

# **District Councillors Report Lighthorne Parish Council**

**14th September 2021**

## **Stratford Recruitment Fair**

Businesses are being encouraged to sign up to join a ‘medieval’ recruitment fair in Stratford this October to help fill vacancies caused by the pandemic. The ‘Job and Apprentice Fair’ is taking place as part of the annual Stratford Mop Fair on October 12 – harking back to the Mop’s original purpose in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It will be held in Stratford Playhouse on Rother Street from 12 noon until 6pm, and attendees can turn up at a time that suits them. “We’d welcome any company looking to hire staff.

## **Proposals to create a South Warwickshire Council**

Both Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Councils face a very uncertain financial future, although for slightly different reasons. Government funding for all Councils has reduced in recent years, and at Stratford-on-Avon yet further significant reductions are expected due to changes to the New Homes Bonus scheme this autumn, whereas at Warwick District the cost of delivering services, including refuse and recycling, is expected to increase significantly. It is estimated that both Councils will have a shortfall of around £4-6m each year by 2025/26. Across the two Councils this means that £10m of annual savings are needed over the next five years to address this shortfall and help preserve services. This level of annual reduction is about one-third of the combined costs of the Councils.

## **Public consultation begins on proposal to create a South Warwickshire Council**

Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Councils are considering a proposal to merge, creating a new District Council covering the whole of South Warwickshire (the areas currently covered by Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Councils).

The public consultation on the plans to create a South Warwickshire Council started on **Monday 6 September and runs until Sunday 24 October.**

**Have your say!** Residents, businesses, Town and Parish Councils, local groups and organisations and key stakeholders are encouraged to take part and have their say by completing the online questionnaire.

“Both Councils face significant financial challenges - the impact of dealing with the pandemic, when combined with the increased costs of delivering existing services, such as waste management, as well as responding to the climate emergency. We have to recognise the undeniable fact that the world has changed in ways we could not have envisaged, and we need to adapt to those changes.

It is vitally important that before the Councillors come to a decision, we hear the views of the wider community on whether you believe a merger is the right option to take or not. So please get involved and have your say.

“We need to hear your views – we need to listen and respond to what our residents want.

“Please take the time to carefully reflect on the questions, tell us what you think the future for local government in this area should be so that we can build a vibrant, new, agile and strong Council to serve you.”

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## **How to take part**

The consultation document and online questionnaire can be viewed and completed at: <https://www.southwarwickshire.org.uk/>

Questionnaires for completion on paper, as well as in different languages and formats can be requested by emailing: [swconsultation@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:swconsultation@stratford-dc.gov.uk) or

calling 01789 267575. The paper questionnaires are returned using a FREEPOST address.

Questionnaires are also available to pick up at the following locations:

- **Stratford-upon-Avon** - District Council's offices at Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford-on-Avon, CV37 6HX
- **Warwick** – Visitor Information Centre, Jury Street, Warwick CV34 4EW
- **Leamington** – Town Hall, the Parade, Leamington Spa, CV32 4AT
- **Kenilworth** – Kenilworth Library, Smalley Place, Kenilworth CV8 1QG
- **Whitnash** – Whitnash Library, Franklin Road, Whitnash CV31 2JH

### **What happens next?**

The findings from the consultation will be considered, along with any other evidence, at a meeting of the councils on 13 December 2021. A decision will be taken as to whether they want to formally ask government to allow the councils to merge.

**The deadline for the survey is Sunday 24 October 2021.**

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