

Council news round-up

Your weekly guide to the latest news

Issue 101

18 January 2019



This week's news from around the Council.

- **Green light for i54 South Staffordshire extension**

On Tuesday, the Council's planning committee granted outline planning permission for an extension to i54 South Staffordshire. The development could generate around 1,700 jobs and lever in up to £300 million of investment. Click [here](#) to read more.

- **South Staffordshire Connect service now available**

The South Staffordshire Connect dial-a-ride bus service is now available. This local, bookable bus service is once again helping many people who struggle to get out and about and it is aimed at residents who live away from regular bus routes or who find it difficult to use a standard bus. The new Connect service operates between 10am and 3pm to three zones. For more information, please click on the following for more information - [Zone 1](#), [Zone 2](#) and [Zone 3](#).



- **Subsidy grant approved**

Did you know that the benefits service pays out over £20m per year in housing benefit in the district? The majority of this is reimbursed by the Government in the form of a subsidy grant and to claim the money back, the Council has to complete a detailed form of all payments. This form has to be checked by an external auditor and selective testing is undertaken to demonstrate the accuracy of the payments made to customers. Grant Thornton has completed their checking and confirmed they are confident in the accuracy of the claim. This is a great result and confirms the high standard of work processed within Welfare Service.

- **Building Better Opportunities**

The award-winning Building Better Opportunities programme needs your help to attract more people to sign-up before December 2019. Since January 2017, 411 residents of South Staffordshire and Stafford have joined the programme but it needs a further 310 people to take part in the programme to hit its target. If you know of anyone who faces additional barriers that make it difficult for them to look for work then please email BBOstaffs@gmail.com.

Through the Building Better Opportunities programme, we can assist them to access online or face-to-face training courses, work experience, volunteering and confidence and team building

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skills. Each person is allocated a dedicated advocate who will provide support and guidance. There are also financial incentives for those who join the programme and/or successfully complete agreed actions. For more information please ring **01902 696228**.

- **Community Innovation Fund**

The submission process for the South Staffordshire Community Innovation Fund is now open and applicants have until 5pm on Friday 25 January 2019 to submit a completed application. Grants up to £1,000 are available for all community and voluntary sector organisations in South Staffordshire, including those registered to the South Staffordshire Community Lottery. Click [here](#) for more information.

- **Coming up next week - Big Energy Saving Week**

Several Parish Councils are supporting the Good Life Energy team during Big Energy Saving Week (21 to 28 January 2019) and hosting local Good Life Energy bill surgeries in their community to help people cut their energy bills. Events are being supported by Great Wyrley Parish Council, Perton Parish Council, Saredon Parish Council and Wombourne Parish Council. Codsall and Bilbrook Parish Council are also helping to promote the scheme.

Good Life Energy bill surgeries are being held on:

- Tuesday 22 January 2019, 9.30am to 1pm - Perton Civic Centre.
- Wednesday 23 January 2019, 9.30am to 1pm - Wombourne Civic Centre.
- Thursday 24 January 2019, 9.30am to 1pm - Codsall District Council Offices.
- Friday 25 January 2019, 9.30am to 1pm Great Wyrley Community Centre.
- Monday 4 February 2019, 4pm to 7pm - Wedges Mills Village Hall.

Remember to bring your bills along so advisors can help talk you through the best energy deals.

Freephone: **03333 058671**

Email: info@cebltd.com

www.sstaffs.gov.uk/energy

- **Community Centre celebrates 30 years**

On Saturday 26 January 2019, there will be a celebration marking 30 years since the opening of Moseley Court Community Centre in Essington by former Chairman Councillor Cyril Wakeman in 1989. This function room is much loved and used by residents and refreshments will be available from 2pm on the day.

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- **Warmer Homes - funding now available for broken gas boilers**

Do you or anyone you know need help to replace an old or broken gas boiler? Funding is available through the Council's Warmer Homes scheme so please get in touch. Funding is for South Staffordshire residents on limited household incomes with hard to heat homes or for residents who are vulnerable to the cold through ill health or age. Please apply now before the funding runs out.

Warmer Homes South Staffordshire.

Freephone **0800 193 1902** or email info@mea.org.uk

- **Pre-purchasing option now available**

Grave plots at the Council's two cemeteries in Sytch Lane in Wombourne and Strawberry Lane in Great Wyrley are now available to pre-purchase. Plots are available for residents of South Staffordshire as well as people from outside the district and there's a variety of grave types including lawn graves, cremated remains graves and natural graves. For more information, please contact Bereavement Services for more details on **01902 696111**.

Regular information

- **Committee/Panel meetings**

Next week, the following public meetings are scheduled:

- **Special Council** - Tuesday 22 January 2019 - 6pm - Council Chamber
- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** - Tuesday 22 January 2019 - 6.30 pm - Council Chamber
- **Standards and Resources Committee** - Thursday 24 January 2019 - 2.30 pm - Bill Brownhill Room

- **5 Rating**

The following organisations have achieved a 5 Rating following their food inspections this week - St Paul's CE First School in Coven, the Courtyard Bistro at Dunston Business Village and Archies Attic in Enville.

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