

# Cheshire East

## Personal Details:

**Name:** Mr Carlton Evans

**Email:** [REDACTED]

**Postcode:** [REDACTED]

**Organisation Name:** Somerford Parish Council (Representative of parish/town council)

## Comment text:

**Related subject:** Somerford

### SUMMARY

Somerford Parish Council opposes the Cheshire East Borough Council proposal and LGBCE draft recommendations to link the parish with the unrelated and distant parishes of Arclid, Bradwall, Moston, Warmingham (and parts of Brereton) in a new Brereton Ward.

Somerford Parish Council proposes a link with the locally related Newbold Astbury and Moreton cum Alcumlow, Hulme Walfield and Somerford Booths, and Eaton.

### DETAIL

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the LGBCE draft recommendations for new warding arrangements in Cheshire East, insofar as they affect Somerford parish. We previously commented on the proposals from Cheshire East Council itself, and these previous comments are repeated below for ease of reference.

It seems that the LGBCE has misunderstood our submission and I apologise that it wasn't sufficiently clear.

The LGBC response to our proposals is as follows:

'... Somerford Parish Council opposed the Council's proposal and argued the parish shares no interests or identity with the other parishes in the ward aside from small parts of Brereton parish. They argued that parish largely relies on the town of Congleton for amenities and services.

However, including Somerford parish within Congleton West ward results in a 18% electoral variance. We consider this variance too high to accept as part of our draft recommendations.'

However, we did not propose that Somerford parish should be included within Congleton West ward. Moreover the LGBCE report also states: 'However, we acknowledge the scale of this ward geographically and the many communities it encompasses. We would particularly welcome local opinion on whether this proposal is reflective of community identities during the current consultation.'

We would therefore like to submit this 'local opinion and whether this [Cheshire East and LGBCE] proposal is reflective of community identities.'

As already stated, we did not propose that Somerford parish should be included within Congleton West ward. The point we made was that we share more community identity with the parishes of Newbold Astbury and Moreton cum Alcumlow, Hulme Walfield and Somerford Booths, and Eaton which are all contiguous with Congleton, which provides many of our services. Our parishioners also rely on the services and amenities provided by Smallwood parish (school, pubs, church etc.) and we also have a shared identity with parts of Brereton parish. Indeed one of our parish noticeboards which is just yards from the boundary between our two parishes still retains the legend 'Brereton and Somerford Parish Councils' - photo attached.

We would therefore respectfully ask the LGBCE to reconsider its position on these arrangements. As we said in our previous submission, the electoral statistics were not shared with Somerford Parish Council so we are not able to give any view on what combination of these parishes (not Congleton West) would satisfy any electoral variance imperative. But once again, we would argue that the community identity you are seeking to achieve, and which we support, is more important to us than electoral variance.

## PREVIOUS SOMERFORD PARISH COUNCIL RESPONSE

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this review exercise. Somerford Parish Council is aware that Cheshire East Council has submitted its views to the LGBCE and the Parish Council would like to make the following comments and suggestions on that submission insofar as they affect the parish.

### Introduction

Somerford Parish Council has considered the Cheshire East Council Report and submission to the LGBCE in its entirety and understands and agrees with principles set out in the Introduction to that report.

However, the conclusion which is drawn in paragraph 4.5 for the Cheshire East Council's proposed ward of Brereton is not agreed. Whilst it may well satisfy a statistical desire to produce a numerically balanced result, it does not address the 'interests and identities' of the residents of the respective parishes which would make up the newly constituted Brereton Ward.

This response will address both the factors which are considered to make the proposed ward illogical and unbalanced insofar as 'interests and identities' are concerned, and those which would achieve a balance of those factors.

### Report Proposal

The Cheshire East Council report proposes that the parishes of Arclid, Bradwall, Moston, Somerford, Warmingham and (most of) Brereton should make up the new Brereton Ward.

With the exception of small parts of Brereton parish, Somerford has no shared interests or identity with any of these parishes. Each of them has, to a greater or lesser degree, a shared affinity to the town of Sandbach to the west whilst Somerford has an affinity with the town of Congleton to the east. Arclid, Bradwall, Moston and a small part of Brereton are contiguous with Sandbach, while Warmingham is contiguous with Crewe, further west. On the other hand, Somerford, Newbold Astbury and Moreton cum Alcumlow, Hulme Walfield and Somerford Booths, and Eaton are all contiguous with Congleton.

The principal roads through the parish of Somerford are the A50 which passes through the length of Somerford as it links Holmes Chapel and Congleton, whilst the new road through Somerford, the Congleton Link Road, joins the A534, Macclesfield to Congleton road, which is used by the majority to access the M6 Motorway (South) rather than Sandbach town beyond.

Somerford Parish Council proposal

The Parish Council does not hold a view which would satisfy any statistical imperative to equalise the electors per councillor ratio since the individual electoral statistics for each parish are not disclosed in the Cheshire East report, nor have they been able to be ascertained. We therefore address the issue solely from the report's claimed objective, insofar as it reflects the interests of the electorate of Somerford, namely "reflecting the interests and identities of local communities...which, as far as possible, maintain local ties and where boundaries are easily identifiable. ”.

Somerford has very little in the way of community/social infrastructure and therefore largely relies on the town of Congleton and neighbouring parishes for such provision. Whilst Congleton provides the majority of publicly and privately provided facilities such as schools, health care provision, shopping, garages etc. much is also accessed in neighbouring small parishes such as:

- Newbold Astbury and Moreton cum Alcumlow – primary school, village hall, principal church (Astbury St. Mary), pubs and restaurants, garage services and shopping.
- Smallwood – primary school, village hall, pubs and restaurants, chapel to Astbury St. Mary principal church becoming the district church for Smallwood in 1846.

A major feature in the life of a Somerford resident has been the opening of the Congleton Link Road. Whilst this road may have brought benefits to some, although perhaps not to the extent promised, it has also brought unwelcome changes to Somerford and these changes have forged a new relationship with the parishes of Hulme Walfield and Somerford Booths and Eaton, through which the CLR travels, such that a joint working party with those parishes to address these issues has been formed.

We therefore submit that the Cheshire East proposal should be revisited insofar as Somerford is concerned and link it instead with one or more of the parishes with which Somerford truly shares interests and identities, rather than merely looking for a mathematical solution.

## Attached Documents:

- brereton-and-somerford-noticeboard.jpg



# BRERETON AND SOMERFORD PARISH COUNCILS

<b>SOMERFORD PARISH COUNCIL</b> <b>NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION</b> <b>OF ANNUAL FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS &amp;</b> <b>ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN</b> <b>ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024</b> <b>Local Audit and Accountability Act 2013 Sections 46 and 47</b> <b>The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/1002)</b> <b>NOTICE</b>	
<b>1. How and when the accounts will be made available</b> The accounts will be made available in the following manner: • Printed copies of the accounts will be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Monday 1 July 2024. • The accounts will also be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Tuesday 2 July 2024. • The accounts will also be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Wednesday 3 July 2024. • The accounts will also be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Thursday 4 July 2024. • The accounts will also be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Friday 5 July 2024. • The accounts will also be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Saturday 6 July 2024. • The accounts will also be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Sunday 7 July 2024.	<b>2. How and when the accounts will be made available</b> The accounts will be made available in the following manner: • Printed copies of the accounts will be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Monday 1 July 2024. • The accounts will also be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Tuesday 2 July 2024. • The accounts will also be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Wednesday 3 July 2024. • The accounts will also be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Thursday 4 July 2024. • The accounts will also be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Friday 5 July 2024. • The accounts will also be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Saturday 6 July 2024. • The accounts will also be available for inspection at the Council Offices, Brereton and Somerford, from 10.00am to 4.00pm on Sunday 7 July 2024.

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**LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTS - A SUMMARY OF YOUR RIGHTS**

These rights are for the authority's benefit to ensure that the accounts are accurate, complete and reliable, and that the accounts are made available to the public in a timely manner.

**1. The right to inspect the accounts**  
You have the right to inspect the accounts at any time during the period of public availability. This right is subject to the following conditions:  
• You must be a member of the public.  
• You must be acting in good faith.  
• You must not be acting for the purpose of making a profit.

**2. The right to obtain a copy of the accounts**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the accounts at a reasonable price. This right is subject to the following conditions:  
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**3. The right to make representations**  
You have the right to make representations to the authority about the accounts. This right is subject to the following conditions:  
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**Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24**

**Executive Summary**

The Internal Audit function has carried out a comprehensive review of the authority's internal controls and financial systems during the year ended 31 March 2024. The purpose of this review was to ensure that the authority's financial statements are accurate, complete and reliable, and that the authority's internal controls are effective in preventing and detecting errors and fraud.

The review identified a number of areas for improvement, including the need to strengthen the authority's internal controls over the procurement process, and the need to improve the authority's financial reporting systems. The Internal Audit function has recommended a number of actions to address these areas, and the authority's management has agreed to implement these actions.

The Internal Audit function will continue to monitor the progress of these actions, and will report back to the authority's management and the Local Audit and Accountability Committee on the results of its monitoring.

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