



MINUTES OF BROWN EDGE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER 2022
BROWN EDGE VILLAGE HALL AT 7PM

Present: Councillors – Cllr. Felton (Chairman), Cllr. Turner, Cllr. Wright, Cllr. Woodward, Cllr. Hargreaves, Cllr. Owen, Cllr. Oberholster, Cllr. Porter (District) and Cllr. Flunder (County)

4 members of the public

Minutes recorded by Mrs. D Wheat (Clerk)

1. Chairman's Welcome and Announcements:

Cllr. Felton opened the meeting and welcomed newly co-opted councillor Kate Oberholster.

2. Apologies for Absence:

Cllr. Lea – Dispensation for ill health.

Cllr. Turner-Holdcroft - unwell

Cllr. Bedson (Vice Chairman) - family commitment

PCSO. Staples and Peacock

3. Parishioners Concerns:

- A resident expressed their concerns about the proposed development at Double Gates Farm and the access to the proposed properties. The resident was concerned that her right to light would be compromised by the over development in the small area for three large, detached houses.
- Another resident also expressed concerns about the same over-development with additional concerns about septic tank which he has a legal right to access across the land to his property. The three proposed proposed houses are large and the plot will be overdeveloped if using all the space.

4. PCSO Report:

The Clerk read a report on the PCSO inspection of the antisocial behaviour to residents adjacent to the Common Land at High Tor. A suggestion was put forward from the PCSO that special vandal deterrent paint could be applied to the fence by the owner and/or neighbour to deter trespassing if the landowner can be contacted to discuss. No further incidents have been reported by the resident although youth presence in the vicinity is still present.

5. County Councillors Report: Cllr. Flunder was delayed in arriving, so the Chairman moved the item on the Agenda.

6. District Councillor Report: Cllr Porter reported the following:

- The Police are raising their profile in the Community with more presence and visibility over the coming month with various initiatives including more Police Surgeries and Community Speedwatch.

- Research is being done on the levels of enforcement available from the District Council for solving the parking issues at Bank End and also the enforcement when fly tipping of rubbish is found in the area. All complaints should be registered on the SMDC “Report it” portal.
- The help to buy scheme is being re-launched to help people purchase their first home.
- Maps –SMDC must be consulted and permission granted for any maps to be published on Parish notice boards or website because of the copyright licencing laws.
- Cost of Living Crisis – meetings are being held at District to form a plan to help local communities cope.
- A Levelling Up bid for 40 million pounds has been submitted for projects in the three main towns of Cheadle, Leek and Biddulph. If successful, some of this funding should filter down to the surrounding Parishes.
- Support Staffordshire have an energy fund – please see their website for more information.
- Climate Change - The District are working to reduce food waste through education via their communication channels. Use of Peat Compost is also discouraged and aim to be banned by 2024 to reduce the Carbon impact.
- Water levels at Knypersley Pool are low, so this is being monitored.

7. Declaration of Interests:

Cllr. Porter – Community Orchards

Cllr. Turner – Item 12b.

Cllr. Owen - Maintenance

8. Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting: Meeting 3rd August 2022 were approved ***Proposed – Cllr. Turner – Seconded – Cllr. Wright – All in Favour***

9. Matters Arising from previous meetings:

- Community Speedwatch** – There is a training day on Saturday 24th September at Endon Methodist Church from 10.30am for volunteers. The Clerk has ordered the equipment for Brown Edge.
- Memorial Bench** – The bench from Woodcraft UK has been delivered and is in storage awaiting fitting. Phil Beresford has agreed to fit the slabs and bench. Date to be confirmed.
- Cemetery Toilets** – A complaint has been received that the Cemetery toilets were not opened at a recent funeral. Arrangements for opening the toilets were discussed. The arrangement with Mr Bourne (Cemetery Recorder) to be clarified by the Chairman.
- Community Orchard** – watering and care of the Orchard trees was discussed. Clerk asked to minute thanks to Mrs Hunt for her help so far. Cllr. Oberholster offered to water once a week in dry weather. Consideration needs to be given to a water source for watering or to be included in the next Maintenance tender for contract watering. A plan is needed to manage the project. Cllr. Turner will ask Biddulph Town Council how they maintain watering. Cllr. Oberholster proposed a water catchment system – funding may be available, research needed.
- New Cemetery Field** – A discussion was had about the overgrown areas on the perimeter of the New Cemetery Field. A contract or licence agreement needs to be in place before renewal at Christmas. Clerk to gather quotations. Cllr. Hargreaves has put a row of sapling trees around

the perimeter on the right. These need to be protected if any cutting back is done. Old Cemetery trees were mentioned. Cllr. Owen to contact the school to arrange a meeting to agree on what can be done to the overgrown border vegetation between the Lawn Cemetery and the School Playing Field. All additional Maintenance work arising needs to be included in the next Tender.

The Council then voted on cutting the New Cemetery field:

Cllr. Turner moved to cut the perimeter all the way around by the Maintenance team.

Cllr. Hargreaves proposed an amendment to protect the saplings to only cut the left side.

A vote was cast with three in favour and three opposed.

Instead of using the casting vote an amendment was proposed by the Chairman for the maintenance team to be asked to cut the whole perimeter but to take care around the sapling trees.

Proposed – Cllr. Felton – Seconded Cllr. Hargreaves – All in Favour

f) Brown Edge High Lane car park updates:

- i. Knotweed** - Maintenance has been completed to treat Knotweed.
- ii. Caravan** - A caravan has been parked on the carpark, owner unknown. Signage was discussed as enforcement cannot take place without the rules and conditions of parking being in place and clearly displayed. Clerk asked to price up at a simple sign to state the ownership of the land by Brown Edge Parish Council and the Council contact information.
- iii. Parking Solution** - The proposal from a Parking company was reviewed for a management solution. It was suggested that two more quotations should be sourced and more information to be researched. A discussion was had regarding consultation of the public on parking, including the local residents and the local businesses that currently use the land free of charge. Electric Vehicle charging points were also discussed. Problems arising from introducing charging were discussed with the potential displacement of vehicles currently using the space to the surrounding streets.
- iv. SMDC Parking** - The Clerk reported research with SMDC on their parking charging system. Unfortunately, they cannot help the Parish due to the legal framework of District Carpark management.

**The Chairman proposed for more information to be gathered to inform the Council.
4 in favour, 4 against – Chairman used casting vote – Motion carried**

- g) Lamp Repair of High Lane Playing Field** – The decorative lamp has been repaired following vandalism on the Playing Field. Cllr. Woodward was thanked for finding an electrical contractor to do the work at short notice.
- h) High Lane Playing Field Footpath Report** – The Councils Insurance company Aviva, are dealing with the claim for the footpath issue on the Playing Field Public Right of Way. Clerk to find out an update from the County Council about the repair.
- i) Anti-Social Behaviour report at High Tor** – already discussed

- j) **Anti-Social behaviour reported by a resident of St Annes Vale.** The Chairman gave permission for the resident to speak of her encounters and the damage done to her property. Youths have been seen and reported to the police for trespassing and damage to property. Contacting the PSCO was discussed. The Clerk will pass this information on.

10. Items on Notice:

a) **Acoustics at Parish Council Meetings:**

Cllr. Woodward has received a complaint from a resident that when attending Parish Council Meetings, they cannot hear the dialogue between Councillors clearly. A discussion was had about ways to improve sound and the issues encountered in old buildings with high ceilings. Covid was the reason that the council moved to the large room. It was proposed to move meetings back to the small room.

Proposed: Cllr. Hargreaves – Seconded Cllr. Woodward – All in favour

b) **Cllr. Porter moved for the Lengthsman to assist with watering the Community Orchard:**

As funding for watering is not included in the current budget the council resolved that this can be reviewed under the maintenance tender for 2023.

c) **Cllr. Porter moved for Pavement weeds to be removed and treated by the Lengthsman.**

A discussion was had that all problem areas need to be identified and reported to the Clerk so a list can be compiled. Issues should also be reported on the County Council "Report IT" App or on their website. The report will then be inspected by a Highways officer. The Clerk can also be asked to request "Street Cleaning" from the District Council. This can clear weeds in the road gutters. Anyone can report issues to the Authorities directly (it only takes 10 minutes) or please report to the Clerk who can do it on your behalf.

(5) **County Council Report: Cllr. Flunder**

- **Covid Update:** Over 50's should have another Covid Booster vaccination this Autumn. Mixed Flu and Covid Vaccinations are beginning to be introduced.
- **Ukrainian Refugees:** Groups are being formed to help bring individuals together to share experiences and build relationships across the County.
- **Together Active Grant:** Funding from the Commonwealth initiative still available for sports and active organisations.
- **Staffs Warmer Homes Scheme:** Funding and help for vulnerable residents has been relaunched across the County. Please promote in your community.
- **Fire and Rescue Services:** Family fun day events this Autumn.
- **Staffordshire Libraries:** Film Festival - see website, also for Blue Badge applications please refer people to their local libraries.
- **Highways:** Stoke-on-Trent City Council are installing traffic calming from Norton to Brown Edge. Cllr. Flunder needs evidence to prove the need for Brown Edge. Please encourage Community Speedwatch volunteers. Staffordshire Safer Roads partnership are producing some new promotional material.
- **Fiddlers Bank:** The road surface has still not been repaired. Letters were sent out to residents, but the work has not been completed to date. Cllr. Flunder will allocate some DHP funding to sort the problems out if not actioned soon.

Cllr. Flunder left the meeting.

11. Planning Applications:

Application Number	Applicant Name	Location	Proposed Development	Decision
SMD/2022/0441	Mr G Hollins	Rosedene, Willfield Lane, Brown Edge	Two storey side extension which is replacing the existing single storey side extension	No objection
SMD/2022/0372	Mr A Beardmore	Land at Double Gates Nursery, Sytch Road, Brown Edge	Erection of x3 detached dwellings and associated works including demolition of existing horticultural and equestrian buildings	Objection: Overdevelopment Setting a precedent to build on all the land behind on the same level

12. Finance & Governance:

- a) Cemetery receipts in August: £ 565.00
- b) Clerk receipts in August: SMDC Councillor Community Initiative Grant £ 100.00
(Cllr Porter)

Balance in the Bank Accounts on 1st August:

(September bank statement was not received at the time of meeting, also note that 2nd Instalment of the Parish Precept had not yet been received). The first payment of interest on the Public Works Loan Board loan is due in November.

NatWest Current Account £22,399.34

NatWest Reserve Account £11,121.55

TOTAL **£33,520.89**

c) The following payments were authorised:

Mrs D Wheat Clerk Salary & Expenses (July)(mileage, phone, stamps)	Chq. 001111	£461.87	
HMRC PAYE	Chq. 001112	£108.40	
Meadowcroft & Davies Ltd.	Chq. 001113	£152.35	
N&J Tree Services Maintenance Visit 5 (August) £820.75	Chq. 001114	£1330.56	
Additional Treatment of Knotweed £509.76			
Playsafety Ltd. – Annual RosPa Inspection Playing Equipment	Chq. 001115	£126.00	
Brown Edge Holly Bush Ltd. Final Balance payment for Solicitor fees concerning the purchase of the Holly Bush Car Park land	Chq. 001116	£9,326.00	
Seiretto Ltd. Additional email storage for Clerk and 1 year Cloudflare	Chq. 001117	£70.79	
Mr P Woodward – Repair to Sandy Lane Well and Gully Clearance	Chq. 001118	£275.00	
ICO – Information Commissioners Office Annual fee	Direct Debit	£35.00	
Water Plus – Cemetery Water Supply	Direct Debit	£33.42	
British Gas – Electricity supply	Playing Field (Aug)	Direct Debit	£18.55
	Cemetery (Aug)	Direct Debit	£13.55

Cllr. Wright questioned the payment of the Solicitor fees for Brown Edge Holly Bush Ltd. A debate followed to clarify the reasons for the solicitors' fees payable by Brown Edge Parish Council incurred in the creation of the company Brown Edge Holly Bush Ltd. Following payment of this final fee, the company Brown Edge Holly Bush Ltd. can now be dissolved, and Brown Edge Parish Council are the sole owners of the Car Park Land.

Payments were then authorised.

Proposed Cllr. Porter – Seconded Cllr. Oberholster – Motion Carried

12. Resolutions being pursued:

- a) **Legal & H.R Committee** – No report for August.
- b) **New Projects Committee** – Verbal report from Cllr. Porter on behalf of the Chair Cllr. Turner-Holdcroft who could not be present this evening at the meeting held at 5pm on 7th Sept 2022.
 - The Committee discussed enlarging the Cenotaph in the Village
 - Progress with the Archives – store space not accessible at the Village Hall. A discussion was had about asking for a quote to make more accessible.
 - Mobile Speed Camera – Clerk to find previous quotations
 - Chain of Office – to request information from Stoke-on-Trent City Council
 - Cemetery – to do a report on the remaining land available in the Lawn Cemetery.
 - Friends of Marshes Hill – Staffordshire Wildlife Trust are to take over the management of Marshes Hill. Arrange for a SWT representative to come to talk to the council about the new management and volunteer working partnerships.
 - The Historic markers application is to be considered by the Moorlands Partnership Board in October.
 - Allotments – New Projects will contact Allotment Committee to discuss any requirements
 - Memorial Garden – no progress to date. Clerk to get quotation for information board for Community Orchard area.
- c) **Maintenance of Assets Committee**
 - Light has been fixed in the Playing Field.
 - Adapted lock to be fitted at the Cemetery for storage
 - Review of the Grounds Maintenance Contract to prepare for Tender in 2023 is now in progress.

14. Reports and Actions of Parish Councillors undertaking business/actions on behalf of the council:

15. Matters for the District Council:

To check with Planning Officer SMD/2022/0372 for historic potential unlawful building of a stable.

16. Matters for the County Council:

- a) **High Lane Playing Field Public Right of Way maintenance.**
- b) **Fiddlers Band Road Repair**

17. Correspondence:

- a) **Date set for tree surgery work on Breach Road by Western Power 21/11/22**
- b) **Volunteer Community Networking:**
Invitation from RH Karen Bradley MP inviting Community Groups to gather at Moorlands House in Leek on Saturday 12th November for a volunteer organisation networking event. Please invite any groups that you are aware of in the village to attend.
- c) **Climate Change Conference Wednesday 28th September by Staffordshire County Council.**
This can also be attended remotely. See the SCC website for details or contact the Clerk.
- d) **Biddulph Mayor** invitations to Civic Events: 10th Sept – Beer Festival
- e) **Brown Edge Vegetable Show** – 11th September – Holly Bush Inn (*this event was cancelled following the news of HM The Queen*)
- f) **Defibrillators have been recalled for maintenance.** The devices can be sent one at a time to make sure there are still two active on the village at all times. Clerk to arrange staggered maintenance over the next month.

18. Matters Pertaining to Issues in the Parish for the Next Agenda:

- PCSO to be invited to attend the next meeting in October ask about Police Safety Partnership - Surveillance Cameras.
- Community Speedwatch Launch

The meeting was closed by the Chairman at 9.45pm

Next Full Council Meeting – Wednesday 5th October 2022 at Brown Edge Village Hall at 7pm.

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