

## **Report from Your District Councillors – July 2025**

### **HS2**

Those that attended the EKFB drop in session last week at The Butchers Arms car park will not have learned much more than we already knew about the closure and diversions around Priors Hardwick. Despite the various meetings I have attended with other Councillors and the MP, no effect has resulted, and we are stuck with a long term closure to the road Wormleighton and what might be called an unsympathetic approach to the likely impact on local residents and local roads. I have written again to our MP, although more in hope than expectation given the national problems that beset HS2. I have also asked that HS2 check that one closure does not interfere with others on the diversion routes. We have had some minor success on reducing the planned disruption between Ladbroke and Southam during September and November, than would have been otherwise, but this is probably of less relevance to Priors Hardwick.

### **Local Government Review**

All of Warwickshire's District and Borough Councils along with Warwickshire County Council would be affected by the plans suggested in the [English Devolution White Paper](#), which is the Government's statement of its intention to reform local government.

On Monday 14 July, the full Council identified their preferred option at this stage as two unitary Councils for Warwickshire.

The District Council was being asked to determine which option under local government reform is its preference. To assist them, the District Council has considered a report by audit and assurance specialists, Deloitte, which was carried out on behalf of Stratford-on-Avon District Council alongside the other Warwickshire District and Borough Councils. This includes a wide range of proposals on devolution, but also wider plans for Local Government Reorganisation.

The [Deloitte report](#) (click the link – it is online on SDC's website) evaluates the two proposals which were identified by Council in the "interim plan" in March, these being:

- Option 1 - Single unitary model: A single unitary council based on the existing geography of the five Borough and District Councils and the County Council.
- Option 2 - Two-unitary model: A two-unitary council model as follows:
  - (1) Based on the existing boundaries of North Warwickshire Borough Council, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Rugby Borough Council, and part of Warwickshire County Council
  - (2) Based on the existing boundaries of Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwick District Council and part of Warwickshire County Council.

These have been evaluated against the 6 criteria to be used by government in determining future structures and concludes that a two-unitary model emerges as the most advantageous structure for Warwickshire.

The matter will be the subject of further public engagement later in the Summer so that residents are able to let us have their views prior to the final submission to government on 28 November.

### **Five Year Housing Land Supply**

Stratford-on-Avon District Council has released an interim update to its Five-Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) position, reflecting recent changes to national planning policy and a significant increase in Local Housing Need (LHN). Having a Five-Year Housing Land Supply is key to maintaining proper management of development across the District.

Following the Government's revision of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and an updated methodology for calculating LHN introduced late last year, the District Council's annual housing requirement has risen from 730 to 1,126 homes per annum.

In response, the District Council has reassessed its housing land supply assumptions, particularly regarding delivery expectations from key sites.

Despite these adjustments, the District Council is pleased to confirm that it continues to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, with the updated position showing a supply equivalent to 5.06 years. This ensures that the adopted Core Strategy retains full weight in the determination of planning applications.

### **Health Screening Events – a reminder!**

Stratford on Avon District Council has joined together with the Graham Fulford Charitable Trust to offer a series of health screening events for both men and women across the District.

The tests on offer cost £14 each, subsidised by the District Council and are:

- For men over 40 – PSA (Prostate screening)
- For men and women aged 18 and over – diabetes and cholesterol

Events run from 10am to 2pm and the next one is on Saturday 13 September at Stratford Leisure Centre.

Residents need to pre-book online and can do this via the District Council's website: [Stratford-on-Avon District Council to host health screening events across the District | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)

### **Meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner**

Nigel and Natalie have met with the Police and Crime Commissioner to discuss ongoing ward concerns. The Commissioner wished to reassure residents that uniformed officers are not the only police officers and around half of the police force are not in uniform. Nevertheless, the Commissioner did acknowledge that Southam SNT are a small team

working in a large geographical area and he would take our points to his weekly discussion with the Chief Constable.

### **Community Safety**

Stratford-on-Avon District Council's CCTV system has received the British Standard Accreditation which recognises good management and practice for an eighteenth consecutive year.

Accreditation under British Standard 7958 follows a comprehensive assessment based on 120 separate criteria, with no recommendations made following the audit. The District Council's CCTV is operated in partnership with local towns and parishes.

### **Community Climate Change Fund**

Round Three remains open for applications. There is no deadline as applications will be assessed on a quarterly basis, meaning applicants will have to wait a minimum of three months to be informed as to whether they have been successful or not. More information and the online application is available on SDC's website. Please email [climate.emergency@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:climate.emergency@stratford-dc.gov.uk) with any queries.

### **Hospital parking**

Anyone who has tried to visit either Warwick or Stratford hospital lately will have found great difficulty in parking, with little alternative travel options. Nigel has put forward a motion to council as follows:

‘Council welcomes the current improvements being made to Warwick and Stratford Hospital facilities but notes that the associated building works are having detrimental effects on parking and access for patients and visitors. Difficulty with parking was already an issue prior to these works beginning. These hospitals provide services over a wide area of South Warwickshire and for most residents of Stratford District, transport is substantially reliant on the use of the private car. For many council wards there is no public transport available in any form. Whilst the hospital authorities presently warn of likely difficulties with parking when attending the hospital, they provide no information or promote the use of such limited public transport that is available. Apart from inconvenience and worry for the public there are impacts on the environment, traffic, NHS staff, missed appointments and thus NHS efficiency.

Council calls on Cabinet to establish an initiative to work with the hospital and health authorities, the County Council, Warwick District Council and voluntary bodies to seek an improvement in transport solutions for residents' attendance at our local hospitals. Elements might include dial a ride, information system, advertising, mobile phone apps, park and ride, interaction with operators, extension and support to voluntary driver schemes, improvements to time tabling and support for extra services. ‘

## **Postal Voters**

Following changes introduced by the Elections Act 2022, voters are now required to reapply for their postal vote every three years.

All postal voters who completed a postal vote application form before 31 October 2023 will be required to renew their postal vote application by 31 January 2026. Postal votes will be limited to a maximum of three years, following which it will be necessary to make a new application.

Stratford-on-Avon District Council will be contacting around 17,000 registered postal voters in the District directly by email, where an email address is held or by post informing them of the new rules and encouraging them to reapply as soon as possible ahead of the deadline. If voters do not reapply before the deadline, their postal vote will be cancelled.

The quickest and easiest way to reapply for a postal vote application is to apply online at [www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote](https://www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote)

For more information please visit: [www.stratford.gov.uk/postal-votes](https://www.stratford.gov.uk/postal-votes)

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