

Council news round-up

Your weekly guide to the latest news

Issue 178

24 July 2020



This week's news from around the Council.

- **South Staffordshire is #openforbusiness**

A short video highlighting the support available for local businesses and showcasing some of the local businesses that are **#openforbusiness** in the district is now live on the Council's YouTube channel. Click [here](#) to view.

- **Leisure centres reopening next Monday**

South Staffordshire Council's four leisure centres in Cheslyn Hay, Codsall, Penkridge and Wombourne will be reopening to Members from Monday 27 July 2020 and to the general public from Monday 3 August 2020. Facilities at the leisure centres will reopen in gradual phases rather than all at once and the first phase will see gyms and exercise classes reopen to members-only. Swimming pools are not reopening at this stage and other facilities including changing rooms, the sports halls, toning suites and 3G pitches will remain suspended and reopen at a later date. Click [here](#) to view a guidance note and click [here](#) for more information.

- **Annual Canvass**

Every year, the Council is required to undertake an annual canvass of all households in the district between July and November to confirm that the details we have on the electoral register are correct. This month you will receive a canvass form from the Council through the post containing details of all the people in the household who are currently registered to vote. The government has made some changes to the canvass this year and now you only have to respond if:

- You're told to do so.
- You need to make any changes or additions to the information provided on the form.

You must read your letter carefully to check whether you need to respond or not. If you need to make any changes then it is a legal requirement to let us know and you could be fined £1,000 if you do not tell us about any changes. Please respond quickly when you receive your form as it saves you time and the council money as canvassers will have to visit any properties where a form has not been returned. Click [here](#) for more information.

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- **More good causes join the Community Lottery**

The South Staffordshire Community Lottery is delighted to welcome five new good causes - Penkridge and Acton Trussell Voluntary Car Scheme, Bilbrook Initiatives Hub, AFC Gnosall, Glenthorne Community Primary School, and Penkridge and Surround Peer Support Group. In total, the Community Lottery is now supporting 72 local good causes.

If you know or are part of a good cause, community group or charity benefitting South Staffordshire and are looking for ways to generate additional funds, register with the Community Lottery. It's free to join and good causes start benefitting from the very first ticket sold through their dedicated lottery page. Find out more at www.southstaffslottery.co.uk

- **COVID-19 update**

This week's news includes updates about face coverings, changes to shielding advice and a reminder about social distancing.

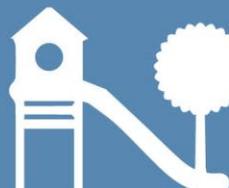
- **Face coverings** - Wearing a face covering in shops and supermarkets in England is to become compulsory from Friday 24 July 2020 - click [here](#) for more information.
- **Changes to shielding advice** - From Saturday 1 August 2020, the advice to people shielding is changing - click [here](#) for more information. Shielding will be paused, and you will no longer need to shield. From this date, the government is advising you to adopt strict social distancing rather than full shielding measures. Strict social distancing means you may wish to go out to more places and see more people but you should take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household or support bubble. You can visit shops and places of worship, but you should continue maintaining rigorous social distancing.
- **Social distancing** - Remember the 'One metre plus' social distancing rule. This means that where it is not possible for people to stay two metres apart, they should stay one metre apart and take additional measures to protect themselves such as wearing a face covering, increased use of hand sanitiser, sitting side by side rather than face to face, or meeting outdoors to reduce the risk of transmission.

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- **Let's get the Midlands moving**

A new campaign was launched this week aimed at getting businesses in the Midlands moving by reducing charges on the M6 toll. The privately owned motorway, supported by a coalition of regional partners, has launched 'Let's Get The Midlands Moving', a campaign aiming to support residents and businesses as they emerge from the pandemic. Click [here](#) to find out more.

- **Helping good causes in the district**

Good causes in South Staffordshire need your support and the South Staffordshire Community Lottery is raising funds to help the district recover from the impact of COVID-19. One way you can help is by buying a lottery ticket in this weekly Community Lottery and 60p from every £1 ticket will support local good causes and charities. As well as supporting a good cause you might even win a cash prize ranging from £25 up to a jackpot of £25,000.

And this August there's a super draw with five £100 B&Q vouchers to be won! This draw will take place on Saturday 29 August 2020 at 8pm. To be in with the chance of winning, buy your lottery tickets before this date. Simply register on the website (www.southstaffslottery.co.uk) or telephone **01902 213777**.

- **Census 2021**

Every 10 years there is a census of all people and households in the UK that provides a detailed snapshot of the whole population. The next Census Day will take place on Sunday 21 March 2021 and recruitment is taking place at the moment to help us ensure everyone is counted. Click [here](#) for more information.

- **Building Better Opportunities (BBO) update**

During lockdown, the BBO team has been working hard to ensure the programme continues to help residents across South Staffordshire and Stafford get back into work or training. Like other services, the programme has had to adapt and deliver support in different ways including:

- A 'Shine Online' Facebook Group containing information about upcoming events and tutorials on things to do to help keep a sense of community going with our participants whilst they were not able to meet in person.

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- The creation of a virtual version of the Upper Morton rural activities 10-week confidence and wellbeing course. The farm has always been one of the most popular courses within the BBO programme and without it there would have been a big gap. However, the team managed to adapt the course and continue via virtual sessions on Facebook alongside delivering packages of supplies and equipment to each person's home.

Although Lockdown has seen the number of referrals to the programme significantly reduce, the team has still managed to sign up 32 new participants since the end of March 2020 as well as achieving successful exit results for 36 others. Click [here](#) to read Sarah's case study. If you would like to find out more about the Building Better Opportunities Programme or know someone who may benefit from the support they offer, please contact Ryan Cresswell (r.cresswell@sstaffs.gov.uk).

- **Challenge Academy Summer Adventure Sessions - now open**

If your kids are longing for a summer adventure then visit Challenge Academy, situated within the grounds of Baggeridge Country Park. From 20 July to 27 August, Challenge Academy is offering a whole host of adventures, including high ropes, an obstacle course, nets adventure, woodland challenges, team building and forest skills. Prices start from £5 per person. Find out more and book online at www.challengeacademy.co.uk

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

- **Audit and Risk Committee** - Tuesday 28 July 2020 - 4pm - virtual meeting.
- **Overview and Planning Committee** - Tuesday 28 July 2020 - 5pm - virtual meeting.
- **Licensing Sub Committee** - Wednesday 29 July 2020 - 10am - virtual meeting.
- **Asset Scrutiny Panel** - Thursday 30 July - 9am - virtual meeting.
- **Standards and Resources Committee** - Thursday 30 July - 2.30pm - virtual meeting.

Details on how to view the virtual meetings on Microsoft Teams will be placed on the news section of the Council website next week - www.sstaffs.gov.uk

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