

## **Somerford Parish Council**

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 15 April 2026**

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

#### **Present**

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

#### **Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs Hardman and Chorlton for any discussion of the Loachbrook Estate.

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

One member of the public was present. He raised concerns about the use of the Public Open Space at the rear of Blackfirs Wood, speed limits on Blackfirs Lane and on Somerford Gate, and the safety of school children and pedestrians along the Lane. These are all issues that the Council is aware of and has been trying to address.

#### **035/26 – Apologies**

No absences.

#### **036/26 – Minutes**

The Council **resolved** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 18 March 2026 be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

#### **037/26 – Cheshire East Ward Councillor report**

Councillor Wray noted that Cheshire East Council would return to a cabinet system of governance from the current committee model in May. (Cllr Massey left at this point).

#### **038/26 – Accounts**

**See Annex 1**

### **039/26 - Planning Applications**

None received.

### **040/26 – Bank Mandate Changes**

The Council **resolved** to add Cllr Hardman as a signatory to the Nat West current account and remove former Cllr Crompton from the current account and PSDF account.

### **041/26 - Chat GPT subscription**

The Council **resolved** that Cllr Hardman should sign up for a paid version of Chat GPT (£7.00 per month) to support her work on social media and the newsletter etc.

### **042/26 – Policies to review**

The Council **resolved** to approve the Data Protection policy, the Document Retention and Disposal policy, and the IT policy.

### **043/26 - Rhead's Meadows and Blackfirs Wood**

Councillors noted that we are still expecting Streetscape to come up with a Service Level Agreement for Rhead's Meadows and Blackfirs Wood, and the arrival of a new Park Ranger at Streetscape might speed things up. An arboriculturist will visit both sites on 13 May to refresh the two tree surveys, and the Clerk has asked the Ranger to put pressure on Cheshire East Council to deal with the dangerous overhanging tree branch in the verge at Blackfirs Lane.

Given the number of outstanding issues both here and elsewhere, Councillors felt they needed to replace the old Parish Council Business Plan (which has just expired) with a shorter, more activity oriented and costed three year Plan.

### **044/26 – Highways**

Councillors discussed the speed indicator device on the Holmes Chapel Road and Cllr Hughes will aim to turn the SID so it faces West not East. The Council will look again at whether improvements can be made to the old Sandy Lane to make it easier to use as a cycleway.

### **045/26 – Housing Developments**

Cllr Hardman has written again to Bovis/Vistry about the increasingly long list of unresolved issues at the Loachbrook development.

### **046/26 - Chairman and Members' Reports**

The Council noted that the Clerk's Annual Appraisal is due. Cllr Hardman and the Clerk will investigate the details for renewing the Council's 'Local Council Award Quality Gold' status. Cllr Hardman is working on raising the Council's profile on social media and she and the Clerk will also work on a new approach to the Council newsletter as previously mentioned.

### **047/26 - Clerk's Report**

The Clerk reported that the first tranche of the 2026/2027 precept had been received and the Council will consider next time how much to transfer from the current account to the new Public Sector Deposit Fund account. He also reminded Councillors that they would need to elect a Chair and vice-Chair at the Annual Parish Council meeting in May.

**The meeting ended at 2034 hrs.**

X

Chairman

## Annex 1 - Accounts

### Finances as of 01 April 2026:

Current Account Balance: **£19,017.60**

PSDF Account: **£50,000.00**

### Receipts since 01 March 2026:

- **£nil**

### Payments to note since 01 March 2026

- **£49.98** – Nest, Clerk's Pension
- **£10.00** – PSDF Account
- **£49,990.00** – PSDF Account
- **£187.35** – HMRC PAYE
- **£206.25** – Everybody Health (5x room bookings)
- **£110.40** – Streetscape, Blackfirs Wood
- **£386.40** – Streetscape, Rhead's Meadows
- **£103.06** – G Bell, planks for repaired bench
- **£89.82** – J Hardman Adobe Subscription
- **£568.64** – Clerk Salary
- **£187.35** – HMRC PAYE

### Payments to approve:

**£nil**