



**BROWN EDGE PARISH COUNCIL
Extraordinary Meeting Minutes
Monday 18th November 2024
7.00pm at Brown Edge Village Hall**

Chairman Cllr. Adrian Felton	Vice-Chairman Cllr. Anthony Bedson	Cllr. Joe Porter (Parish & District)
Cllr. David Gerrard	Cllr. Woodward	Cllr. Margaret Hunt
Cllr. Neil Hargreaves	Cllr. Shufflebotham	Cllr. Phil Berrisford
		3 member of the public

Minutes – Mrs Denise Wheat Responsible Financial Officer

- 1) **Chairmans Welcome:** Cllr. Felton welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2) **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr. Kate Oberholster, Cllr. Marilyn Marathe, Cllr Christina Jebb, Cllr. Keith Flunder and the Clerk Mrs.Hayley Harrison

3) Parishioners Concerns:

- a) A Resident asked if CCTV cameras could be fitted on The Bush to monitor the Car Park. The Councillors agreed that they would support putting security cameras in place. It was discussed that any antisocial behaviour should be reported to the police.

4) Declaration of Interests on the forthcoming Agenda:

Cllr Porter: NHS, Carnival Committee
Cllr Shufflebotham, Cllr. Berrisford, Cllr Hunt – The Bush

5) Items on Notice:

To consider correspondence received from the Directors of the Bush concerning a proposal to lease the Car Park for the pub’s customers.
A discussion was then had about the Car Park:

- In May 2022 the Parish Council purchased the Holly Bush Car Park to secure the land from development which could have resulted in the loss of a Village Pub asset. This purchase was for a proposed 2-year period while a Community Interest Company was set up to purchase the Pub, with the intention to then to take on the lease of the CarPark from the Parish Council.
- The Council are using reserves to pay for the loan as no income has yet been generated from the car park, although a lot of work has been done to try to do this, with Councillors looking at car park management, EV charging, parking permits for residents and adjoining businesses.

It was resolved that the Council should seek legal advice. The RFO should seek clarification from the Public Works Loan Board and the Staffordshire Parish Councils Association about the powers allowed to a Parish Council to lease land.

The Chairman suggested the Council explore the option for the Council to raise the Precept to include the loan payments. This would need a public consultation to gain a majority vote to raise the precept.

Cllr. Shufflebotham spoke on the purchase of the Allotment Land. This was a legal requirement because parishioners had requested Allotments in the Parish. This can't be compared with the Car Park purchase.

The Choices were clarified:

- a) Sell the Land to pay back the loan
- b) Lease the land to cover the loan
- c) Increase the Precept to cover the loan

Cllr. Woodward left the meeting 7:30pm

Questions raised were as follows:

- d) **Powers:** Does the Parish Council have powers to lease land on a loan agreement?
- e) **Consultation and Precept:** How would the Parish Council conduct a consultation to raise Precept. The RFO suggested Cllr. Flunder would know as Checkley Parish Council did this to purchase Great Wood Community Hall in Tean.
- f) **Maintenance:** A discussion was had about the cost of maintaining assets. Maintenance needs to be factored into the Precept moving forward for all Parish Council assets. Cllr Porter suggested care must be take when raising Precept as the Government have caps which can stop the percentage being raised too high.

RFO to work out the Percentage rate if the Council were to raise the Precept to cover the loan and to clarify the Councils legal position.

Proposed Cllr. Berrisford – Seconded Cllr. Hargreaves

6) Finance and Governance:

- RFO to find out the charge if the loan was repaid early.

7) Open Floor:

Members of the public were allowed to give their views.

- It was commented that not all the Villagers use the pub, it is only a small percentage.
- The Council have a duty to obtain the best value for the Assets they own.
- Leek has resident parking on some Car Parks, and this works well for them. These are SMDC managed car parks.
- The Parish Council have a duty to provide a new Cemetery in the imminent future. This project should be planned for.
- It was discussed that currently the Bush has a new, positive audience and they are successfully using social media.to promote their events and activities.
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- **16) Matters Pertaining to Issues in the Parish for the Next Agenda:**

The RFO was asked to provide an account of all the costs on the Car Park to date, and to seek advice from the SPCA and PWLB.

Meeting Ended: 8.25pm