

District Councillor Report (08/11/2021) – Matt Jennings

SDC Covid Cases –

Last time we spoke Henley-in-Arden & Claverdon had 25 cases – it is now at 32.

Stratford District 445 per 100,000 (was 464 last time)

Warwick 517 (482 last month)

Solihull 414 (444 last month)

Redditch 368 (603 last month)

Since the start of October we have unfortunately had a 4 death's in the District where coronavirus is mentioned on the Death certificate (11 in the last 7 months)

People aged OVER 12 who have been vaccinated in the District :

1st dose numbers : 85 %

2nd dose numbers : 80 %

In our Ward

1st dose numbers : 86.7 %

2nd dose numbers : 81.5 %

Usual message - If you know of anyone who has not been jabbed – please encourage them to do so.

District News

Swans in Stratford

It has been confirmed that there is Avian Flu in the District – this disease has affected the swans on the Bancroft & recreation ground in Stratford Upon Avon. If you are going to Stratford do not feed the swans, do not approach the swans, do not touch sick or dead birds and keep your dogs on the lead. If you need to report this contact either the RSPCA on 0300 1234999 or SDC on 01789 267575.

Culture

The RSC is back! The Magician's Elephant, adapted from the prize-winning novel by Kate DiCamillo and directed by Sarah Tipple, started last week. The family show is the first production in the Royal Shakespeare Theatre since its closure due to the Covid pandemic back in March 2020.

I was thankful to be invited to the opening night and it was a great show and well worth a visit.

Leisure

I opened the Stratford Leisure Centre Wellness Suite on Saturday at the refurbished Stratford Leisure Centre. This is a designed for those with limited physical abilities who are looking to improve their fitness, lose weight or increase their strength in a controlled social environment. The Suite includes a range of power assisted exercise equipment and is ideal for those coming back to exercise after periods of rest or inactivity especially the elderly. If you know of any groups or societies who would benefit or be interested in booking this (or receiving further information) please ask them to get in touch with me or visit the www.everyoneactive.com website or call 01789 268826.

Mop Job & Apprentice Fair

We had over 50 organisations exhibit (from all over the District) at the Stratford Playhouse and approximately 200 attendees. This attracted lots of positive media coverage, both nationally and internationally (BBC Overseas radio did a piece for the US market)! It got the message out that not only was Stratford District open for business and welcoming back tourists, it was also prepared to look at innovative ways to make a difference. I was asked in one of the interviews what would need to happen in order for me to look at the Job Fair as a success? My answer was that if it helped steer one person in a positive career direction then it was worthwhile. I was contacted by one of the exhibitors the following day to inform me that they had made three job offers which had all been accepted... all were long term unemployed.

Budget

Bad news - Unfortunately neither of the South Warwickshire bids for 'Levelling Up Funding' were successful. We will be submitting these to the next round of funding but in the meantime we may have to look at alternative ways to possibly finance public works.

Waste Contract

The joint SDC /WDC contract was awarded to Biffa and will commence on the 1 August 2022 when we will also be bringing in a new waste collection system known as '1-2-3'. I will be attending an information night on this to learn all the details of what this will entail shortly – I will report back to you once I have done this.

Fly Tipping

Fly tipping is well below last year's level but still has some way to go before we get to 2019 levels. Against other authorities, we appear to be faring better than they are.

Finances

The results for the first half of the financial year show that there has been a net deficit against the budget of £340k. This is attributable to both higher than budgeted costs in some parts of the organization e.g. use of agency staff and consultants, cost of utilities, together with shortfalls against budgeted revenue in others e.g. off-street car parking (£573k). The significant over budget revenue from the Garden Waste Scheme has been offset to a significant extent by the extra costs incurred as a result of the fire and loss of the Ettington dry recycling centre (net gain £588k).

The current projection to the end of the financial year is that SDC finances will show an unfavourable net balance of £746k against budgeted income and expenditure. SDC's reserves will again have to bear the consequences.

Local Enforcement Plan

The new Local Enforcement Plan is available to view on the SDC website where you will also find comments from the consultation undertaken – see:

<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/208615/name/Local%20Enforcement%20Plan%20Final%20October%202021.pdf>

This is also to advise that to date 491 cases were closed during 2021. Of these 185 (38.0%) were closed due to 'No Breach'.

57 (11.6%) were closed as the result of finding a negotiated solution

56 (11.4%) were resolved as a result of a planning application being approved.

More than a third of cases, therefore, have involved officer time being devoted to instances where ultimately it was found there was 'no breach'.

Venture House

'Online Events' for November :

[Export Academy workshops](#) - DIT, 9-10 Nov

[Coventry & Warwickshire's Annual Business & Economic Conference](#) - 12 Nov

[Midlands Business Network Expo](#) - National Motorcycle Museum, 26 Nov

[Meet the Contractor](#) - Made Smarter WM, 15-17 Nov

[A masterclass in networking skills](#) - CUE Business Solutions, 3 Dec

[How to save money and get more customers](#) - CUE Business Solutions, 3 Dec

Local networking

Take a look at our [list of local networking groups](#) to see what you might like to get involved with. If you run an online networking group that does not appear on this list, please tell us about it and we can add your listing.

For further information visit : www.venturehousestratford.co.uk