

**Brewood and Coven Parish Council
with Bishop's Wood and Coven Heath**

Business Plan 2021-2026

General

1. Quality Service Provision

It is an ongoing aim of the Parish Council to provide a number of services to the local community. It will constantly seek to ensure that these services meet the needs of this community and that they represent value for money. We welcome the involvement of residents in its decision making process and will always consult residents on issues of importance. The Parish Council has adopted the General Power of Competence and will continue to improve the quality of the service it provides. We have attained Quality Council status under the new Standards and will play a greater role in shaping and delivering public services.

The Council will continue to invest in regular training for both parish councillors and staff.

2. Communication and Public Relations

The Parish Council will compile a 'welcome pack' for new residents to the area, which will be available from Parish Council office and will enhance the information already provided in the Parish Guide, quarterly newsletters, noticeboards, website and facebook page. We will continue to develop communications with residents using the above media.

The Council will continue to appoint representatives to local community groups and organisations where required and will consult on issues affecting them. A new accessible gov.uk website and associated email addresses are now up and running.

The Parish Council now records all of its public meetings.

3. Partnership/Sponsorship Approach and Funding

The Parish Council is one of many organisations working within the community. We encourage investment of both time and resources by other agencies to help achieve our objectives. We have joined forces with county and district councils and with the business community, voluntary bodies and local residents and a variety of associations for the benefit of the Parish, seeking out funding opportunities where available. The Parish Council has agreed in principle making available up to £3,000 to assist with alleviating digital poverty for children in the Parish.

4. Climate Change

Climate change presents the Parish Council and the general public with both challenges and opportunities. By taking immediate action and working together with other tiers of local government we can begin to make improvements with the aim of protecting the environment. As a result we will also benefit from these initiatives by saving money.

We will help residents to adapt to climate change in a variety of ways such as encouraging recycling, discontinue the use of single-use plastic, and consider viable locations in the Parish that may be suitable for chargepoints for electric vehicles. We will lobby our local district and county councils to improve public transport, car sharing when appropriate, walking buses and reduce fuel emissions. We will report annually on our energy consumption, endeavour to use renewable energy and strive to reduce the carbon footprint of our buildings, in particular the Parish Council office. See point 11 below.

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We will assist other local councils, in conjunction with and guided by the County Council Flooding Team, with improving drainage and other initiatives to reduce flooding in all four villages/wards.

Community Issues

5. Crime and Disorder

The Parish Council will work with the Police and other agencies in an attempt to reduce vandalism, anti-social behaviour and criminal activity within the Parish. We continue to be proactive in our community by facilitating regular meetings with the Police via the PCSO, the circulation of Smart Alert bulletins, contributing to the Locality 2 Police Accountability Forum where current crime trends are discussed, and often facilitating regular drop-in surgeries jointly with the Police; encouraging members of the public to report their concerns regarding crime and disorder in all villages using 101 and Crimestoppers for non-urgent matter, 999 for urgent matters and through social media.

6. Planning/Development of Housing

The Parish Council will work in partnership with South Staffordshire Council, other adjoining councils and local Housing Associations to develop affordable housing in the Parish and will endeavour to support local residents in putting forward their views on planning legislation as outlined in the South Staffordshire Local Plan. The Parish Council will continue to comment on local planning applications affecting the Parish and where appropriate, the surrounding areas and be mindful of our duty to cooperate with the Birmingham Development Plan and other planning requirements such as the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area and other associated plans.

We will continue to work with other local parish councils and organisations in opposing further major commercial development of this rural area of South Staffordshire.

We aim to influence the planning authority to ensure that all planning applications for developments of 4 or more houses - where no off-street parking is available - to be accompanied by a pledge to provide On-street EV Charging Points under the 'On-street Residential Chargepoint Scheme.'

We will support sustainable/renewable energy sources being used where any new housing is built.

7. Recreation Facilities

The Parish Council is committed to improving the recreational facilities in order to improve health and promote well-being for the whole community. The Parish Council has provided adult exercise equipment at two of its open spaces and has set aside funding for a third site at Bishop's Wood. We will continue to provide funds for the upkeep of these facilities.

We will support Brewood Parish Sports Association in its endeavour to provide an acceptable level of maintenance and to develop and improve facilities, including updating and modernising the changing rooms, improving the condition of the waterlogged pitches, the proposal to install floodlights and a MUGA.

have provided a suitable path to give access for the disabled to the tennis court at Coven playing field.

We are aware that the changing rooms at Coven are underutilised and will encourage local sports clubs and organisations such as promoting the formation of clubs for tennis, basketball, rugby and a gym club, in order to make better use the facility and greater use of all the sports facilities in Coven playing field.

We will upgrade the tennis court surface at Coven playing field.

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We will continue to support Brewood Bowling Club in the provision of a clubhouse on its land at Engleton Lane playing field.

We will continue to support Brewood Tennis Club and jointly will consider converting the floodlights to LED.

We recognise the important contribution that trees can make in creating an attractive landscape and moderating climate change. We will identify sites on our land where the landscape can be improved by trees and commence a phased programme of tree planting.

We will continue to maintain and improve our allotment sites for the enjoyment of all allotment holders.

We will continue to liaise with Staffordshire County Council for the protection of our footpaths and bridleways and continue to refurbish public footpath signs which have fallen into disrepair. We will utilise the Community Paths Initiative to upgrade any footpaths in the Parish, which may have been neglected and require improvement.

8. Traffic Management

The Parish Council will continue to consult with and listen to residents on traffic management matters. We will continue to hold regular traffic management meetings with Staffordshire County Council Highways in order to discuss and suggest improvements on a variety of traffic related issues in the Parish. We have supported the County Council in funding double yellow lines along Dean Street, Brewood and Poplars Farm Way, Coven.

We will continue to promote the Community Speed Watch scheme and encourage new volunteers.

In association with Staffordshire County Council, we have provided one mobile speed indicator device and six posts at a variety of locations in the Parish. We will be adding a further three devices over the next year.

Bishop's Wood

We will continue to encourage the monitoring of speeding vehicles along Ivetsey Bank Road and, in conjunction with Staffordshire County Council will endeavour to reduce the speed of vehicles entering the village by the provision of gateways at the three entrances.

Brewood

We will work in partnership with Staffordshire County Council to relieve traffic congestion in the centre of Brewood.

Coven

We will encourage the monitoring of parking in Church Lane/Brewood Road and School Lane.

Parking (General)

The Parish Council will encourage partnership working with schools to improve the education of parents, through their children, in respect of the dangers of excess traffic around schools such as safety, pollution, inconsiderate parking, speeding and other issues, including supporting initiatives by the Safer Roads Partnership for example using parking buddies outside schools.

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9. Highways

Although the Parish Council is not a highways authority it does recognise that highways issues are of considerable concern to residents, with speeding vehicles and the state of road surface being the most widely reported matters. In conjunction with Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire County Council, in particular our County Councillor, we will attempt to achieve a variety of traffic calming measures and Police initiatives in all four villages. We will continue to encourage residents to report any new pot holes.

10. Transport.

Public transport is another major concern for residents and again is not the jurisdiction of the Parish Council. However, we will support the community to put pressure on Staffordshire County Council to retain the subsidy on our bus routes to meet local rural transport needs. We will continue to support and actively promote the Voluntary Car Scheme and to attract new volunteer drivers, once the scheme becomes operational again after the coronavirus pandemic has passed.

We will seek to ensure that the bus shelters are kept clean and usable. We recognise that some users would welcome the introduction of seating and will consider upgrading two stops a year if appropriate seating can be installed and it is deemed appropriate.

11. Street Scene

The Parish Council acknowledges the sterling work carried out by volunteers in all four of its villages, not only during the Best Kept Village competition, but throughout the year at events such as Christmas lights switch on in all four villages, and the biennial music festival in Brewood. It acknowledges that there is an unacceptable level of dog fouling and is committed to joining with South Staffordshire Council to make use of any initiatives available in order to attempt to reduce dog fouling on pavements, footpaths and open spaces. We will also liaise with South Staffordshire Council in order to provide more litter bins and dog fouling signs. The Council will support local litter picking initiatives; we will provide volunteers from all four villages with litter picking tongs and rings bags, if requested.

We will investigate the possibility of devolving some local services from the County and District Councils (with appropriate compensation) to the Parish Council. The Parish Council will encourage local residents to take increased ownership of and pride in their local environment. We will consider replacing two benches in Coven Heath and refurbish and relocate another.

Corporate Issues

12. Infrastructure

Parish Council Offices

The condition of the Parish Council offices has been a concern for many years. The Parish Council will investigate the most cost effective way to address this matter and consider whether to redevelop the existing site or move to new premises; this will be in consultation with all our stakeholders. As part of this major project we will investigate whether proper access for people with disabilities is feasible and improved IT facilities.

Until a decision is reached on alternative accommodation, we will ensure that the existing offices are properly maintained, and that any energy efficiency measures that can be justified as giving value for money in the short term are implemented. We will begin a programme of works to make the parish council

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building more energy efficient by installing loft insulation, replacement windows and upgrading the heating system.

13. Corporate Governance

The Parish Council will continue to comply with legislation regarding proper practice and regularly review its policies in relation to corporate governance, Safeguarding and compliance with the Council's Code of Conduct and Standing Orders.

14. Review of Strategy

The Parish Council will review this business plan on an annual basis. The next review will take place in January 2021 in line with the budget proposal.