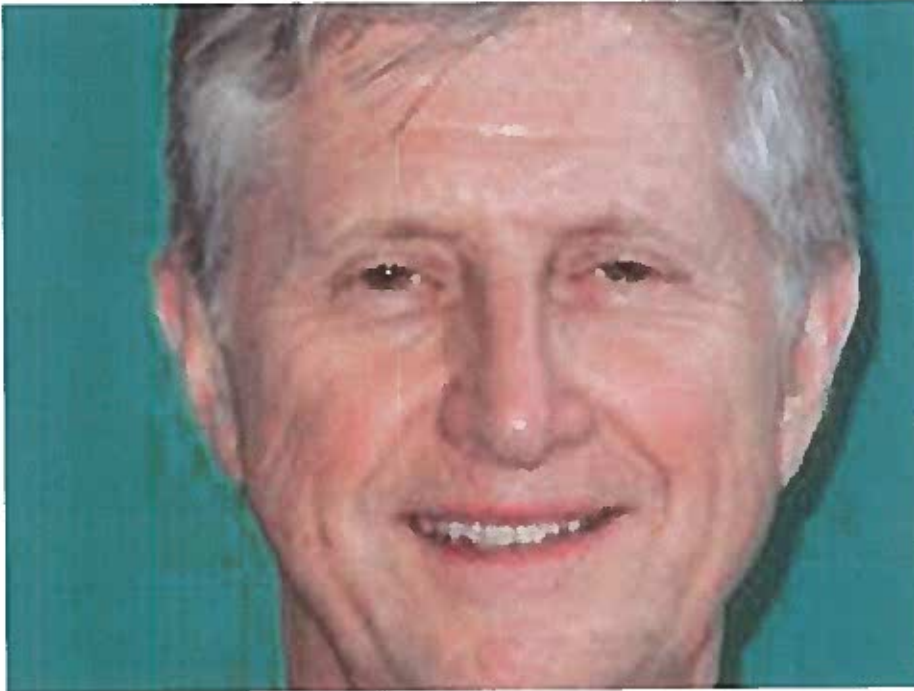


News

Fri, 13 Apr 2018

Senior councillor apologies over 'transphobic' retweet

Conservative councillor 'regrets' reposting comment



A SENIOR Conservative councillor has had to apologise after sharing online comments mocking transgender people as mentally disordered.

Political opponents have called for an inquiry after Dominic Boeck used his social media Twitter account to repost other users' comments.

He retweeted a post about comedian Eddie Izzard, recently defeated in his bid for a seat on the Labour Party's ruling body.

Original poster Rod Bishop published a photo of the transgender comic and said: "Just when you think Labour couldn't be any more ridiculous they bring on Eddie Izzard."

But what provoked most outrage was Mr Boeck's sharing of comments by another poster, using the moniker BrexitTory, who wrote: "There are two genders but three options - 1 male; 2 female; 3 mental disorder."

3 Mental Disorder

Mr Boeck subsequently deleted his reposting of the comments.

His Twitter profile states: "Retweets from me do not signify endorsement."

The chairwoman of Newbury Labour Party, Gemma Lowe, said: "West Berkshire Council has made a great deal of its commitment to improving the mental health of the community by raising awareness of its causes and fighting stigma.

"Research by Stonewall [UK lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights charity] shows trans young people are particularly vulnerable to serious mental health problems; more than one in four have attempted suicide and 72 per cent, of a sample of 956, report having self-harmed.

"Yet one of our senior elected representatives, Dominic Boeck, seems to think it's acceptable to engage in transphobic, mocking tweets."

She called for a council investigation and added: "He is apparently unconcerned that his words serve to deepen and legitimise stigmatising attitudes and show awareness only of his own bigoted world view.

"We have been shocked by the content of his Twitter feed in general.

"Maybe he should read his own council's social media code of conduct – and report himself."

Mr Boeck later posted on Twitter: "I do believe without doubt that people of any gender and sexual orientation must be respected and I will make sure my behaviour online and off reflects that.

"I resolve to look closer at tweets before I retweet them and I regret any offence I may have given in this way.

"I absolutely do not believe that anyone with gender issues is mentally ill."

He told the *NWN*: "People have interpreted what I retweeted in a way I'm sorry about.

"I will make sure I don't put myself in that position again."

When pressed on why he had chosen to retweet the comments, Mr Boeck declined to comment.

Newbury's Conservative MP Richard Benyon described Mr Boeck as "an honourable man" and added: "I've known Dominic long enough to know that he is not how he is being portrayed.

"He has expressed his regret and apologised. The matter should be left there."

The *NWN* asked West Berkshire Council whether its code of conduct had been broken.

Council spokeswoman Peta Stoddart-Crompton, said: "We don't divulge receipt of complaints as it could prejudice outcomes."

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Characters left: 1000

SEND

NewburyDenizen 19/04/2018 - 11:11

Wow, the comments here really shouldn't surprise me given the right leaning stance of this area of the country, what happened to compassion and caring for others? I guess having the country led by racism enabling Tories is only going to draw more of the selfish and different hating scum out into the public with bigoted views.

Reply

Westberkswalker 15/04/2018 - 09:09

scooberdoo3 13/04/2018 - 21:09

Here, here i think most people do. I certainly do.

Reply

Rebecca 15/04/2018 - 15:03

I don't

Reply



Louise 13/04/2018 - 12:12

Many of us concur with his view, get over it.

Reply

grumpy 13/04/2018 - 15:03

Indeed we do

Reply

Rebecca 15/04/2018 - 15:03

I don't

Reply

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Dont Vote Benyon

Glad to see such nice people are in charge of our council's this foul person should be removed from his position with immediate affect.

Love how Benyons waded in to tell the NWN that this should be the end of it - wonder what his comment would of been if the shoe had been on the other foot and it was a lib dems or labour councillor who did this

Like Reply · 12w



Tom Tunney

It's ok he's an honourable man

Like Reply · 1 11w



Simon Kirby

I don't see any apology. "People have interpreted what I retweeted in a way that I am sorry about" isn't an acknowledgement of the hurt that this kind of mockery can cause. I have some sympathy for Dominic Boeck as attitudes have changed and, assuming his grammar school was anything like my comprehensive, all manner of people were mocked for all manner of reasons and it's easy enough to find yourself with prejudices that on reflection are hateful, but if he really is the honorable man that Richard Benyon says he is I would hope that he'll acknowledge the challenges for people with poor mental health and those with gender identity issues and instead promote more kindness and understanding.

Like Reply · 11w

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