



**Hulme Walfield
and Somerford Booths**
Parish Council

Final Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 23rd January 2025 7.30pm at Eaton Community Hall

Part 1: Public and press present

Present:

- Councillor Mark Wakerly (Vice Chair)
- Councillor Vic Brown
- Councillor Adam Bamping
- Councillor Margaret Gartside
- Councillor John Spence
- Elizabeth Worrall – Clerk
- Councillor John Wray – Cheshire East Council Ward Councillor

Absent:

- Councillor Mark Hill (Chair)

Public Forum

One member of the public was in attendance.

A query was asked regarding street lighting on the new Redrow Estate which are bright. Cllr. Brown confirmed that Cllr. Hill was aware of this and was liaising with the site and would provide an update on his return from annual leave.

A second query was raised regarding mud on the road, which appears to be coming from the Castle Green site onto Barn Road and the Link Road. This is despite occasional sweeping. The Clerk will contact the site to make them aware of the issue.

A question was asked regarding the changes to the agenda and why Councillor reports have been moved to later in the meeting. The Clerk and Vice-Chair confirmed this was to allow the Council to complete all their compliance matters first; discussions were had regarding the need for Councillors to submit reports in advance of the meeting, to allow members of the public to review these in advance and ask pertinent and appropriate questions.

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 23rd January 2025

Signed

Dated

01/25 To receive and approve apologies for absence

Cllr. Hill had sent his apologies in advance of the meeting.

02/25 To receive any declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

03/25 To receive and resolve to approve [the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 21st November 2024](#)

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes.

04/25 To receive a report from Cheshire East Ward Councillor if present.

Cllr. Wray confirmed that Cheshire East are still struggling financially and are planning to increase the rates to 9.9% across the county. Many departments are facing cost-cutting measures, and the Council are considering sourcing of grant funding for various projects. A discussion was had regarding the impact that this is having on the Council.

Cllr. Wakerly asked if there were any upcoming developments for Parish Councils. Cllr. Wray confirmed that Parish Councils will need to pay a small fee towards election costs from 2027. Cllr. Spence asked how the decision to increase the budget was made. Cllr. Wray confirmed that this decision was not final and still needed to be voted on by the full Council. Cllr. Spence also asked why Cheshire East was not considering declaring Section 114 and were instead considering a loan from central government. Cllr. Wray believes that this is due to various factors, but mainly that the Council wish to do more than the statutory minimum in support of their residents and entering Section 114 will restrict their ability to do this.

Cllr. Brown asked Cllr. Wray to advise the Clerk of the next full Council meeting, when this matter will be decided. Cllr. Wray confirmed that he would do this.

There are still teething issues with the Planning Portal, and this is still being worked on. Cllr. Wakerly noted an improvement since the last time he accessed this.

05/25 To consider training needs for Councillors in 2025

06/25 To consider training needs for the Clerk in 2025

Cllr. Wakerly discussed these items together and encouraged Councillors to consider their own training needs throughout this year, especially focussing on financials, which are likely to become more important as the Council continues to grow.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Clerk's participation in the PIALC course.

07/25 To consider the following planning applications and any others since the publication of the agenda:

Several planning applications had been made available since the publication of the agenda and had been circulated to Councillors. Councillor Brown will review the planning applications amendments proposed for the Redrow Estate and Barn Road and will circulate any comments to Councillors for review and then the Clerk for submission.

24/5057/HOUS Householder – It was **RESOLVED** to submit a “no objections” comment to this application.

Cllr. Brown and Cllr. Wray are liaising on a planning adjacent matter relating to brown road signs and boundary signs within the Parish. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

08/25 If applicable, to ratify and approve any comments made on planning applications between meetings.

None as of 21st December 2024

09/25 To [review the Council's budget](#) (through to 31st December 2024) and consider any amendments to be made

The budget report was noted by Councillors. It was **RESOLVED** to make no amendments to the budget.

10/25 To receive and resolve to approve the accounts for payment:

BALANCE OF ACCOUNT = £35,199.49

PAYMENTS MADE

Clerk's Salary (November)	£351.72
Clerk's Homeworking Allowance (November)	£26.00
Clerk's Salary (December)	£419.41
Clerk's Homeworking Allowance (December)	£26.00
Eaton Community Hall	£90.00
Clerk Mileage (Apr – Dec)	£95.40
Trees for Congleton Donation	£50.00

PAYMENTS RECEIVED

VAT Refund	£358.68
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PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED

Clerk's Salary (January)	£419.41
Clerk's Homeworking Allowance (January)	£26.00
PIALC Course (Clerk)	£144.00
HMRC	£280.60
Zurich Insurance	£291.92
TCS Management	£61.92
John Spence Expenses	£241.27

[Bank Reconciliation \(end December\)](#) to be reviewed and signed by the Chair

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the above payments and to sign the Bank Reconciliation.

11/25 To receive updates on sourcing a speaker for the Annual Parish Meeting (All)

Through discussions, Councillors decided to not invite the MP. Councillors will think about this matter ahead of February's meeting and will bring suggestions. Cllr. Spence will approach the Police and Crime Commissioner.

12/25 To receive an update on the newsletter (All)

Councillors were asked to consider and write suitable articles to be submitted to the Clerk. The Clerk has written a piece on the Council's plans for social media and the newsletter ahead.

13/25 To receive and note the contents of the Chair's Report

Cllr. Hill had not shared a report in advance of the meeting.

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14/25 To receive and note reports from the members:

Cllr. Bamping – Cllr. Bamping shared that the defibrillator was in the process of being installed and an update would be provided at the next meeting.

Cllr. Brown – nothing to report.

Cllr. Gartside – nothing to report.

Cllr. Spence – Cllr. Spence had circulated a report to Councillors on the meeting attended in December with the Police and Crime Commissioner.

There is a proposal for a merger between Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Warrington. The concerns raised would be that more focus would be placed on the urban areas such as Warrington, Chester, Macclesfield etc. but that more powers may be devolved to the county. This is still in early stages of discussion.

The first responder training is still to be finalised – Friends of Giantswood Lane are still to confirm numbers, to allow for the Parish Council to confirm whether one or two sessions are needed.

The speed-watch kit has now been purchased. Cllr. Bamping offered to store the Hi-Viz jackets and tabards if required. Cllr. Gartside offered to support as a volunteer. This will be pursued further as the weather improves.

Cllr. Spence shared concerns raised by Cllr. Robert Douglas regarding money that may not have been claimed by Cheshire East through the planning process. Cllr. Wray confirmed that the planning process is clearly structured and that he, personally, cannot see how that would be missed. Cllr. Wray will continue the conversation with Cllr. Douglas to aim to resolve this.

Cllr. Wakerly – residents of living near Somerford Hall and Newsbank have asked for dog waste bins to be installed in the area. Cllr. Wakerly will liaise with residents (possibly via questionnaire) to better gauge interest. Cllr. Brown commented that the Parish Council may need to offer a nominal fee to Congleton Town Council, to arrange for them to add this bin to the collection route.

Residents in Somerford Booths have also asked about a defibrillator and this will be reviewed and discussed again at a future meeting. The main issue will be finding a suitable site for the defibrillator will be installed. Councillors discussed possible funding streams for this and whether a third defibrillator within the Parish was needed.

15/25 Any other correspondence

Councillors discussed the Christmas tree installed on Alderley Gate and how this had been well received by the community.

The Clerk noted correspondence was received from Cllr. Douglas making them aware that the issues with the verge on Barn Road have been noted, and that Cheshire East Highways are aware.

The Clerk had received communications from the election team offering a copy of the electoral register. It was **RESOLVED** to request the electoral register.

The Clerk will speak to the Parish Hall and Eaton PC regarding the temperature of the hall.

16/25 To note the date of the next parish council meeting to be held on 20th February 2025

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