

Somerford Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 21 January 2026

Holmes Chapel Community Centre, 7.00pm

Present

- Councillor Geoff Bell (Chairman)
- Councillor Paul Crompton
- Councillor Bill Chorlton
- Councillor Jake Saxton
- Councillor Simon Hughes
- Mr Carlton Evans – Clerk

Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Hughes – land, discussed under item 009/26 below
- Chairman Bell – land, discussed under item 009/26 below

Part 1 Public Forum

One member of the public was present, Congleton Town Councillor Robert Douglas. Cllr Douglas updated the meeting about the Cheshire East Call for Sites, uncollected/lost s106 monies which he is still chasing up with CE Council, and the imminent loss of the majority of Cheshire's PCSOs.

001/26 – Apologies

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

- Cllr T Massey – personal reasons
- Cllr J Hardman – personal reasons

002/26 – Minutes

The Council **resolved** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 19 November 2026 be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

003/26 – Cheshire East Ward Councillor report

No report in Councillor Wray's absence.

004/26 – Accounts

See Annex 1

005/26 – Budget 26/27 and Precept Request

The Council discussed the budget for FY 26/27 and the projects that the Council would like to undertake. They noted that the burden of responsibility for things like mowing verges, hedge cutting etc. was increasingly being shifted from Cheshire East Council down to parish councils.

Because of a continuing increase in population, the Council would be able to increase the precept for FY 26/27 while at the same time seeing a small reduction in the cost per household. The Council therefore **resolved** to request a precept of £55,000. This would mean a Band D equivalent of £50.05 per household, down from £51.16 in 25/26.

006/26 - Planning Applications

None received.

007/26 – Public Sector Deposit Fund

The Council noted that a CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund account had been opened and in light of the budget discussion **resolved** to make an initial deposit of £50,000.

008/26 – Policies to review

The Council postponed discussion of the Council's Risk Assessment until its May meeting, and **resolved** to make no changes to the following policies:

- Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Complaints Policy

The Council further **resolved** to adopt a new Social Media policy and noted that they should be using social media much more to communicate with parishioners, especially as the demographics of the parish are changing.

009/26 – Cheshire East Local Plan and 'Call for Sites'

The Council noted the proposals Cheshire East Council had made for two sites in Somerford, plus those on the Somerford border in Astbury.

010/26 – Peak Cluster proposals for a Carbon Capture and Storage pipeline

The Council noted the proposals which would mean a pipeline being installed to the north of the Parish. The Planning Inspectorate had invited the Council to comment but the Council **resolved** to make no representations.

011/26 - Rhead's Meadows

The Council postponed discussions til its next meeting.

012/26 - Blackfirs Wood

The Council postponed discussions til its next meeting.

013/26 – Police and Crime Commissioner survey

The Council **resolved** to make no collective representations about proposals to reduce the number of Police Constable Support Officers.

014/26 – Highways

Councillors discussed the speed indicator device on the Holmes Chapel Road and **resolved** not to purchase a replacement sim card (to collect traffic data remotely) as traffic volumes and speed did not seem to be problematic.

015/26 – Housing Developments

No matters raised.


016/26 - Chairman and Members' Reports

The Chairman noted that the fencing at the bridge by Goodwin's Pool had been replaced and an invoice should arrive shortly.

017/26 - Clerk's Report

Nothing further to report.

The meeting ended at 2100 hrs.

 Chairman

Annex 1 - Accounts

Finances **as of 01 January 2026:**

Account **Balance: £72,357.49**

Receipts since 01 December 2025:

- £nil

Payments noted since 01 December 2025

- £1,488.24 – John Harding annual verge cutting
- £49.98 – NEST, Clerk Pension
- £363.16 – Congleton TC, dog bin emptying

Payments to approve: None