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MINUTES OF BROWN EDGE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023  
BROWN EDGE VILLAGE HALL AT 7PM

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**Present:**

Chairman Cllr. Adrian Felton, Cllr. Bedson (Vice Chairman) Cllr. Woodward, Cllr. Oberholster, Cllr. Berrisford, Cllr. Wright, Cllr. Hunt, Cllr. Porter (Parish & District).  
Cllr. Jebb (District) and Cllr. Flunder (District & County)

5 members of the public

Minutes recorded by Mrs. D Wheat (Clerk)

**1) Chairman's Welcome and Announcements:**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Clerk read a letter from a resident who would like to see improvements to the Playing Field equipment and use of the space. Clerk to invite the resident to the next meeting.

The Chairman had received correspondence from Cllr. Jebb regarding changes to open space land (locally know as War Moors)

The Defibrillator at the Village Hall has been reported with the door left open. The Clerk will check the equipment.

Advance notice of an expense forthcoming: The Cemetery Recorder has ordered a new set of Deed documents.

**2) Apologies for Absence:** Cllr. Hargreaves

**3) Parishioners Concerns:**

- a. Mr Davies a local resident brought to the attention of the Council a planning application for the land on the War Moors for 25 houses. It was previously passed by a small majority by the SMDC Planning committee. The Topography of the land is bad for building. The land has been neglected for 40 years. 57 years ago, it was a little quarry. The council filled it in and landscaped it. It is now a wildlife area which has beautified itself. There is a marsh and a Fenn. Wild bees have been sighted. It needs to be reinstated as public open space (SJ907532 Grid Reference).

The owners do not live in the village. They have no appreciation of what this field means to the village, and they have recently destroyed all the trees. Mr Davis asked the Council to help save the Green Space for development.

A discussion was had about the outline planning permission granted on the land. The last designation was decision pending, the Parish Council did put in a strong opposition and so did the Staffs Wildlife Trust. It is a designated site within the Local Plan at the District. Cllr. Porter said he would support an objection and paid respect to former Councillor Linda Lea who worked very hard to protect the site. Cllr. Lea has recommended Cllr. Jebb to take up the case.

- b. Cllr Jebb reported that in May 2019 the SMDC Planning Committee resolved to grant permission, but the section 106 was never signed. The eco surveys need to be resubmitted. If there are any changes it will go back to committee. The land was recently cleared in August leaving very little nature left to survey. Cllr. Jebb has been advised by District that Brown Edge need to revitalise the Neighbourhood Plan and to emphasise the Open Space policies. The further forward the Plan is, the more weight it will carry. If the council is willing, there are steps to build the case against further destruction, the positioning of those houses could be conditioned to enhance the natural area.
- c. Resident Mr Turner is concerned how this development will affect Sytch well. What would happen if the well ran dry? Sytch is a very significant village feature. The Well pre-dates Endon Well. If the water table is altered, it will stop the water. The council need to protect the Fenn. The area is called the War Moors but it is not known why it is called that. There is a stream that runs under the area creating a floating bog. It used to be a lake. The dam is still there. Before allowing any building of houses we need to make sure it would not damage a historic village feature. Five years ago, knotweed from the land was injected when it contaminated Parish Land. Concerns were raised that the seeds of the knotweed could get into the water system and contaminate the wells and the water source of local farmland and horticultural businesses.

The Chairman commented about the constant overdevelopment in the village.

Cllr. Berrisford previous Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee will continue with the Neighbourhood Plan to preserve the heritage of this biodiverse piece of land, as a wild space for Swallows, Housemartins and Swifts, to preserve the openness of the village green spaces and to save the natural feature of the floating bog. Planning advice has been sought and due to length of time the planning permission may have lapsed, the Neighbourhood Plan could help the Parish have rights to re-enter it as an open green space.

Cllr. Porter will research hazardous plants with (Defra) and report the issue that Japanese Knotweed may have been cut and not treated properly.

**It was proposed to re-start the Neighbourhood Plan process. A meeting will be arranged. Item to be on the October Agenda.**

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

**4) PCSO Report: No officers were present.**

**5) County Councillors Report: Cllr. Keith Flunder reported the following:**

- Health Committee – there have been three meetings and councillor training. A performance plan is being put into action to get more operation appointments, more beds and to getting people through A&E faster.
- Adult social care: the committee are finding ways to improve how people can be assessed financially.
- Mental health care some patients may be sent out of the area meaning statistics are not accurate for Staffordshire.
- Covid and flu jabs, please promote to residents in the village to keep immunisation levels up.
- The Conclusion of the Audit of the County Accounts is due.
- Current situation with RAAC in local Schools in Staffordshire. There are 405 schools maintained by the council. There are many more Academies who have been offered support. The Department of

Education have announced that in Staffordshire, 61 schools need further investigation but at the moment no cases have been identified.

- Flood action group – work is being done in this area.
- Grants – the County Community fund is now available, but the deadline is 31<sup>st</sup> October.
- Highways –A meeting has been arranged with the groundwork contractor to move forward with the instillation of signage at Hill Top. An order can then be processed for the posts and signage.

## 6) **District Councillor Reports:**

### a. **Cllr Christina Jebb:**

***Declaration of Interest: Cllr. Jebb is the Chair of the Moorlands Partnership Board.***

- Cllr. Jebb reassured the Council that the Planning issue discussed earlier has been raised at the highest levels at District.
- There is a small amount of funding still available to apply for from the Moorlands Partnership Board for heritage buildings and other village features.
- Training has recently been given at District on GDPR. It was recorded and may be shared to Parish Councillors.

### b. **Cllr. Joe Porter:**

- Brown Edge Vegetable Show was held recently. Congratulations to the Allotment Committee for organising this. It needs promoting more next year and to advertise to get more entries.
- Fairfield Avenue There have been parking issues reported to Your Housing.
- Cllr Porter and Cllr. Woodward have revitalised the Planter coming into Brown Edge
- Cllr Porter is on a team looking at Council Tax reduction.
- Road safety – on Chapel Lane abandoned cars have been reported. The local policing team have been advised.
- A public meeting regarding a homeless gentleman has been held, it well attended with over 40 members of the public plus two Police sergeants. If any members of the public have any safety concerns, please encourage them to dial 101 or use the online police portal.

### c. **Cllr. Keith Flunder:**

The UK Shared Prosperity Funding from the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) has now opened for more applications. Six new grants are available through the SMDC website. Please look for projects to apply for.

## 7) **Declaration of Interests:**

Cllr. Porter: Staffs Police civil servant

Cllr. Berrisford: Holly Bush, and a pecuniary interest in a quotation for work relating to the lifting and transporting of the Playing Field gates from the Moorlands Partnership Board Grant.

Cllr. Hunt: Carnival Committee, Luncheon club and resident of Bank End

## 8) **Approval of the Minutes** of the Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

***Proposed Cllr. Wright – Seconded Cllr. Bedson – Motion Carried***

## 9) **Matters Arising from previous meetings:**

- a) **Highways issues reported on the App:** Bushes overgrown at Jobs Pool and tree on Sytch Road have not yet been cut back. A bin has not been fixed by the steps on Top Chapel Lane, but two bags of rubbish fly tipped on Ladymoor lane have been cleaned up.

**b) HGV deliveries at the Village supermarket.**

Residents are asking for clarity. Cllr. Porter suggested that the Parish Council put a statement out on social media and the Parish News that the Parish Council have actioned the problem and that there has been a positive result.

*The Chairman suspended standing orders to allow a member of the public to speak.*

Mr. Turner reported that trucks had delivered on High Lane twice this week.

*The Chairman reinstated standing orders. (Clerk to check this procedure of suspending Standing Orders).* **The Chairman proposed that the Parish Council draft a statement after speaking to the manager for an update on the deliveries.**

***Proposed Cllr. Felton - Seconded Cllr. Bedson – All in favour***

**c) High Lane Car Park – Parish Council signage will be collected soon.**

A report has been received by a member of the public that a vehicle is emitting diesel onto the car park. A car park maintenance plan needs to be put in place. The Chairman will arrange a meeting with the Holly Bush Group to arrange a presentation of their project progress to the council. An EV charging company need to be invited to present to the council.

***Proposed Cllr. Felton - Seconded Cllr. Woodward – All in favour***

**d) New Cemetery Field Hedge Row**

The opposite hedge adjoining the school playing field needs tidying up and establishing ownership. Cllr. Woodward offered to meet with the maintenance contractor to get an estimate. A meeting needs to be arranged with residents to try to iron out any concerns about maintenance. The saplings granted from the Woodland Trust can be stored. The Clerk will ask the Woodland Trust if the order can be postponed.

***Proposed Cllr. Woodward – Seconded Cllr. Wright – All in favour***

**e) Website**

Mr. McGrath has offered to help manage the website. Mr Turner currently is the administrator for the server maintenance of the website. There are tasks to be maintained regularly behind the scenes to keep the website up to date, Mr Turner will send a link to Mr McGrath so he can access to add information.

***The Chairman thanked both for helping the council.***

**f) Playing Field Gates**

The gates have been removed and transported to the factory for shot blasting and powder coating. They will then be painted and returned to Brown Edge. Thanks were given to Pete Whiston the painter for his original quote which helped secure the grant.

**g) Neighbourhood Plan Progress report:**

Cllr. Flunder offered to help as he has experience with Checkley Parish Councils Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr. Bedson will contact Urban Vision who can prepare a new proposal for the forthcoming funding period. The Clerk can then apply for the Grant.

**h) Community Speedwatch report:**

A new site has been risk assessed for Hill Top by co-ordinator Michelle Shaker. The team need more volunteers. Once or twice a week is preferable, but any volunteer time given is welcome. Currently eight regular volunteers are operating Speedwatch several times a month at different times and at different sites to vary the scope. It is a good team of volunteers and good fun while preventing accidents and making the village safer.

Cllr. Poster encouraged everyone to contact Community Speedwatch to book a training session.

10. Planning Applications: None received in the last month.

11. Finance & Governance:

a) Financial reports were presented by the Clerk for August.

13 September 2023 (2023-2024)

**Brown Edge Parish Council**

Prepared by: Denise Wheat Date: 13/09/2023  
*Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)*

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)*

<b>A</b>	<b>Bank Reconciliation at 31/08/2023</b>		
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2023		69,003.67
	<b>ADD</b> Receipts 01/04/2023 - 31/08/2023		18,800.17
	<b>SUBTRACT</b> Payments 01/04/2023 - 31/08/2023		87,803.84
	<b>Cash in Hand 31/08/2023</b> (per Cash Book)		<b>68,157.82</b>
<b>B</b>	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash 31/08/2023	0.00	
	Natwest Current 31/08/2023	7,792.28	
	Natwest Business 31/07/2023	61,289.54	
	Leek United Building Society 31/08/2023	0.00	
			<b>69,081.82</b>
	Less unrepresented payments		924.00
		68,157.82	
	Plus unrepresented receipts		
	<b>Adjusted Bank Balance</b>		<b>68,157.82</b>
	<b>A = B Checks out OK</b>		

### c) Payments were Authorised

1. Mrs D Wheat Clerk Salary	£454.60
Phone (Tesco Mobile Top Up)	£ 7.50
Mileage (Aug 2023)	£ 13.50
Rymans (Printing Paper)	£ 10.79
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>£486.39</u></b>
2. HMRC PAYE	<b><u>£113.80</u></b>
3. N&J Tree Services Ltd. Invoice 5th Maintenance Visit	<b><u>£924.00</u></b>
<b>Direct Debits</b>	
4. British Gas Playing Field Aug 23	£19.96
5. British Gas Cemetery Aug 23	£13.02
6. Water Plus Cemetery Aug 23	£14.13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>£47.11</u></b>

### *Proposed Cllr. Felton – Secoded Cllr. Bedson*

### d) Cemetery Recorders Report for August 2023 and other income received.

1 <sup>st</sup> . August 2023. Headstone Fee.	£ 135 – 00
12 <sup>th</sup> . August 2023. Headstone Fee.	£ 135 – 00
14 <sup>th</sup> . August 2023. Headstone Fee.	£ 135 – 00
16 <sup>th</sup> . August 2023. Purchase of Grave & Interment Fee.	£ 435 – 00
21 <sup>st</sup> . August 2023. Purchase of Grave & Interment (@ Double Fees).	£ 870 – 00
22 <sup>nd</sup> . August 2023. Interment Fee.	£ 170 – 00
23 <sup>rd</sup> . August 2023. Headstone Fee	£ 135 – 00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>£ 2,015.00</u></b>

**12. Items on Notice:** None this month

### **13. Reports and Actions:**

Cllr. Bedson had responded to a request to meet National Grid engineers onsite at Cross Edge to discuss a request to put in a telegraph pole. A cable running from the telegraph pole in the supermarket car park needs raising up by the National Grid to 5.8 meters.

**20:38 Cllr Woodward left the meeting to take a call.**

**The only option is in the verge adjacent to the Lump of Coal.** The Council will receive wayleave for having a pole on Parish land. The Council will be helping the National Grid because of their new height regulations.

**20:43 Cllr. Woodward returned to the meeting**

**A vote was cast to approve the pole with the result: 3 against, 4 in favour, 1 abstain.  
Clerk to formalise the agreement with the National Grid.**

### **14. Correspondence:**

a) Request from National Grid (as discussed above)

b) Mazars Auditors have notified the Clerk to state the Parish Council have moved bracket into the intermediate Audit due to the increase in income to over £200,000 as a result of receiving the PWLB Loan of £175,000 in 2022 to purchase the High Lane car park land.

c) A child has injured their hand on a Parish Council litter bin. The Maintenance team have been asked to remove the bin. The Clerk was asked to apply to the County Community Fund for a new bin if it fits the criteria.

**15. Items for the attention of other Local Authorities:**

Top of the Rocks. Potholes are earmarked for repair but the residents have been advised that the wall which has fallen is not District responsibility. The District or County Councillors were asked to clarify this.

**16. Matters pertaining to issues in the Parish for the next Agenda:**

a) Cllr. Porter and Cllr. Hunt as members of the Carnival Committee have an idea to plant an oak tree to commemorate the Coronation of Kings Charles III. The cost of a well-established Oak sapling is £125. The Carnival Committee would like to discuss potential sites with the Council.

b) As part of the Lottery Grant bid that the Carnival Committee were successful in applying for a bench and plaque for the Queens Memorial Garden. Cllr Hunt asked to discuss styles of benches.

c) Concerns were raised about a wall on the new development on High Lane encroaching onto Parish Council Land. The Council have received a reply from Planning to say they can not enforce this and the Parish Council must follow this up as a civil case. There is also metal sticking out into the Playing Field from the fence installed by the developer.

**Meeting ended 21.02**

**Date of the Next Brown Edge Parish Council Meeting:**

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 7pm at Brown Edge Village Hall**

<b>I hereby state this is a correct account of the monthly meeting held by Brown Edge Parish Council.</b>		
<b>Signed: (Chair)</b>	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Date:</b>