

Somerford Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 19 November 2025

Holmes Chapel Community Centre, 7.00pm

Present

- Councillor Geoff Bell (Chairman)
- Councillor Jeanette Hardman (vice-Chair)
- Councillor Paul Crompton
- Councillor Bill Chorlton
- Councillor Jake Saxton
- Councillor Simon Hughes
- Mr Carlton Evans – Clerk
- Mr John Wray – Ward Councillor

Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Hardman – any Loachbrook Estate discussions
- Cllr Chorlton – any Loachbrook Estate discussions

Part 1 Public Forum

141/25 - One member of the public was present, Congleton Town Councillor Robert Douglas. Cllr Douglas spoke about fly tipping across the area, his continuing efforts to identify outstanding s106 monies that should be available, and the emerging Cheshire East Local Plan and its latest 'Call for Sites' – and how that may impact Somerford.

142/25 – Apologies

The Council **resolved** to accept and approve apologies from:

- Cllr T Massey – personal reasons

143/25 – Minutes

The Council **resolved** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 17 September 2025 be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

144/25 – Cheshire East Ward Councillor report

Nothing significant to report from Cllr Wray.

145/25 – Accounts

See Annex 1

146/25 – Budget 26/27 and Precept Request

The Council discussed the budget for FY 26/27. Cllrs asked the Clerk to flesh out various proposals that could be funded this year or next including: replacement/additional signage; improvements to the verges on Blackfirs Lane; costed plans for a bench, noticeboard, dog bin and defibrillator at each new housing development; and costs associated with more frequent newsletters given ever larger distribution lists. The Council **resolved** to spend up to £3,000 for Remembrance Day figures and poppies for 2026, and up to £500 for new Christmas trees and additional Christmas lights.

The Clerk will incorporate these ideas and regular maintenance activities and provide a forecast for discussion at the Council's next meeting.

147/25 - Planning Applications

25/0795/OUT

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

Somerford Park Farm. The application was initially refused and is being appealed. The Council **resolved** to support the appeal and asked the Clerk to write to the Planning Inspectorate accordingly.

RE: 25/3982/FUL Full Planning

Change of Use of building from B8 (Storage and Distribution) to Class E (d) (Commercial, Business and Service) for use as an indoor sports facility (Padel Courts). Bracken Barn Holmes Chapel Road.

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

148/25 – Financial Regulations

The Council reviewed and **resolved** to accept the list proposed by the Clerk of regular known expenses (including Cllr Hardman's Adobe subscription) that do not need to come before the Council every time payment is due.

149/25 – Standing Orders

The Council **resolved** to make minor changes to re-order some of the provisions concerning the establishment of committees, as proposed by the Clerk.

150/25 - Rhead's Meadows

The Council asked the Clerk to set up a meeting with Streetscape to take stock of works done so far and the possible longer term contract for future works at Rhead's Meadows (and Blackfirs Wood).

151/25 - Blackfirs Wood

See above.

152/25 – Highways

Councillors noted that some people were regularly parking on the pavements at the southern end of Blackfirs Lane thus forcing pedestrians to walk on the road. The next Newsletter may carry some reminders about more considerate behaviour.

153/25 – Housing Developments

Cllr Hardman reported that there had been some localised flooding and sewage spillage on the Loachbrook development due to blocked drains and a problem after a power outage at the pumping station. Some remedial action had been taken.

154/25 - Chairman and Members' Reports

The Chairman reported that he and the Clerk had met Grassmats representatives about reinforcing the grass verges along Blackfirs Lane and the Council **resolved** to proceed with a test on a small stretch. Cllrs asked the Clerk to investigate further the increasing encroachment into the Public Open Space between the David Wilson Homes development and Blackfirs Wood. The Chair will continue to research the costs of asking a local company to distribute the Parish Council Newsletter. Cllr Hardman and the Clerk will put forward a proposal for frequency, timing, content, style etc. of the Newsletter.

155/25 - Clerk's Report

Nothing further to report.

The meeting ended at 2145 hrs.

X

Chairman

Annex 1 - Accounts

Finances as of 01 November 2025:

Account Balance: **£75,701.84**

Receipts since 01 October 2025:

- £NIL

Payments noted since 01 October 2025

- £378.00 – PKF Littlejohn, external audit
- £50.76 – Clerk, mileage claim
- £49.98 – NEST, Clerk Pension
- £69.12 – TCS Payroll Management
- £363.16 – Congleton TC, Dog Bins
- £94.00 – Clerk, SLCC membership
- £568.64 – Clerk Salary
- £41.25 – Everybody Health, HCCC room hire
- £41.25 – Everybody Health, HCCC room hire

Payments approved:

£1,488.24 – John Harding, Chelford triangle cutting