

Somerford Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 19 August 2026

Holmes Chapel Community Centre, 7.00pm

Present

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

Declarations of Interest

None.

Part 1 Public Forum

Congleton Town Councillor Robert Douglas updated the meeting on his further research into outstanding s106 monies, with particular reference to the Elan homes and Anwyl developments, and how much might be available to Somerford; he referred to a serious traffic incident at the entrance to the new Somerford Farm quarry; and he informed the Council that he had written to Sarah Russel MP supporting a tiered system of penalties for fly-tipping with a maximum fine of £5,000.

097/26 – Apologies

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

- Councillor Jeanette Hardman (prior commitment)
- Councillor Bill Chorlton (prior commitment)

098/26 – Minutes

The Council **resolved** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 15 July 2026 be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

099/26 – Accounts

See Annex 1

The Council noted the healthy current account balance and asked the Clerk to transfer £10,000 to the PSDF account. The Council also noted that the pace of spending had slowed and the Chair encouraged all Councillors and the Clerk to revisit previously discussed initiatives and progress them as speedily as possible.

100/26 – Cheshire East Ward Councillor report

Councillor Wray updated the meeting about changes to Cheshire East's refuse collection services and the increase in complaints about bins not being collected now that the service had been taken back in house.

101/26 – Parish Newsletter

The Council discussed alternative arrangements for printing and distributing the Newsletter and **resolved** to ask The Leaflet Company to go ahead on the basis of their quote. While the printing costs between the three companies approached were similar, the other two companies could not undertake the distribution. The Council asked Cllr Hardman and the Clerk to finalise the Newsletter and send it to the printers as soon as possible.

102/26 - Planning Applications

26/2410/FUL

Minor amendments to approved application 25/1780/FUL: Erection of 1no. two storey dwelling and linked garage.
Plot 3, Green Tree Farm Chelford Road.
The Council **resolved** to raise no objection.

103/26 – Cheshire East Local Plan

The Council discussed the consultation on the new Local Plan and decided that Councillors should respond individually if they want to, rather than taking a consolidated Council position.

104/26 – Contractors for works at Rhead's Meadows and Blackfirs Wood

The Council asked the Clerk to prompt Streetscape to come up with a proposal for a new style of larger dog bins for the parish. Scottish Power had been in touch asking permission to prune a tree that might be at future risk of interfering with the overhead power line, the Clerk and Chair will discuss this further with the contractor.

The Clerk will also contact Scottish Power about the possibility of burying the overhead cable underground instead.

105/26 – Road Signs or Finger Posts

The Council discussed several quotes received for a replacement Finger Post at the junction of the Chelford Road and Blackfirs Lane and **resolved** to set aside a budget of £5,000 for this and other signposts that had previously been discussed. The Clerk and Chair will liaise and make progress with the design etc.

106/26 – Allotments

A parishioner had approached the Chair asking whether the Council could provide allotments for residents. The Council discussed the issue but since neither Rhead's Meadows nor Blackfirs Wood are suitable, the Council would need to acquire some land. This could be done either by finding a generous donor or buying some land if it became available, but the Council felt the likelihood of the former was almost non-existent and the cost of purchasing any land would be prohibitive. It also noted that even if provision could be found this would entail additional recurring costs for management, insurance etc. In conclusion, although the Council is very sympathetic to the provision of allotments, considering the feasibility the council **resolved** that the provision of allotments was not reasonably practicable.

107/26 – s106 monies

The Council asked the Clerk to continue discussions about possible uses for any available monies with Cheshire East Council.

108/26 – Highways

No further discussions.

109/26 – Housing Developments

Cllrs noted the incursion into the buffer zone and fencing off of a section of Public Open Space by Blackfirs Wood and asked the Clerk to continue discussions with Cheshire East Council. The Clerk will contact Bellway homes about the installation of the cycle track to the North of Rhead's Meadows and style of gates etc.

110/26 - Chairman and Members' Reports

The Chair noted that the pallets dumped on Rhead's Meadows will be removed shortly. The Clerk will contact the donors of benches in Rhead's Meadows to see if they still want commemorative plaques on them.

111/26 - Clerk's Report

The Clerk noted that the Cheshire Wildlife Trust had offered to harvest and pay the Council for the wildflower seeds at the north Meadow. Cheshire East are consulting about the renewal of Public Space Protection Orders in the borough but the Council decided not to make any further representations. Instead, the Council still believes that Cheshire East Council should seriously consider reductions to the speed limit on Chelford Road and Blackfirs Lane.

The meeting ended at 2035 hrs.

X

Chairman

Annex 1 - Accounts

Bank Balance as of 01 August 2026: **£90,698.31**

Of which: Current Account: **£20,165.81** PSDF: **£70,532.50**

Received since 1 July 2026:

- £nil

Payments to approve:

- £162.00 – Community Heartbeat Trust for defib support

Payments to note since 1 July 2025:

- £69.12 – TCS Payroll Management
- £49.98 – NEST, Clerk Pension
- £60.56 – Clerk Q1 2026 Mileage Claim Payment
- £41.76 – Clerk Q4 2025 Mileage Claim Payment
- £43.92 – Clerk Q3 2025 Mileage Claim Payment
- £20,000 – Transfer to PSDF Account
- £52.00 – ICO annual fee
- £568.64 – Clerk July Salary