



BROWN EDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Monday 3rd March 2025

7.00pm at Brown Edge Village Hall

Cllr. Adrian Felton (Chairman)	Cllr. Anthony Bedson (Vice-Chair)	Cllr. Phil Berrisford
Cllr. Jane Shufflebotham	Cllr. Joe Porter (District & Parish)	Cllr. Marilyn Marathe
Cllr. Margaret Hunt	Cllr. Phil Woodward	Cllr. Kate Oberholster
Cllr. Neil Hargreaves	Cllr. David Gerrard	Cllr. Keith Flunder (County)
Cllr. Christina Jebb (District),	Parish Clerk Hayley Harrison	
4 members of the public	Minutes Denise Wheat	Responsible Financial Officer

- 1) **Chairmans Welcome:** Cllr. Felton welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Clerk was warmly welcomed back after a period of absence.
- 2) **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr. Oberholster will be arriving late
- 3) **Parishioners Concerns:**
 - a. **Two Parishioners asked if parking charges will be introduced on the High Lane Car Park? They use the space as their street has no parking areas outside properties. The Parishioners were concerned that there had been little communication to residents. How are the council going to manage the car park if permits are introduced and the car park gets busy? In the past when development was in progress the land was fenced off.**
The Chairman explained the reasons for purchase. The original intention was to put ownership back with the pub for them to manage as a CIC as a community asset. Cllr. Berrisford stated that residents' permits may still be offered by the pub if they take over the lease. The original intention was to put it in a CIC.
The Council resolved to keep residents informed through the website and social media. The Chairman asked the residents to keep in touch with councillors by telephone or by attending future meetings if they have any concerns.
- 4) **PCSO Report:** None present.
- 5) **County Council Report: Cllr. Keith Flunder**
 - **Police Crime Commissioner:** Cllr Flunder will ask for PCSO presence.
 - **Devolution:** On 5th March at SMDC full council meeting, there is a protest organised by Conservative members.
 - **Easter Egg:** Gifts for Looked after Children (LAC) can be donated at Libraries.
 - **Wallies Quarry:** A decision has been made that the quarry will not be capped.
 - **Cancer Bus Tour:** visiting Leek Morrisons on 4th April all day, pop in to get help and advice.
 - **Special Library days:** International Book Day, Women's Day and many more, see website.
 - **Highways:** A bin lorry has caused some grass damage on verges reported.
 - **No HGV signage:** The DHP project is now complete. The sign needs to be checked to make sure the location is correct.
 - **Brown Edge water course survey:** The county have organised an investigation of the flow systems of the Sandy Lane confluence including the water courses, sewer networks and foul water networks. This will be done from 24th March.

6) District Councillor Reports:

a) Cllr. Joe Porter:

- **Grit Bins:** Recommendation to put stickers on the bins to instruct residents not to take too much or use for personal use.
- **Nature in Your Neighbourhood:** A meeting is arranged to visit the nominated Brown Edge sites with the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust officer.
- **Community Speedwatch:** Sessions are ongoing, speeding is reducing. Breech Road can be problematic. A meeting with all the volunteers was held recently where volunteers could network. Wheely bin stickers and recruitment flyers are available.
- **Finance and Resources:** SMDC have set their 2025-2026 Budget at 2.99%
- **Car Park Charges** are rising by 10p in SMDC car parks.
- **Garden Waste:** A debate is in progress to introduce an additional waste charge for brown bins.
- **Planning:** An additional dwelling will be built on Sandy Lane in the garden of a larger property.
- **No to Stoke campaign:** over 6000 signatures have been gathered across the Moorlands.
- **High St Banking Closures:** A campaign to stop the closures of high street banking is in progress.
- **Dog Fouling:** SMDC environmental health team are distributing signage and are spraying warnings on the pavements.
- **Leek Markets** were re-opened by Calvin Fletcher the TV star of Fletcher Farm.
- **Brown Edge Carnival:** Our Brown Edge Communities have invited any members of the public to get involved with the Carnival. Themes chosen for 2025 are Pottery, Farming and 200 years of Kindness

b) Cllr Jebb:

- **St Annes Church grave matter:** A resident had phoned to complain about a grave which had gone missing. The RFO had liaised with SMDC, Cllr. Jebb and AES had found the grave which had a collapsed headstone. AES will help the family to repair the gravestone.
- **Newcastle Borough Council display about the Forgotten Women** is one display from 15th March The exhibition will later be on show in Biddulph.
- **War Moors:** Cllr Jebb has called in for review of the planning application.
- **Waspa pensions:** A new campaign for Women who have lost pension as a result of the change of date for women to retire.

Cllr Oberholster arrived 19.30

- **Sandy Lane Centre:** Heating is now running. Defibrillator fundraising is going well and a local electrician has offered to help with fitting free of charge.
- **Bench on the verge close to the Cemetery Field:** A Lingfield Ave resident has asked for a bench on the verge by the Cemetery Field.
Item for the April agenda.

7) Declaration of Interests on the forthcoming Agenda:

Cllr. Berrisford: The Bush

Cllr Hunt: Carnival, Luncheon Club and The Bush

Cllr Shufflebotham: The Bush

Cllr. Porter: Allotments, Police, NHS and Carnival Committee

8) Minutes: 20th January Extraordinary and 3rd February 2025 meeting minutes were approved as a correct record:

Proposed: Cllr Shufflebotham – Seconded: Cllr. Hunt – all in favour

9) Matters arising from previous meeting:

- a) **Council contact information:** Agenda contacts have been tidied up and the Website updates. Councillor photos still need to be uploaded.
- b) **Parking on Verges:** Chairmans letter has been sent to residents politely requesting that they stop Pavement parking on Sytch Road is still an ongoing problem. ***Clerk to research legislation about parking and to post on social media to ask residents to think before they park, to consider pedestrians and to use their drives where possible with information about how to report problem parking to the enforcement officer at SMDC.***
- c) **Your Housing garages on Marshall Avenue:** Information has been given to residents so that they can apply for a garage if available. 3 empty garages, 2 need a condition report. ***Item complete***
- d) **Pest Control:** Treatment has been booked for the Lawn Cemetery to divert the moles from burial areas.

10) Correspondence:

- a) **Woodside Avenue:** A freedom of Information request has been received from a resident. The email from Cllr. Jebb will be sent to the resident to give the information about the previous meetings that were held.
- b) **Dropped Curb:** access to driveways is usually done when a planning application is considered. If the road is an A or B road they would need to seek permission. It was discussed that they still should have applied a permit to dig. The Council discussed setting a bad precedent, rules should be upheld. Two parking spaces and they reverse out into the road. Enforcement is an area that both District and County have not got the manpower or funding.
Letter to be sent to Highways officer.
- c) **Application for a Lawn Cemetery Bench:** Five memorials on each bench. Space is available on other benches. The Council voted to uphold the Bench Policy.
- d) **Railings Woodhouse Lane:** White visibility railings used to be maintained by the County Council. Cllr Jebb remembered that the Parish Lengthsman painted them in the past. Cllr. Shufflebotham also referenced the grant which used to be available from the County Council for these jobs. A second question about the railings being on a Council asset register was discussed. Unique village features are a heritage matter.
Clerk to enquire to the Highways officer and to respond to the resident.
- e) **Signage:** Request from the Allotment Association for signage to access the Kings Coronation Field down Tongue Lane via footpath to deter dog walkers from using the Allotment Filed as a cut through. The footpath goes through Lovatt's farm onto the Kings Coronation Field.
- f) **Sponsorship offer for Community groups:** Ideas were discussed: Carnival, Well Dressing, Luncheon Club, Benches. The Council would be very interested in a discussion.
Clerk to write to the Broadband company.

11) Reports and Actions:

- a) **Fencing:** The work on the New Cemetery Field will be started imminently.
- b) **Grave missing** in St Annes cemetery has been resolved by the District Council.

12) Items on Notice:

- a) **Neighbourhood Plan:** Cllr. Bedson, Cllr Felton and Cllr. Berrisford had a meeting with Hannah from Urban Vision. A full leaflet drop is not needed. A poster needs to be put on the Parish Council website, notice board, social media and shared on Brown Edgers group. Cllr. Flunder has asked for some training on Neighbourhood Plans and how the plan can influence Planning decisions.

- b) Letters to go out one week before the consultation opens to local stakeholders and land owners. Clerk to aim to get these done so that the consultations can happen on Tuesday 8th at The Bush and Thursday 10th at Top Pub 5-7pm. LETTERS/ WEBSITE/ SOCIAL MEDIA need to be the platforms to get the information out allowing 2 weeks to get the information delivered.

Cllr. Berrisford moved that the Council approve to move the Neighbourhood Plan to hold a consultation for green spaces and commercial zone

Proposed Cllr. Berrisford - Seconded Cllr. Bedson – all in favour

The War Moors was then discussed. Outline planning permission has been passed following completion of the reserved matters. Planning conditions have been imposed including biodiversity net gain. Questions were asked about if developers can offset to another site? Who draws up the plan for a biodiversity increase? Cllr. Jebb confirmed that ratification on biodiversity is decided by the District Planning Committee. New rules have 10-15% minimum net gain on a very biodiverse site. This application may have been passed before this requirement came in. Cllr Porter had correspondence from officer Jane Curley. In May 2019 the application was approved subject to completion of administration due to the death of a trustee. SWT considered the new ecology reports and no objections were given. There is no mention of Sytch Well in the planning decision. The well water is fed from a spring. A definitive study needs be done so that the well water will remain at full source. The well is part of village heritage.

It was resolved that the Parish Council should ask Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to do a new study on the War Moors land.

Proposed Cllr Felton – Seconded Cllr. Bedson – all in favour

Care must be taken that no site clearance is to happen when birds are nesting. A sign needs to be put up stating this, by order of the Parish Council.

Proposed Cllr Berrisford – Seconded – Cllr. Felton

- c) **High Lane Car Park:** A working meeting was held to forward the proposal to cover the deposit amount paid and to cover the future repayments. The directors of The Bush understand that the Council need to receive the deposit back to replenish reserves to earmark for the new Cemetery. Clerk to email the yearly payment amounts and the initial deposit totals. The council approved to start negotiations with solicitors on the understanding that in principle the Bush pay the deposit back in 5 years and to take on the loan repayments. ***Proposed Cllr. Hargreaves - Seconded Cllr. Bedson – all in favour.***
- d) **Legal Advice:** it was decided to discuss informally before Legal advice is engaged.
- e) It was proposed to authorise the removal of Christmas Wreaths and ornaments. Clerk to inform the maintenance team.
Proposed Cllr. Felton – Seconded Cllr. Hargreaves – all in favour
- f) **Allotment Community Plot:** Cllr Oberholster offered to help.
- Ask for Risk assessment
 - Complete our own risk assessment at a pre-visit
 - Check Insurance
 - Ask for information about what groups are visiting.
 - Council to write a Policy on terms of use.
- g) **Best Kept Village:** The Council resolved not to enter the Best Kept Village with so many other tasks in progress.
Proposed Cllr Felton – Seconded Cllr. Hargreaves – all in favour
- h) Mrs Rosen from St Annes School was invited to speak. The school would like to be involved to celebrate VE Day 80 on Thursday 8th May. Cllr Hunt reported that Brown Edge Luncheon club

would organise with Mrs Rossen to celebrate together with the school children. Flag raising was discussed. Clerk to order a flag.

Propose Cllr. Hunt - Seconded Cllr, Hargreaves – all in favour

It was resolved to move the date of the Annual Assembly to 12th May. 6pm Annual Assembly followed by the Parish Council Annual Meeting.

- i) **Kings Coronation field.** Cllr Porter proposed to enlarge the Orchard area with another set of fruit trees and to re seed the land. Ideas were also discussed for a bench and a pond. A District Council Climate Change fund for £500 is available to apply for.

A debate was had about sustainable planting and annual maintenance. Several of the last batch of saplings had failed because they were not watered.

Cllr. Felton counter proposed that a robust plan about maintenance needs to be presented before more trees are planted. A quotation is required to cut grass on the Kings Coronation Field.

Proposed Cllr. Felton – Seconded Cllr. Hargreaves - approved

13. **Planning applications and related issues:**

- a) A Planning appeal hearing is taking place on 4th March at SMDC concerning the battery storage application at Bemmersley Road.
- b) DET/2025/0006 Upper Heakley Farm, Ball Lane, Brown Edge: Application to determine if prior approval is required for proposed alterations and refurbishment of former milking parlour to a single storey one bedroom dwelling. **No objection**

14. a) **Payments were approved for March:**

Proposed Cllr Hargreaves - Seconded Cllr. Bedson

	<u>Net</u>	<u>Tax</u>	<u>Gross</u>	<u>Chg. No.</u>
1. <u>Mrs H Harrison</u> Clerk Salary				
Month 11 (February)	£467.00	£0.00	£467.00	1348
Statutory Sick Pay				
2. <u>Mrs D Wheat</u> RFO Salary	Net	Tax	Gross	
Month 11 (February)	£330.37	£82.60	£412.97	1349
6 hours p/w (absence cover)				
Back dated pay increase 63pp/h				
130 hrs £81.90 included in gross.				
3. HMRC PAYE - DW £82.60			£82.60	1350
4. <u>Mrs D Wheat</u> RFO Expenses				
Toner			£168.17	
Stamps (recorded delivery)			£3.35	
Travel Allowance (Feb)			£13.50	
HMRC additional fee NI (RFO had to pay in advance to avoid fine			£73.91	
Tesco mobile top up			£30.00	
			£288.93	1351
5. <u>N&J Tree Services Ltd.</u>				
Invoice 11 th Visit (Year 2)	<u>Net</u>	<u>VAT</u>	<u>Gross</u>	
	£808.50	£161.70	£970.20	
Additional weed clearance	£210.00	£42.00	£252.00	
			1222.20	1352
6. <u>Alliance Environmental Services</u>	503.64	£0.00	£503.64	1353
		TOTAL	£2,894.74	

- a. Cemetery Recorders Report for February was approved
Income Received

1 st February 2025. Scattering of Ashes	£ 27.50
5 th February 2025. Interment Fee	£ 170.00
25 th February 2025. Interment Fee.	£ 170.00

TOTAL RECEIVED £ 367.50

- c) Other income was approved including receipt of the County Council DHP funding of for the No HGV signage **£1950.00**
- d) Commercial Waste contract was reviewed and approved for the Cemetery waste removal from Lawn Cemetery at a yearly fee of £503.64. The Chairman signed the contract.
- e) The Responsible Financial Officer is still gathering quotations for the repair of the Playing Equipment. The Council resolved that this should be fixed as soon as possible. Mrs Rosen of St Annes Schol advised the council that play equipment should always be repaired by approved suppliers. The Maintenance team have offered to replace one of the bins. The Council asked the Clerk to respond to give their thanks and go ahead for this offer. It was approved to run quotations by the Chairman and to get the work done as soon as possible.
Proposed Cllr Felton – Seconded Cllr. Shufflebotham
- f) The Council appointed Mrs D Corbishley to audit the internal accounts for the financial year 2024-2025.

The Council approved to continue the meeting after 9.30pm:

- 15. a) Matters for the District Council: 30MPH speed restriction by Rock Cottage, overgrown grass
- b) Matters for the County Council: A mirror has fallen off on a bad visibility place in the village. Report to Highways and notify Cllr. Flunder
- 16. **Matters Pertaining to issues in the Parish for the next Agenda:**
 - a) New Cemetery Field: When the cemetery was purchased the corner piece was owned by the County Council. Responsible Financial Officer to check with Cemetery Recorder Mr. Bourne. Previous Councillor Linda Lea had the topography survey already done. Eon will need to be consulted about the overhead cables and Severn Trent with the sewer drain. Planning Permission is needed. Clerk to gather some quotations.
 - b) Organise a Big Spring Clean event and involve the school and families with the aim to do litter picking and cleaning street signs where safe to do so.
 - c) Carnival committee need to get more volunteers. People don't have to come to meetings but the team just need to know they have helpers at events leading up to and on the day. United Against Hate were contacted because of how many insulting comments were posted on social media about committee members.

Meeting ended 21.46

e) Finance and Governance:

a. Payments were authorised:

Proposed Cllr Berisford – Seconded Cllr. Felton – All in favour

The Clerk requested to transfer £6000.00 funds from the Councils Reserve account (general funds) to the Councils Current account to balance payments before the next Precept is received in May.

The Council approved the transaction subject to the Chairman reviewing the current balance in both accounts.

- b. **Dry Stone Wall quotation:** One has been received. The next Moorlands Partnership Board meeting is mid-March. Cllr. Porter will Speak to officer Joanne Blunt about the application.

- c. **New Cemetery Field fencing work.** Three quotations were read out to the Council. The Council approved the quotation from Jack Proctor.

Proposed Cllr. Bedson – Seconded Cllr. Berrisford – All in favour

- d. **Play Equipment Repair:** RFO has sent RosPa report for a comprehensive quotation but with the swing marked as urgent.

- e. **Solicitor quotations to negotiate lease/purchase agreements for the Car Park:** One quotation has been received so far. Item to be moved to the next Agenda or possibly an Extra Ordinary

f) Matters for the attention of other local authorities:

- a. Matters for the District Council: Marshall Avenue Garages – contact Your Housing
- b. Matters for the County Council:
 - Keep pressure on Highways to fill up the grit bins.
 - Sytch Road Junction: when is the Highways work scheduled.

g) Matters Pertaining to Issues in the Parish for the Next Agenda:

- a. **Great British Spring Clean:** How the Parish could get involved.
- b. **Annual Parish Meeting:** VE Day 80
- c. **New Cemetery:** A plan needs to be put in place.

Meeting ended 21:26

Chairmans Name	Signature	Approval Date