

Report to Ilmington Parish Council 31 July 2025.

District

1. Just a reminder that the District Council is now publishing an email newsletter The Online View. This is available to anyone who has signed up for it on <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/communications/email-newsletter.cfm>. These are now being published each week.

2. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee next meets on 27 August and South Warwickshire Foundation NHS Trust will be attending to describe the future use of the Ellen Badger Hospital.

In the meantime, a site visit is being provided by SWFT on 8th August, to Ellen Badger, for members of SDC Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Manuela Perteghella, MP for Stratford on Avon has requested the Secretary of State to call in the decision of the Interim Care Board not to allocate any inpatient beds to Shipston. This call in was supported by SDC on 14th July.

3. Local Government Reorganisation: At SDC's meeting on 14th July, it was agreed that the best proposal for a unitary authority was for Warwick and Stratford Districts, to take on County Council responsibilities by combining to create one South Warwickshire Unitary Authority.
4. Round 3 of the Climate Change Community fund is now open <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/environment/climate-change-fund.cfm>
5. Criteria for the Community Grant fund are still to be confirmed
6. Free summer activities for children at local leisure centre | Stratford-on-Avon District Council <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/news/press.cfm/current/1/item/138560> As part of the national Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, Stratford Leisure Centre and The Greig Leisure Centre in Alcester - managed by Everyone Active in partnership with Stratford-on-Avon District Council - will host an array of free activities, all accompanied by free lunches.

Activities over the summer holidays include TagActive and junior gym sessions - both of which are designed to appeal to different age groups and interests.

TagActive is an interactive indoor obstacle course that tests strategy, speed, agility and bravery, all while promoting fun, fitness and competition. Meanwhile, the junior gym sessions will help promote social, mental and physical activity for younger members.

Family swimming sessions at Stratford Leisure Centre, Studley Leisure Centre, Southam Leisure Centre and Shipston Leisure Centre will also be on offer as part of the programme.

Every session will include a free nutritious and balanced lunchtime meal.

7. Prostate, diabetes and cholesterol screening

For men and women aged 18 and over - 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

The events are taking place at:

Saturday 2 August at The Greig Leisure Centre, Kinwarton Road, Alcester, B49 6AD

Saturday 13 September at Stratford Leisure Centre

Saturday 11 October at Shipston Scout Hut, New Street, Shipston-on-Stour, CV36 4EW

10am until 2pm at each location and people are able to book at a discounted rate of £14 for each test.

Spaces are limited and need to be booked in advanced at:

<https://sdc.mypsatests.org.uk/>

County

1. The Reform UK Leader of County, elected in his absence and then on holiday for 4 weeks has stood down due to ill-health. Reform UK has chosen as their Group Leader his Deputy, George Finch.

Full Council met on Tuesday 22 July and elected George Finch as the new County Leader. The LibDems did invite the County Conservative Group to form a coalition with all other parties but they abstained from all votes for Leader.

2. The personal attacks on the CEO have not gone well with the officers at County but from my experience that are acting with great professionalism.

Attendance by Reform Portfolio holders at OSC has been poor with those attending unable or unwilling to answer questions. OSC are the Public Fora in which the Administration should be held to account.

DOGE. Reform UK is keen to bring in a DOGE team but at the same time is wasting officer time by not turning up to meetings and now they plan to spend £190K on Political Assistants.

There have been addition misrepresentations by George Finch, alleging that his administration has inherited 6500 potholes. When challenged by Cllr Matecki on the evidence for this he appeared to blame social media. Actual number circa 150. Reform has also said they have found “Genuine deliberate obstructionism”, again without citing any evidence.

3. SEND deficit. The Government has extended the ‘Statutory Over-ride for a further 2 years, meaning the circa £90m deficit is essentially ‘off the books.’ This is not as a result of bad financial management at County, it is the result of government’s refusal to fund SEND provision properly.
4. Councillors' Grant Fund [Councillors' Grant Fund – Warwickshire County Council](#)
The applications window for Round 1 of the Councillors' Grant Fund 2025-2026 opened on 9 June, closing on Sunday 20 July at 5.00pm.

The Fund provides each Councillor with £8,000 to support local projects in their divisions. There are two rounds each year and it is at a Councillor’s discretion how they split their £8,000 between the two rounds.

The Councillors’ role is to review and make decisions on the applications submitted, with officers undertaking due diligence and scoring.

All applications must be submitted via our website, which also includes full details on the eligibility criteria and guidance on how to apply - Councillors’ Grant Fund – Warwickshire County Council

The Round 1 timelines are:

- 9 June – application window opens.
- 20 July – application window closes.
- 23 July to 10 August – officers process applications, including due diligence checks and scoring.
- 11 August to 29 August – officers discuss applications with Councillors individually, and Councillors decide on awards.
- 1 September to 5 September – decisions are shared with applicants.

I welcome proposals that have the support of PCs, and, given the tight timescale, my proposal is that at least 50% of the fund is carried fwd to round 2.

I have a meeting with the relevant officer on Aug 11 to consider round 1 applications

5. Delegated Highways the Budget allocated to your Division for this year is £35087 plus £16793 underspend carried over from previous years.