

## **Somerford Parish Council**

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 16 April 2025**

#### **Holmes Chapel Community Centre, 7.00pm**

#### **Present**

- Councillor Geoff Bell (Chairman)
- Councillor Jeanette Hardman (vice-Chair)
- Councillor Paul Crompton
- Councillor S Hughes
- Councillor B Chorlton
- Councillor T Massey
- Ward Councillor J Wray
- Mr Carlton Evans – Clerk

#### **Declarations of Interest**

- Cllrs Hardman and Chorlton – any Loachbrook Estate discussions

#### **Part 1 Public Forum**

No members of the public were present.

#### **043/25 – Apologies**

None – all Councillors present.

#### **044/25 – Minutes**

The Council **resolved** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025 be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

#### **045/25 – Accounts**

**See Annex 1**

### **046/25 - Cheshire East Ward Councillor Report**

Cllr Wray informed the Council that a public annual and mayor making meeting of the full Cheshire East Council would take place on 14 May in Knutsford.

### **047/25 – Possible Savings Account**

The Council discussed several options for an interest bearing account and **resolved** to open an account with the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund. Cllrs Hardman and Crompton will discuss with the Clerk the arrangements for signatories etc. and how much to hold in the account at any one time, and advise the Council accordingly. The Council also asked the Clerk to ensure that VAT claims are submitted quarterly.

### **048/25 - Planning Applications**

#### **25/0795/OUT**

Somerford Park Farm: Outline approval for access matters for a proposed livery yard comprising a block of 20 stables and associated works, all other matters reserved.

The Council **resolved** to support this application.

### **049/25 – Risk Register**

The Council reviewed the Risk Register and **resolved** to adopt it.

### **050/25 – Councillor Vacancies**

A piece on the current vacancies has been drafted for the next newsletter and will be followed by advertising in the local press etc. before launching the formal process of election/co-option with Cheshire East Council.

### **051/25 – Newsletter**

The Council will aim to have a final draft ready for discussion within a week so that an agreed version can be printed and circulated in May.

### **052/25 - Rhead's Meadows**

Councillors discussed the quote from Bellway Homes' sub contractors to install a water supply from their site to the north meadow. The cost is higher than expected and the Council asked the Clerk to investigate whether additional sources of funds could be available. The Clerk had written to Streetscape to ask them to proceed with a series of maintenance works, as agreed at the last meeting. They had not yet started at Rhead's Meadows or Blackfirs Wood so the Clerk will follow up with them.

### **053/25 - CWT proposals**

Councillors discussed some Cheshire Wildlife Trust proposals to support a series of Wildlife Corridors that could involve Somerford and neighbouring parishes. The Council **resolved** to participate in 'Option B', which appears to be a free 'beta' version of the package of support that they are developing and will roll out in 2026.

### **054/25 - Blackfirs Wood**

See discussion of Rhead's Meadows above.

### **056/25 – Diversion of Footpath 2**

The Council discussed the Anwyl proposals for a minor alteration to the course of Footpath 2 across their development, as requested by the Cheshire East Public Rights Of Way team. The new proposals are still contrary to Somerford Parish Council's earlier recommendations so the Clerk will respond to the PROW team's consultation and object.

### **057/25 – Highways**

Councillors discussed the appalling state of roads across the county. Claims by CE Highways' claim that they are in the top 20 of council highways departments does not match the lived experience of parishioners. Cllr Crompton will follow up previous discussions with the Police and Crime Commissioner about installing noise cameras on the Congleton Link Road.

### **058/25 – Housing Developments**

Cllr Hardman reported that the roads on the Loachbrook estate had been finished, broken/sunken kerbstones are being tackled and a CCTV survey of the drains had been completed, but there appears to be disagreement between the developers and Cheshire East Council about responsibility for the defective street lighting at the entrance to the estate.

### **059/25 - Chairman and Members' Reports**

Cllr Hardman has circulated some instructions on switching to our new email account, and has been in touch with residents of Turnstone Grange to share experience of establishing a residents' group. Cllr Hughes will contact the owners of Goodwins Pool and report back on their plans to repair or replace their broken and unsightly fence.

### **060/25 - Clerk's Report**

Nothing further to report.

**Part 2 – no press or public present**

**061/25 – Clerk’s annual appraisal**

Councillors discussed a report from the Personnel Committee on the Clerk’s performance and annual appraisal and **resolved** that he should progress from spine point 22 to point 23 on the NALC pay scale.

**The meeting ended at 2120 hrs.**

X

Chairman

## Annex 1 - Accounts

### Finances as of 01 April 2025:

Account Balance: **£33,759.36**

### Payments to note since 01 March 2025:

- NEST, Clerk Pension £56.89
- HMRC, Tax £170.14
- Clerk Salary £643.53
- G Bell, Christmas Lights installation, reimbursement £350.00
- G Bell, Boundary Signs installation, reimbursement £875.00
- HCCC, Room Hire March 2025 £41.25
- HCCC, Room Hire February 2025 £41.25

### Receipts since 01 March 2025:

- £nil

### Payments approved:

- £528.00 – Parish Online, website hosting and development