

Council news round-up

Your weekly guide to the latest news

Issue 138

4 October 2019



This week's news from around the Council.

- **District's food hygiene ratings amongst the best**

Local authorities are there to protect the safety of customers and staff and ensure that food establishments are preparing their food in a safe and hygienic way. Restaurants and takeaways are awarded a rating of 0 to 5 and recent figures from the Food Standards Agency show that hygiene levels in South Staffordshire are above standard with just 30 businesses (3%) scoring less than a 3 food hygiene rating. This compares with 18% in Walsall, 11% in Wolverhampton and 9% in Dudley. For more information, visit: <https://ratings.food.gov.uk/authority-search-landing/en-GB/291>

- **ICT achieves PSN certification for 10th year running**

Well done to the ICT team, which has achieved Public Secure Network (PSN) compliance certification for another year. This is the 10th year running that this has been achieved and the certificate was awarded by the Cabinet Office to the Council this week. Also this week, cyber security training was completed with the Members on Tuesday 1 October 2019. This included good practice advice on locking your screen when you move away from it, stronger password/phrases and links to agile working.

- **Coming up - annual Parish Summit**

The Council will be hosting its annual Parish Summit on Friday 11 October 2019 in the Council Chamber. This event aims to inform, engage, support and network with Councillors and you can see the agenda by clicking [here](#). To confirm your attendance, please call **01902 696289** or email policyadmin@sstaffs.gov.uk along with your two workshop choices by Tuesday 8 October 2019.

- **Carl becomes a Commonwealth Champion**

Congratulations to Carl Holland for taking gold at the 2019 Commonwealth Judo Championships, which took place last week. Carl, who works at Codsall Leisure Centre and is a Leisure Assistant teaching swimming lessons and judo, competed in the veteran under 60kg category. Click [here](#) to see a pic.

- **Events coming up**

- **Good Life Energy Switch Surgery** - Thursday 10 October 2019 - 10am to 1pm - Foyer.

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- **Health and care update**

Following its 12-week public conversation about health and care across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, the Together We're Better partnership is holding a series of workshops to evaluate a list of potential solutions to the problems identified during the listening exercise.

The dates for the workshops are:

- Thursday 24 October 2019 from 1pm to 5pm, Port Vale Stadium, Stoke-on-Trent.
- Monday 28 October 2019 from midday to 4pm, George Hotel, Lichfield.
- Wednesday 30 October 2019 from midday to 4pm, Entrust, Stafford.

Click [here](#) for more information and to register. Registration will close on 16 October 2019.

- **Community Safety update - locality police engagement meetings**

Chief Inspector Mark Ward and Helen Marshall, the Council's Community Safety Officer (h.marshall@sstaffs.gov.uk), will be present at the next series of police engagement meetings, which take place in each locality twice a year. The purpose is to give an opportunity to all Parishes and elected Members from within the locality to meet and discuss issues relating to crime and disorder in their locality. Meetings are for Parish Councillors and District Members and they take place from 5pm to 7pm.

- Locality 3 - Wednesday 9 October 2019 - Council Chamber, Essington Community Centre.
- Locality 4 - Wednesday 23 October 2019 - Codsall Parish Chambers.
- Locality 5 - Wednesday 30 October 2019 - Swindon Community Centre.

- **Community safety update**

As part of the Rural and Wildlife Crime Week of Action, specialist officers at Staffordshire Police will be holding an online chat on Monday 7 October 2019 at 7pm. This is an opportunity to ask any questions to the officers relating to your rural community and the chat is open to the whole of Staffordshire. To join the chat, follow this [link](#) and type your questions.

- **Free Brexit training course for local businesses**

The Council in partnership with Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce is providing a free workshop about trading successfully across borders and how to get your business 'Brexit ready'. This free workshop will take place on Thursday 10 October 2019 from 10am to 4pm at the Council Offices in Codsall. Click [here](#) for more information and click [here](#) to book a place.

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Issue 138

4 October 2019



- **Get ready for Brexit**

The Government has launched a public information campaign 'Get ready for Brexit', which sets out what all members of the public and business owners need to know. Visit the Council website (click [here](#)) and find out more at www.gov.uk/brexit.



**Get
ready
for
Brexit**

- **Annual Canvass 2019**

Canvassers are now out in the district to chase up any outstanding Household Enquiry Forms. If you haven't returned your form, please spare a couple of minutes to complete it with them. Every year, we are required to write to households in the district to confirm that the details we have on the electoral register are correct. It is a legal requirement to respond to this letter and it's quick and easy to reply - you can do this online or by telephoning, texting or signing the form and sending it back. Click [here](#) for more information. We have to follow up any non-responding households so please help us save money by responding quickly.

- **Courses coming up this autumn**

Forest of Mercia CIC has got a range of courses and activities coming up this autumn including witches broomstick making, willow basket making, family bushcraft, willow reindeer sculpture making and natural Christmas decoration making. Booking is essential. Click [here](#) for more information or visit the Forest of Mercia website for prices. www.forestofmercia.com

Or why now join Community Forest Services on Thursday 7 and Friday 8 November at Jubilee Wood in Billbrook for a course in 'Forest Bathing'. The cost of the two day course is £20 per person and booking is essential. Click [here](#) for more information.

- **Energy switch surgery every Thursday**

If you'd like help switching your energy supplier, the Good Life Energy team will be visiting the Council Offices every Thursday between 10am and 1pm. You can book an appointment with the team on Freephone **03333 058671** or turn up with a recent energy bill on the day. For more information, visit www.sstaffs.gov.uk/energy.

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- **Funding now available to help you heat your home**

For a limited time, householders and tenants in South Staffordshire can benefit from being connected to mains gas along with a new gas-fired central heating system all installed free of charge (subject to eligibility). The scheme is funded using the Warm Homes Fund, established by National Grid to support local authorities, registered social landlords and other organisations working in partnership with them, to address some of the issues affecting fuel poor households. South Staffordshire Council is working with Staffordshire County Council, E.On and Affordable Warmth Solutions to help fund and successful deliver this scheme locally and ensure households can afford to heat their homes.

Click [here](#) to view our first installation case study in Perton. For more information, call freephone **0800 193 1902** or email advice@mea.org.uk.
www.staffordshirewarmerhomes.co.uk

- **Events coming up**

- **Perton Library** is celebrating Staffordshire History Festival with a family-friendly open day - Saturday 5 October 2019. 11am to 4pm.
- **Apple Day - Forest of Mercia** - Sunday 20 October 2019, 11am to 3pm. Click [here](#) for more information.

- **South Staffordshire Connect service now available**

The South Staffordshire Connect dial-a-ride bus service is now available. This local, bookable bus service is once again helping many people who struggle to get out and about and it is aimed at residents who live away from regular bus routes or who find it difficult to use a standard bus. The new Connect service operates between 10am and 3pm to three zones. For more information, please click on the following for more information - [Zone 1](#), [Zone 2](#) and [Zone 3](#).



- **Having a clear out?**

The Council can help you get rid of your bulky waste items including sofas, beds, wardrobes and white goods such as fridges, freezers and washing machines. Click [here](#) to book online 24/7. Unwanted household items can also be re-used or donated via a series of charities and forums including the British Heart Foundation, Acorns Children's Hospice, the Furniture Re-use Network and others. Click [here](#) for more information.

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- **Together we win!**

Good causes in South Staffordshire need your support and one way you can help is by buying a lottery ticket in our weekly Community Lottery. As well as supporting a good cause you might even win a cash prize ranging from £25 up to a jackpot of £25,000. To buy a lottery ticket, simply register on the website (www.southstaffslottery.co.uk) or telephone **01902 213777**.

Regular information

- **Committee/Panel meetings**

Next week, the following meetings are scheduled:

- **Cabinet** - Tuesday 8 October - 2pm - Committee Room 2.
- **Personal Development Review and Appointments Panel** - Wednesday 9 October - 2pm - Committee Room 2.
- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** - Thursday 10 October - 6.30pm - Council Chamber.
- **Personal Development Review and Appointments Panel** - Thursday 10 October - 9.30am - Committee Room 2.

- **5 Rating**

The following organisations have achieved a 5 Rating following their food inspection this week - Village Pizza in Penkridge, the Swan Inn in Whiston near Penkridge, The Curry Inn in Brewood and Bridge Inn in Brewood.

Everyone is encouraged to submit news items, please email: comms@sstaffs.gov.uk