

District Report from Cllr. Keith Flunder July 2026

For the Brown Edge Parish Council meeting July 6th 2026

If there are any concerns or questions that parish councillors wish to ask me, then please phone me.

1. LGR Update and summary: -

- a) We are expecting to hear about which option for the Unitary Authorities will be chosen by the Government over the next two weeks. Probably around the mid July. This will be only part of the announcement for the remaining 12-13 County areas. Please note there are some cases when the Government may ask for further consultation on the options. This will only give 10 months to arrange the election of the new authorities roughly based on the old County Council divisions.
- b) The next stage in the SMDC district, are meetings that will be arranged by and run by Mutual Ventures. Most of the initial 21 meetings run by Mutual Ventures have now been completed. This included face to face meetings in Leek last Wednesday for the Northwest group and a further on-line meeting took place in the evening on July 1st for both community groups and residents. A before the Parish Assembly meeting. There is still quite a lot of work to do.
- c) Another champions meeting will be held before the final three separate subject lead meetings, to ensure that Health and wellbeing is included for public sector organisations, tourism & culture and re-generation / infrastructure (transport) will also be included.
- d) At a separate meeting called by myself for the three parish councils in the Northwest group. It was explained that it is important for each of the Parish Councils to complete and return a response to the initial stages of the Mutual Ventures consultation. This was more to put a 'line in the sand' as to what assets, activities and community support groups are vital to keep the village strong, independent with great community infrastructure moving forward for the next 5-10 years.
- e) Parish and Town councils then need to log both their physical assets and community groups and activities. These will include public areas and street furniture etc. It is hoped that this process will help them look at their own assets and support their own local strategic plans, which can be completed in detail before March 2027.
- f) Future meetings and possible visits to parishes are also available. Although it might be best to get a report on the agenda from the planned locality meetings..
- g) I'm still hopeful that there will be some assistance from SMDC, as to the best way to transfer any community assets in the remaining time period.

2. The Parish Assembly and the SPCA will support Parish and Town councils over the coming years to produce their own plans. This was agreed at the recent SPCA executive meetings in Stafford. The SPCA executive meeting was held on Monday 15th of June.
3. I was asked to report back to the Parish Council about the UKSPF projects that the District Council are currently completing. I will be receiving more information through the Services Delivery committee by the autumn and attending an opening day event. The Leek indoor market project has been completed, The Leisure Centre project (£17.5 (gone up to £19+) million is going to opening during the summer in stages and looks really good, The Nicholson Institute project (£3.2 Million) is now on-going with the library now operating on the ground floor of Moorlands House, until the building is ready to be moved back into. This is due for completion later in the year (possibly early 2027?). There has also been more UKSPF funding made available (just under £1 million) for other projects around the Staffordshire Moorlands partly related to Arts and Culture, I think.
4. Brown Bin charges started from June 29th 2026, for residents in the SMDC district. Residents need to register as soon as possible if they want their bin to still be collected. The food bin service / process will also start in June. Information / leaflets have been sent out to all residents. I have received complaints and the services team are contacting the local residents who have had issues.
5. The Green Space maps have been delivered to Brown Edge councillors. I have examples for Brown Edge at this evening's meeting.
6. Other local projects I'm currently looking into, include playgrounds / cycle/skate parks and parking areas to support local activities and community projects.
7. The district council has been placed in 'special measures', meaning applicants for larger applications can now go directly to the national Planning Inspectorate if they wish. SMDC officers are looking at how these measures can be lifted as soon as possible. The next Planning Committee meeting is on July 16th. I have been lobbied about the application for development along Breech Lane, and an enforcement notice is currently being appealed.
8. Other case work includes planning issues and enforcement, the building rubble at Spinney Close. An email from Ben Hayward for Parish Councils, has been promised.
9. The CIF fund has now been reopened for 2026/27.
10. Other future and recent meetings have included, a street furniture working group meeting, a film about climate emergency at Endon Village Hall .
11. There are a couple of surgeries planned in July, Aug. Sept, dates to be promoted.
12. Questions ? Please call me on 07836 526834 or send me an email at keith.flunder@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk