

**Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Somercotes Parish Council at
6.30pm on Friday 12th September 2025 in the Lounge of the Parish
Hall, Somercotes**

Present: Cllr J Parker

Cllr E Sherman

Cllr P Slater

Cllr C Addison-Lees

Cllr P Wardle

Cllr Barron

Cllr Judson (part)

Cllr S Bent (DCC)

Catherine Hedley (Acting Clerk)

Members of the public were in attendance

PART 1

35/25: Apologies for Absence - None received

36/25: Social Media: The clerk advised that she would be recording the meeting to assist with accurate minute taking. A member of the public advised that she would also be filming the meeting.

37/25: Declarations of Interest:

Cllr Sherman – Item 52/25 – Planning

38/25 Variation in Order of Business - None

39/25: Cooption – Kellie Judson outlined her reason for wishing to become a councillor and Council **RESOLVED** to coopt Kellie Judson onto the council.

Cllr Judson joined the meeting at this point.

Cllr Sherman stated that the cooption procedure would be reviewed by the HR sub-committee in light of future reorganisation of councils in Derbyshire and its subsequent effects on councillor selection .

40/25: Chairs Statement – Cllr Parker outlined recent events which had culminated in the resignation of 6 councillors and two members of staff. He explained that the council had faced considerable challenges as a result with a number of issues being identified but that progress was being made to rectify those issues. Cllr Parker stressed the importance of ensuring current and future councillors were properly equipped for the challenges and opportunities ahead.

41/25: Public Participation

Paul Smith raised a number of issues. some of which he had raised previously:

- He asked Cllr Brent to look into the condition of the road on Sleetmoor Lane and the neglected condition of the mini islands in the parish, many of which required painting and repair.
- The interpretation boards introduced by the parish council required attention.
- Pennytown Ponds had experienced a landslide over two years ago. Fishing pegs had collapsed and two thirds were unusable. He pointed out that the site development had been externally funded and had cost the borough council very little. He enquired why it wasn't included in any capital programme and ask asked the parish council to raise the matter with AVBC.
- He advised that it was imperative that future councillors abide by the Nolan Principles and avoid publicly displayed conflict.
- He confirmed that Somerlea centre was an ofsted approved nursery and not available to members of the public.

Cllr Sherman stated that she was liaising with an officer at AVBC about Pennytown Ponds and they were visiting the site on Wednesday. Paul Smith replied that examples of fishing pegs at a cost of £125 had been shown to the AVBC officer and he had been advised that he was working on an estimate of £1000 per peg.

Cllr Sherman advised that she would be speaking to the officer to see if this could be progressed. 30+ pegs needed repair/replacing.

42/25: Items to be taken in seclusion: Cllr Parker read out the announcement below:

“That in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, such that it would be prejudicial to the Public Interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the meeting resolves that the public and press will be temporarily excluded – Items 54/25. 55/25, 56/25, 57/25, only.

43/25 The minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 15th August 2025 were **APPROVED**.

44/25: To consider and agree the extent of councils support to the community in its attempts to save the Premier Electric Theatre Council RESOLVED to:

- Support a feasibility study into the viability of resurrecting the facility.
- Engage the services of an employee of CVS to progress the above.
- To allocate £5000 to support the above if necessary.

45/25: Council ratified the decision made at the Extraordinary meeting on 13 June 2025 and **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £2000 to the People of Somercotes Together Group (P.O.S.T)

46/25: Review of DALC Subscription:

Council **RESOLVED**:

(a) that the clerk request a refund of the annual subscription fee paid to DALC in view of an identified conflict of interest issue.

(b) That a letter be sent to DALC expressing the councils concern about advice issued to individual councillors and its unauthorised issuing of advice to another authority using this authorities subscription

(c) That the clerk join SLCC and that the council fund this.

47/25: To identify whether Council wished to explore the feasibility of hosting public events in the parish rooms.

Council **RESOLVED** to explore this option and consider applications on a case by case basis. subject to parish hall lease conditions. It was also agreed that the formation of an events sub committee to consider and devise future events would be formed following the election or cooption of additional councillors.

48/25: To consider organising a competition for halloween and supporting the community with safety advice for children when engaging in trick or treating events.

Council **RESOLVED** that Cllr Slater look into arrangements for this together with other interested parties.

49/25: Review of gov.uk domain/email provision. Council **RESOLVED** to remove the two-tier authentication system for emails and monitor those effects.

50/25: Update by Clerk on S106 provision for recent housing developments. Cllr Sherman gave a comprehensive account of the steps being taken in identifying S106 monies spent in the parish and agreed to report back with a further update at a future meeting.

51/25: To consider whether council wishes to introduce parish councillor surgeries.

Council **RESOLVED** to hold parish councillor surgeries on a monthly basis. To be attended by two councillors on a rota system.

52/25: Planning:

AVA/2025/0470: Rainbridge Timber Ltd Treatment And Storage Unit 15 Pye Bridge Industrial Estate Somercotes Alfreton Derbyshire DE55 4NX. Construction of new steel portal framed Automated Pallet Production Building. Mr Jonathan Poyntont, Pontrilas Packaging Ltd Pontrilas Sawmills Pontrilas Hereford Herefordshire HR2 0DJ UK

Date registered:

11-August-2025

Status: Pending

Council had **NO COMMENTS** on the above.

53/25: Correspondence:

DALC July, August, September Newsletters – Council NOTED the correspondence.

PART 2 – TO BE TAKEN IN SECLUSION

54/25: Clerk and Admin interim arrangements & support Council **APPROVED** the interim support arrangements as advised by the Clerk and the HR Chair. These included:

- The employment of an interim clerk for 15 hours per week
- The employment of an RFO for an interim period on a flexible hours contract
- The employment of a Caretaker/Booking Administrator on a flexible hours contract

55/25: HR Report – Cllr Sherman

Cllr Sherman outlined the circumstances which had resulted in the arrangements described at Item 54/25 and updated council on the disciplinary action which had been taken place against a member of staff and the external HRs subsequent report and recommendation. Council **RESOLVED** to accept and implement the external HRs recommendation in full.

56/25: Recruitment – To receive the clerks report on current staffing arrangements and agree proposals for future structure and recruitment.

A discussion took place around reviewing support staff structure and access arrangements for the parish hall.

Council **RESOLVED:**

- a. To delegate the recruitment process to the HR Sub-Committee
- b. To consult with the PCC to implement an automated access system

57/25: Allotments: To examine the current allotment lease agreements and consider whether alternative or additional options are necessary.

Council **AGREED** to review the current allotment agreements and instructed the Clerk to present new agreements for councils consideration at the next meeting in November 2025.

Date of next meeting: 6.30pm Friday 21 November 2025 in the Lounge, Parish Rooms, Somercotes. Items to be with the clerk please not less than 7 days before.

The meeting ended at 8.30pm

DRAFT