it on the front page once). We would print positive stories about them, if they or anybody sent them.

They seem unable to accept even mild criticism, taking it personally instead. How else could you explain the extremes they go to, to stop us promoting ourselves and raising funds for printing? They fear we will become more and more popular, which unfortunately for them, is inevitable as time passes. We will find out eventually who these people are who call our supporters and bribe/threaten/misinform them. Their partial success in persuading people shows they have some influence in the town. We pity them for their anonymous, cowardly actions. Please inform us if they contact you.



Free Press
 Est 2021 Facts & Integrity

News, Funny Stuff & Improving Accountability

www.pkmarketing1.com/wetherby-free-press

In response to the same old stuff our critics love to trot out, here are some facts for them.

"You're not a journalist" Correct, I'm not, there are none in Wetherby. I do have high standards and the qualities and skills of a professional journalist, though.



"What do you do for the community?" Not that it's any of your business how I spend my spare time, but I:

- ⇒ volunteer for a Community Interest Company
- ⇒ campaign on transport issues (got buses on Boxing Day)
- ⇒ have raised over £1500 for Cancer Research in last 3 years (and put nearly £1500 into the coffers of a local independent business in the town).

Oh, and I edit a community newsletter promoting many good people, events and organisations, and Free Speech.

(And pick up litter near my house, and glass bottles everywhere)

I don't need or expect any recognition for my good deeds. I state them here because critics keep on asking. I will leave them here until they stop asking.

In 2023 we Supported 25 Local Charities & Organisations

Send us your



to WetherbyFreePress@PM.me

Town Council Extra

Town Council Meeting - February

Attendance: 12 councillors attended out of 15. Cllrs Ager-Mills, Bradley and Payne were absent. The meeting lasted 1 hour 6 mins.

1 member of the public and Leeds City Cllr Penny Stables also attended.

There were no questions or comments from public.

The precept for 2024/25 is £540,000. *What % increase is it going to be? Nowhere does it say!*

There was no comments or discussion on the Markets Committee meeting nor the Welcome to Wetherby meeting that did take place (see P8 for those that didn't).

These are both very important meetings yet there was nothing worth discussing or highlighting from either meeting. Why? Seems odd.

Crime Statistics for Dec & Jan showed a total of 12 anti-social behaviour offences and 250 other crimes. These statistics also included 33 assaults which related to HMP Wealstun and Wetherby YO1.

There is still no analysis on this raw data - is crime increasing, staying the same or decreasing? Why is there no comparison with the same period last year? No comment on anything from councillors.

MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS THIS MEETING APPROVED

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Committee

It was AGREED, subject to more information being provided and cost verification, that the following items be prioritised:

- One Stop Centre Funding – up to £60,000
- Sandringham Park Playground Tender – up to £34,000
- Garden of Rest Iron railings - £22,104
- Wetherby War Memorial repair and clean – up to £22,000
- Bridgefoot Gardens Planting Scheme - £4,500
- Implementation of new Speed Indicator Devices (SID) - £11,250

The Iron railings in the Garden of Rest are in need of refurbishment. Previous quotation for removal, cleaning, repainting, and re-installing was £22,104.00. An up-to-date quotation would be required to progress. It was NOTED that refurbishment of these rails was more cost effective than replacing them. The War Memorial on Boston Road is in need of repair and cleaning. An initial quote of £2,250 was provided however it was estimated that it could cost up to £22,000 when including the cost of getting planning permission, road closures, and scaffolding.

It was AGREED that the Clerk would confirm the total cost prior to progressing further on this item. It was NOTED that £60,000 was previously committed in principle for the refurbishment of the One Stop Centre. As such, these funds need to remain earmarked until further updates have been provided.

Sandringham Park playground project: It was NOTED that while grant funding and other funding pots are being identified to cover the costs of the project, CIL funding may be required as a match fund or to cover any remaining deficit. It was AGREED that up to £34,000 could be set aside for this purpose.

The Budget committee wanted to ensure that there is no increase in the precept for the 2024/25 period.

Planning Ctte: Conversion and change of use of Wetherby Social Club on Sandbeck to form gym with therapy/treatment rooms; hard landscaping to accommodate new car parking.



Cllr Connor Mulhall

Wetherby Town Council has no objections to the principle of the development contained within this application, however requests that the following be considered as part of the drawing up of any resulting conditions. *Read them online.*

Welcome to Wetherby: It was NOTED that the council will progress with the Funfair and Fireworks Festival, Bonfire night, D-Day event, and the 200th Anniversary of the Sale of Wetherby events for the 2024/25 years. Longer term plans include quarterly events and the support of local organizations' events. A public consultation is also planned to explore what the quarterly events should look like and how to proceed with them. 8.3. Consultation on future events. Councillor Buckle asked whether a Music Festival will be included in the planned events for 2024-25. It was noted that this could be included as an option in the public consultation.

The minutes state that Peter Burr is a member of the committee but does not state his affiliations.

We note that Cllr Connor Mulhall took the Chair in 2 meetings when the Chair is absent. He is already Chair of many other committees. He takes on far more than other councillors. Shouldn't the Chairs' work be spread a bit more evenly?

We write to the Town Clerk and all our Town Councillors after every issue of WFP is published and ask them to address the legitimate issues we raise. We have yet to receive any information or comment from them in the last 6 months. None of them took the opportunity to 'Meet the Editor' last November.



so many
question
s but no
answers