

County Councillor report Lighthorne Parish Council Meeting 27th September 2022

Key Messages

This is a worrying time for so many people as they struggle to manage household budgets. Rising living costs present major concerns which can be damaging to mental and physical health as people's eating and sleeping habits and general wellbeing can be negatively affected.

WCC want everyone to be aware of support available and to feel comfortable asking for help if they need it. We encourage people to look online or call the council for themselves or on behalf of family and friends.

There are lots of services available to support residents:

Further support from WCC

Residents can get further support by visiting the council website and searching 'cost of living' - the website address is warwickshire.gov.uk/costofliving. There is support and information on housing, money and benefits, the Local Welfare Scheme, food and fuel support, help with childcare costs, finding your nearest foodbank and council tax payments. There is also information available about free school meals: warwickshire.gov.uk/food. Throughout the school holidays, we've been promoting our Holiday Activities and Food programme, known as HAF. There are activities and events happening during all school holidays, including half terms – just search 'Warwickshire HAF' on an internet browser.

Additional messages

As a Council, we are looking at further options to support residents, and are actively talking to other Councils and partners about how we can combine our efforts.

In terms of Council Tax, there is work underway for our 23/24 budget and the refresh of our 5 year MTFS. It's difficult to be certain because of massive inflationary pressures we are facing and the expectation of significant additional demand for core services, especially social care, arising from the current cost of living challenges. We need to await information from the new Government.

This won't distract us from the long-term strategic aim to level up, although we must be realistic about the fact the challenge will only become greater.

We must not ignore the wider impact that financial strain places on families and individuals and I urge people to protect their wellbeing at this time.

Council advice to stay mentally and physically well, combat loneliness and support one another is also available through our family and health webpages – you can search 'mental health' on the council website, or the website address is warwickshire.gov.uk/mentalhealth

I hope people will seek out these resources and ask for help if they need it.

Anyone who wants to help others in their community who may be struggling can consider donating food, clothing and other household items. Many supermarkets have food collection points and local charity shops will advise what sort of donations are needed

Act on Energy

Are you struggling to pay your energy bills? Are you worried about the rising cost of energy? Contact them NOW to see how they can help 0800 988 2881

Pensioners struggling with household costs

Older people in receipt of Pension Credit have received a contribution toward food and fuel this summer from Warwickshire County Council.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/3066/help-for-warwickshire-pensioners-struggling-with-household-costs>

We know that sudden unexpected costs can create real challenges for people experiencing financial hardship. If this, is you or anyone you know, help is available?

Local Welfare Scheme

The Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme supports the most vulnerable residents at times of unavoidable crisis when they have no other means of help. The scheme provides basic and essential help in the form of emergency food parcels or credit for energy. Call 0800 408 1448.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/1218/help-is-available-for-people-who-may-be-struggling-to-cope>

Applying for a Secondary School Place in Warwickshire

Have a child in Year 5? Have you started thinking about which secondary schools to apply for? Now's a great time to find out about your options. A good place to start is our Find a School website which will give you info about your local schools: <https://apps.warwickshire.gov.uk/findaschool>

Applying for a Secondary School Place in Warwickshire

If your child will be moving to Year 7 in 2023, then now is the time to start thinking about your secondary school application.

Watch our video for tips on how to prepare for the move:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7yVvgN9tAs>

Hope – Young adult mental health journeys

A new animation from Warwickshire County Council shares genuine mental health journeys from young people in the county.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/3094/-hope-animation-shares-young-adult-mental-health-journeys>

Emergency duty foster carers

Warwickshire County Council's fostering service is looking for foster carers to care for young people in a crisis.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/3211/could-you-offer-a-safe-place-to-sleep-for-a-night->

Safer Streets Warwickshire

Funding worth more than £350,000 has been secured from the government by Warwickshire's Police and Crime Commissioner Philip Seccombe and local partners to improve safety at four public spaces.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/3154/major-funding-boost-to-help-improve-safety-in-public-spaces-across-warwickshire>

Latest COVID-19 behaviour messages from UKHSA - Summer 2022

To continue to support our residents to reduce their risk of catching and spreading COVID-19 we ask you to share messages encouraging people to:

Get vaccinated. Wear a face covering in indoor public places

If you feel unwell, stay at home and avoid contact with others

Let fresh air in if you are meeting indoors

For further information, visit www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19

Children aged 5 and above are eligible to have the COVID-19 vaccinations.

To find out more, visit www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-children-aged-5-to-11-years/a-guide-for-parents-of-children-aged-5-to-11-years

Pregnancy and vaccination

It is important to get fully vaccinated to protect you and your unborn baby. Thousands of pregnant women have been safely vaccinated in the UK and worldwide.

To book your vaccine, call 119 or visit www.nhs.uk/covidvaccination

Dementia Connect in Warwickshire (for everyone living with dementia and their carers)

Dementia Connect in Warwickshire is available for everyone affected by dementia. It offers practical and emotional support and can ensure people are

linked in with and supported to access the wide range of additional support that can help them to live well with dementia. This service is commissioned by Warwickshire County Council and delivered by Alzheimer's Society across Warwickshire. People affected by dementia (whether they have a diagnosis or are a carer) can self-refer to Dementia Connect. Practitioners can pass on the Dementia Connect contact number (charged at local rates): **0333 150 3456**. Further details on how to contact the service and opening times are on the attached resource.

The Dementia Connect Service manager for Warwickshire, Tony Refson, would be happy to arrange for a local Dementia Advisor to attend team meetings or answer any queries you may have about the service. Please contact Tony directly on Tony.Refson@alzheimers.org.uk, or by phone: 07889 604655.

Information on dementia, services and support and regular updates with news, activities and events are also available through Warwickshire's Living Well with Dementia website: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/dementia

Community Risk Management Plan

Warwickshire Fire & Rescue want your views on the draft strategy and plans. What should they be doing to keep Warwickshire safe? Are their priorities the right ones? Is their approach the right one for Warwickshire? Please take 10 mins to tell us what you think:

<https://ask.warwickshire.gov.uk/resources/wfrs-pprs-2022-2027-consultation>

Chris Mills.

Kineton and Red horse