

Parish & Member briefing note 4/12/20

The big news this week is of course the decision to take Stratford into T3 and our response to it. The SDC Cabinet decided to Judicially Review that decision with the Government, not a decision we took lightly. We had asked for a response by Thursday but that was not forthcoming. The Government said it will now be with us on Monday. The main reason for this action is to help protect not the hospitality trade in particular but all of our businesses. Stratford was the fourth hardest hit authority in the country and should have been treated differently. Even if the decision was reversed on Monday – unlikely – it would be too late for some of our pubs to reopen in time to make a difference. This is a tough time for them.

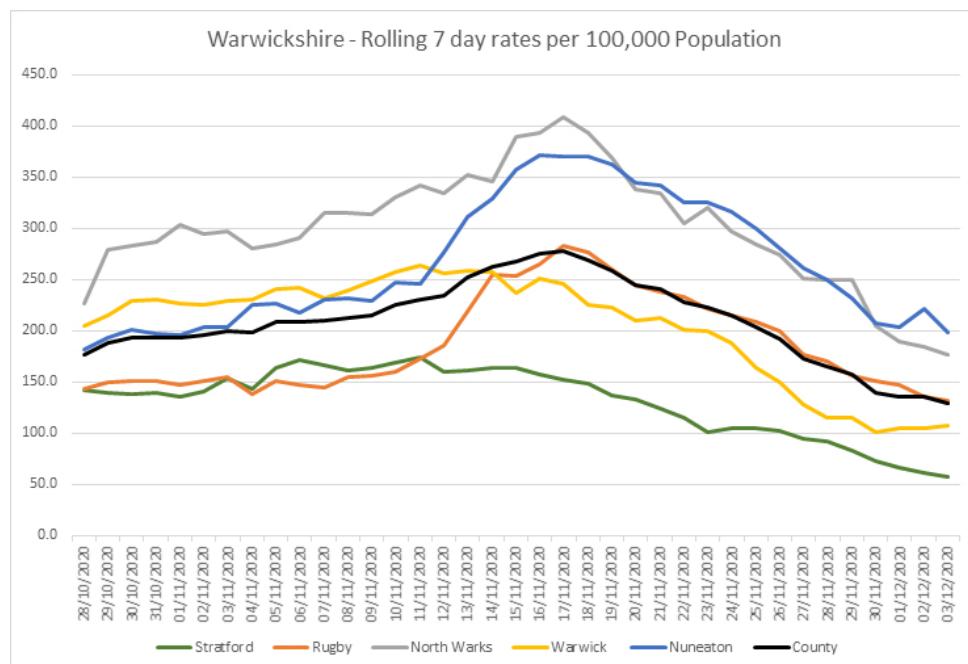
In an attempt to help our local businesses, I would ask that where possible, please buy locally. Every little helps, as they say.

Covid 19

Figures released Friday shows that for the SDC area the seven day rate/100,000 is now down to 66.9/100,000 and the over 60's day rate is currently 62.4/100,000 with 26 cases over the last seven days across the district. This really does highlight the importance of looking after one's parents and grandparents and also provides evidence that we need to be in a lower tier to protect and support our local businesses. Positivity is running at a few percent.

SWFT Hospital Beds. We have seen a slight increase of Covid inpatients with 31 (24) confirmed cases of COVID-19 and five (5) patients in ICU (last week's figures in brackets). There are 52% of SWFT hospital beds occupied by Non-COVID-19 patients which demonstrates that other procedures and treatments are continuing however there are 8% beds occupied with confirmed COVID-19 patients and 23% beds occupied with suspected COVID-19 patients and a spare capacity of 16% beds.

The cumulative deaths across Stratford District from the start of this second wave (28th August 2020) has sadly increased by a further three to 18, with 10 occurring in care homes, seven in hospital and one at home, out of a total of 285 all cause deaths in the district for this new second wave period.



The cumulative total of deaths across Warwickshire for Wave 2 is now 42 from a total of 1290 all cause deaths. The cumulative total of Covid-19 deaths in Stratford district is 186 since the start of the pandemic and in Warwickshire 642; over the same period there have been 4978 non Covid-19 related deaths in Warwickshire and 1306 non Covid-19 deaths in Stratford on Avon District.

Lateral flow testing will take place first in the North of the County as that's where the majority of cases are.

Business news

As we are effectively in another lockdown, businesses forced to close can get business rates grants from Stratford DC. We have already paid out around £843,000 to 500 businesses with 500 more enquiries. Please follow the link or pass it onto businesses that can claim for help.

Business grants link

<https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.stratford.gov.uk%2Fcoronavirus%2Flocal-restrictions-support-grant-national-lockdown.cfm&data=04%7C01%7Cmarkcargill%40warwickshire.gov.uk%7C2e23bc7aeb224546b82308d898fc44c3%7C88b0aa0659274bbba89389cc2713ac82%7C0%7C0%7C637427556545606327%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&reserved=0>

Vaccine and Vaccinations

As a professor of virology said, "vaccines do not save lives, vaccination does". Meaning of course that it is vital we get as many people vaccinated as is possible to make it effective. Indications are that the first vaccinations could take place as early as next week in all parts of the UK. Our MP, Nadhim, has the challenge of rolling out the vaccine across England and that is not going to be easy. I wish him well. The first vaccination points are still a secret as it appears criminals are targeting supplies for nefarious reasons.

The logistics of mass vaccination are mind boggling. Here are a few stats for you.

- Vaccine costs vary between \$3 & \$9 per dose. It is estimated that we need 9 billion doses for the entire planet
- The UK is looking for around 120-130 million doses with up to 4 million being administered by the end of the year
- Many countries have pre-brought doses meaning that they have sponsored the companies to develop the vaccine. There is a risk there but without that sponsoring, we would not have the vaccines now
- Some vaccines need to be stored at minus 70 Deg C as the active component is covered in a lipids – small fatty deposits – that both protect it and slow it dissolving into the blood stream meaning better take up by the body. It may be that the vaccine can be stored at a higher temperature, but time and experience will tell. Other vaccines like the Oxford/Astra Zeneca one can be stored at 'warmer' temperatures in a domestic fridge as they use a different technology
- Logistics company UPS are building freezer farms in their US airport hubs, each with 600 freezers capable of holding 48,000 doses
- Pfizer BioNTech are aiming to produce 25 million doses by the end of the year. Oxford/Astra Zeneca expect to ship 4 million doses by the end of the year.

- One of the Pfizer thermal 'suitcases' can carry 4875 doses
- Each vaccine needs to be delivered in a borax glass phial (normal glass is not good enough) which can contain between 2 and 20 doses.
- Most borax glass is made in Germany with production ramping up to producing 600 million phials per year
- It would take 8000 747 cargo planes to transport a dose of the vaccine to every person on the planet
- There have been 43,538 people in the phase three trial for the Pfizer BioNTech
- Vaccine hesitancy varies between countries with 90% saying they would have it in China but only 55% in Russia
- There is limited knowledge of how long a vaccine will provide protection, however estimates suggest about a year which is similar to a flu vaccine.

Source: New Scientist

Although our globally connected world meant that the virus was able to travel very easily, the supply chains in place now mean that the vaccines can be rolled out more easily.

Finally, the news that Stratford is considering taking out a JR on the Government has hit the worlds media all the way from the Stratford Herald to Morocco world News – it must have been a slow news day in Morocco!

Also, Stratford is one of the happiest towns in the UK according to Right Move 😊

Stay safe and healthy

Best wishes

Mark

Alcester Division, Alcester & Rural Ward

Other news and information

It is currently illegal to ride an e-scooter in a public place. Although a tempting Christmas present, you can only ride an e-scooter legally on private land. Warwickshire is currently not part of any trial for e-scooters



Shop opening hours

Government has relaxed the opening hours restrictions from Monday to Saturday from December through January.

Local Welfare Scheme – Winter Support

You are not alone! Support is available for Warwickshire families and individuals facing hardship this winter. Find out more:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/1562/help-for-people-struggling-this-winter>



Now Extended: Green Home Grants

WCC is encouraging all residents to explore the opportunity of environmentally sustainable home-improvements through the UK Government's Green Home Grant Scheme, which has now been extended by a year. Read more:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/1553/now-extended-green-home-grants-good-news-for-the-environment-and-for-resident-s-energy-bills>



EU Transition (Brexit) – Information for Residents

From 1 January 2021 there will be new rules to travel to Europe. Things you may need to do before you go include:

- Check the validity of your passport.
- Get travel insurance that covers your healthcare.
- Check you have the right driving documents.
- Organise pet travel - contact your vet at least 4 months before you go.
- Check roaming policies with your mobile provider before travelling.

Find out more here: <https://www.gov.uk/visit-europe-1-january-2021>



**let's do the
right thing
for Warwickshire**