

Council news round-up

Your weekly guide to the latest news



Issue 228
23 July 2021

This week's news from around the Council.

Council News

- **Public consultation for new ward boundaries closes on 02 August 2021.**

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has announced that it is minded to recommend that the council should have 41 councillors in the future. They are now drawing up a new pattern of wards to accommodate 41 councillors and asking local people and organisations for their help to draw up the new ward boundaries across South Staffordshire District Council.

Please share [this information on the Boundary Review](#) and the Commissions dedicated consultation section on its website <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/27826>, to local people and organisations. The Commission also has a [dedicated section on its website to keep you up to date as the review progresses](#).

This stage of the consultation closes on 02 August 2021.

The Council is also responsible for producing a Warding Pattern Submission to the LGBCE, which is being led by Members through the Your Council Challenge Panel.

- **Council Job Vacancies**

Why not join our fantastic team; apply today!

- Street Scene Operative – Level 2, closing 5pm on 28 July 2021. [Application Information](#)
- Systems Support Officer Apprenticeship, closing midnight on 30 July 2021. [Application Information](#)
- Benefit Assessment Officer Apprenticeship, closing midnight on 30 July 2021. [Application Information](#)
- Customer Services Welfare Advisor Apprenticeship, closing midnight on 30 July 2021. [Application Information](#)
- Customer Services Specialist Advisor, closing 12pm on 2 August 2021. [Application Information](#)
- COVID-19 Support Officers, open closing date, [Application Information](#)

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- **Next week's Council Committee meetings**

- There are no public meetings week commencing 26 July 2021

Members of the public can virtually attend meetings via Microsoft Teams - a link can be found in the news section at the bottom of the [Council's website](#).

- **South Staffordshire Community Safety Partnership**

South Staffordshire Neighbourhood Policing Team, throughout the Euros 2021, has been visiting high risk victims at least once a week to offer support and reassurance; South Staffordshire Council has promoted a social media campaign, led by Cannock Chase Council, entitled "[Show Domestic Abuse the Red Card](#)" explaining that there will be consequences to perpetrators of domestic abuse and [New Era](#), the service provider supporting victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse, has worked closely with Staffordshire Police, housing providers, social care, GPs and other support services to assist victims and guide them through some challenging circumstances.



Staffordshire Police figures are showing the year-to-date comparison for the month of 15th June to 15th July as 93 recorded incidents in 2021 compared to 143 in 2020 showing a 35% reduction. This reduction is partly due to the proactivity of the Community Safety Partnership to work together through co-ordinated activities supporting not only high-risk victims but repeat victims too. Proactive policing means that perpetrators are also visited, if required, to reinforce the message that domestic abuse will not be accepted in South Staffordshire!

- **Wombourne Leisure Centre – Toning Suite**

Wombourne Leisure Centre have recently relocated the toning suite which now sits within a more central location, in easy view of centre users which will help to promote the facility.

The relocation has included a newly redecorated and refurbished facility, new flooring and has proven a real success with lots of positive feedback from toning members and users.

In addition to this work, the leisure centre are introducing a new 'wellbeing room' which will be bespoke for wellbeing classes such as tai chi, yoga and pilates and which will be located at the far end of the centre in a quiet and relaxing area of the centre.

Well done Nat and the Wombourne team!

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- **Summer Holiday Swimming**

Our Leisure Centres are pleased to be offering a good variety of swimming sessions over the summer. Customers must arrive swim-ready, however, changing rooms and showers will be available at the end of each swim. [Please click on this link for further information on the Summer Holiday Swim.](#)

- **The Space Scheme – Discounts for children this summer**

We will be providing reduced access for 8-17 year olds during the summer with discounts on 3G pitches, public swimming sessions and Active youth gym sessions. [Please click on this link for further information on the Space Scheme.](#)

- **Changes to Leisure Centre Protocols**

After the latest announcement from the Government confirming that restrictions are easing, we wanted to clarify safety protocols going forward for the leisure centres.

Although many rules will be removed from **Monday 19 July**, based on best practice there remains basic safety measures in place.

Although we are delighted to be able to increase provisions and access, and finally return to some normality; we equally want to take a sensible approach to resuming services and ensure that our staff and customers continue to feel safe when visiting us and have an enjoyable experience.

The following safety measures will remain in place:

- Sanitise hands on arrival
- We advise you to keep your distance from other users
- Face Masks - will continue to be provide and promote best practice e.g., wear indoors where any situation is crowded, or people are close together. As we continue to see rising infection rates, we would encourage everyone to continue to follow best practice.
- One-way systems through the centre will remain in place to help reduce congestion

[Please click here to visit our website to familiarise yourself with additional measures in place within each of our facility areas.](#)

Information and Resources

Please note: A Helpful Resources webpage on the Councils Website is coming soon. The Council News Round Up will then briefly update you on new resources that have been added to the webpage each week.

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- **Will you help us to save water? An Important Message from Severn Trent Water**

With the onset of the school holidays, with more people at home and the exceptionally high temperatures we're experiencing - demand for water in the Midlands has increased sharply this week. There has been a huge spike in usage with customers, on average, using up to 40 percent more water each day.

The good news is that our reservoir levels are healthy, and we currently have enough raw water. Our water treatment plants are working at their maximum and our teams are working around the clock, but water is still being used faster than we can treat and pump it to everyone's homes. We're continuing to increase the amount of water we can treat and put into supply and are trying to reduce customer demand to ensure we avoid supply issues.

We're asking everyone to play their part by reducing the amount of water they use for the next few days and help us to keep the taps running for everyone. Please could you encourage everyone...

- to not use hoses to water gardens, municipal parks and other outside areas for the next few days
- to not wash vehicles unless it is essential, e.g. for reasons of essential hygiene
- to encourage others to be more water conscious
- [Click on this link to find some really simple tips about water saving](#)
- [Pick up some free water devices by clicking on this link.](#)

The basic message is simple: there is sufficient water for everyone if we all do our bit by minimising the use of water hungry gadgets like sprinklers and pressure washers.

- **Staffordshire Youth Awards**

Sporting Communities CIC are hosting their first ever Staffordshire Youth Awards in October. The event celebrates the achievements and challenges young people have experienced over the past 18 months. This is an opportunity to draw out all those inspiring stories of individual courage and sacrifice which young people often experience but are unseen and rarely recognised for.

There are several categories and the closing date to nominate a young person in Staffordshire is 7th September 2021. Anyone can nominate a young person.

- [Please click here to read more and nominate a young person.](#)

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- **20 FAMILY THINGS TO DO IN STAFFORDSHIRE FOR THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS**

Spectacular light shows, cinema under the stars, hunting for dinosaurs, top national attractions and beautiful open spaces – there’s plenty for the family to enjoy in Staffordshire this summer!

Philip White, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member responsible for tourism at Staffordshire County Council, is urging families to opt for a staycation this summer and explore the county’s amazing attractions and countryside.

He said: “Whether it’s the thrills of our theme parks, visits to our national attractions or day trips to our wonderful countryside and parks, we have something for everyone.

“With a Staffordshire staycation, not only do you get the chance to explore our amazing attractions but you’ll also be supporting local businesses after what has been a tough trading year for them.

“It’s also important to remember that some attractions may still have restrictions in place and need to be booked in advance, so please visit their websites and Facebook pages for details before visiting.”

- [Click here to connect to the website for the full details of this summer's events and things to do in Staffordshire.](#)

For more information please contact Richard Swancott on 07468 468729 or email richard.swancott@staffordshire.gov.uk

- **National Lottery Funding**

The National Lottery Community Fund is offering grants between £300 and £2,500 to help smaller community groups fund projects that bring people together and tackle loneliness. Organisations need to have an income of less than £50,000 and applications need to be made by 6 August.

- [Please click here for further information on this grant scheme.](#)

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COVID-19 Update

- **Covid 19 Update**

On 19 July, most legal restrictions will end, removing social distancing and social contact restrictions and enabling remaining businesses to reopen. From 19th July:

- No restrictions on numbers attending life events such as weddings, parties etc., and the ban on singing and dancing will be lifted.
- All remaining premises, including night clubs, can reopen.
- All legal limits on social distancing will be lifted.

- **BUT Covid-19 is not over!**

The success of the vaccination rollout has paved the way for the safe and gradual lifting of restrictions. But no vaccine is 100% effective and, like all viruses, Covid-19 can mutate.

As further restrictions are lifted, there will sadly be more cases, hospitalisations and deaths. Step 4 does not mark the end of the need for caution and restraint.

At Step 4, while many of the legal restrictions that the Government has imposed through the pandemic will be lifted, cautious guidance will remain making it clear this is not yet a return to normal.

While cases are high and rising, everybody needs to continue to act carefully and remain cautious.

- **Ongoing key protections to be kept in place**

- Symptomatic testing and targeted asymptomatic testing in education, high risk workplaces and to help people manage their personal risk
- Isolating when positive or when contacted by NHS Test and Trace
- Border quarantine: for all arriving from red list countries, and for those people arriving from amber list countries, other than those UK residents fully vaccinated in the UK vaccine programme.

- **Guidance to protect yourself**

- Whilst Government is no longer instructing people to work from home if they can, Government expects and recommends a gradual return over the summer.
- Government expects and recommends people wear face coverings in crowded areas such as busy public transport.
- Fresh air is key! Meet outside when you can; plenty of ventilation when meeting indoors.
- Minimising the number, proximity and duration of social contacts.

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Remember! Hands, Face, Space and Fresh Air!

- **Vaccination**

Please continue to encourage people to have their vaccination, particularly the 18-25 year olds and the over 40s.

[This link contains details of the walk-in vaccinations for this week and the upcoming weekend in Staffordshire and details of how you can book your vaccination if you can't get to a walk-in clinic.](#)

- **Covid-19 Asymptomatic testing options**

Asymptomatic residents are encouraged to test at least twice a week. If you test positive, please isolate for 10 days. There are three options available, of which are all free:

- [Collect test kits from a pharmacy; click here to find the nearest one to you.](#)
- [Order test kits online by clicking here.](#) These will be sent to your home address.
- Visit a test site to either collect test kits or to have a test done.
- South Staffordshire's semi-permanent Covid-19 Community Testing site is Wombourne Library.
- Further updates on daily pop-up testing sites all around South Staffordshire can be found on [South Staffordshire Councils Facebook page](#).

Please note: [Anyone with symptoms should not attend and instead book a PCR test online here.](#)

- **Lateral flow testing Guidance**

The Government has published step-by-step guides on how to do a rapid, lateral flow test at home. The guides include video demonstrations of how to carry out the test for yourself or a child as well as information on how to read and report the result.

[Click here for guidance on Lateral Flow Tests and a video demonstrating how to do one.](#)

[Click here to follow step by step instructions on using a lateral flow test kit – nose only test.](#)

[Click here to follow step by step instructions on how to do a nose and throat lateral flow test.](#)