

**SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL FINANCE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 12<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2022 AT ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH, OLD SEALAND ROAD, SEALAND, DEESIDE. CH5 2LQ**

**PRESENT: Councillors:** David Wisinger (Chair), Gwyneth Bullock, Ashley Griffiths (Vice-Chair), Barbara Hinds, Chris Jones (County Councillor), Norman Jones, Alex Lewis, Lionel Prouve, Mary Southall, Brian Ward and Shelley Webber.

Peter Richmond - Clerk and Financial Officer.

**22/164      APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors: Jean Fairbrother and Linda Thomas

RESOLVED – that the apologies be received and accepted

**22/165      CODE OF CONDUCT DECLARATION**

RESOLVED – that it be noted that no declarations were made to Council at the beginning of the meeting in respect of the agenda.

**22/166      MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC**

No issues were raised before the meeting and the Clerk had not received a request to hold a hybrid meeting.

**22/167      MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 21<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2022**

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

**22/168      NOTICE OF VACANCY – CASUAL VACANCY – MRS. SHELLEY WEBBER**

The notice was issued with a date of 1st November 2022 with a submission date to the Clerk of 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022. One application had been received within the required time period – Mrs. Shelley Webber who meets the requirement for co-option.

The required Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Register of Interest Form were duly completed by the newly elected Councillor and signed by the Clerk.

REOLVED – that Councillor Mrs. Shelley Webber be welcomed back onto the Council.

**22/169      CHAIR'S REPORT AND ACTIONS SINCE 21<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER 2022**

There was no report.

**22/170**

**CHAIR'S FUND 2022/23**

The Clerk reminded Council that the agreed spend for the Chair's Fund for the 2022/23 financial year is £800.00. Payments being made under expenditure powers - Ancillary Power Local Government Act 1972 (S1). Council noted at the October 2022 that the Chair's Fund will fund the cost of refreshments at both the Remembrance Sunday Service and the Christmas Celebration event at St. Barts.

The Chair proposed a payment of £100 to Waverton Handbells who will be attending the Christmas Celebration event at St. Barts on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022

RESOLVED – that payment of £300 from the Chair's Fund to St. Bartholomew's Church be approved together with a payment of £100 to Waverton Handbells.

**22/171**

**POLICE ISSUES**

**a) Community Speed Watch**

Councillor Ashley Griffiths advised that additional speed checks will be arranged.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**b) Scrambling Bikes – Ferry Lane – on Sundays**

PCSO Zoe Harrison 4420 previously advised that she will contact PC Scott Noble who is dealing with this issue.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**22/172**

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ISSUES.**

**a) Underpass - Foxes Lane**

RESOLVED – that Wayne Jones be advised that the drains need to be cleared of leaves as water is standing in the underpass.

**b) Ferry Lane Footbridge – Noise Nuisance**

Ian Bushell was asked to provide a progress report following the November 2022 meeting. A reply is still awaited

RESOLVED – that a reminder be sent to Ian Bushell copying in Kate Wilby.

**c) Dandy's Top Soil – Sealand Road**

Glyn.D. Jones was asked to provide a progress report following the November 2022 meeting of Council.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**d) Sealand Ditches**

Following the October 2022 meeting Andy Roberts was requested to provide an update on the drainage issues in Sealand together with a report on the findings of the annual drainage inspection including the Garden City Drain that runs around the perimeter of Garden City. The Clerk and Chair have had separate conversations with Neil Parry who advised that he would submit an update to Council.

RESOLVED – that a reminder be sent to Andy Roberts and Neil Parry.

**e) 10 West Green - Sealand Manor**

The County Councillor advised that the issues at this address are being attended to by the appropriate Housing Officer. There will a site visit in January 2023.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**f) Concern about condition of side access – Spar Shop, Welsh Road,**

The Chair referenced 062135 - Land to the side / rear of the Spar Shop, Garden City and advised on the planning appeal and that it has been ruled that the applicant must carry out repairs to the side access as required for vehicular access. Glyn.D. Jones has been asked to provide a progress report following the November 2022 meeting of Council.

RESOLVED – that the Chair should draft a communication to go to Claire Morter outlining Council's concerns about the issues at this site.

**g) Trees – Sealand Primary School – Farm Road**

The Acting Headteacher has advised that most of the work has been completed to reduce the height and prune the school trees that run alongside Farm Road. It was reported that the works have still to be completed. The Acting Headteacher was asked to provide a progress report following the November 2022 meeting of Council.

RESOLVED – that the Acting Headteacher be asked to provide a progress report

**h) Damaged fencing – Cycle Bridge – A494**

Wayne Jones has previously advised that this has been referred to NEWTRA and Sustrans.

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

**j) Dog Bins – Airfield Development**

Wayne Jones has previously advised that they will be installed as soon as the highways have been adopted. One bin has been installed.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**i) Need for Traffic Calming Measures - West Green / Manor Road at Sealand Manor and Farm Road – Garden City**

On 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022 Ian Bushell and Anthony Stanford were advised by Council that West Green is part of a through route from Sealand Road along Manor Road and Foxes Lane to Garden City. The speed traffic goes along West Green / Manor Road is getting ever more dangerous for residents - the speeding traffic even includes agricultural tractors. Council requests the County Council to provide traffic calming measures along West Green. Council has requested the provision of the same for Farm Road and Sealand Avenue.

Ian Bushell and Anthony Stanford were asked to provide a progress report following the November 2022 meeting of Council.

RESOLVED – that a reminder be sent to Ian Bushell and Anthony Stanford

**j) Dutton Fields Estate**

Ian Bushell Streetscene Maintenance Manager advised on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 that with regards to the adoption of Dutton Fields. The estate was placed onto a 12 month monitor prior to being adopted. Wayne Jones's inspection on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 highlighted no further issues which will be reported back to the Development Control Section. DC will then instruct the FCC Legal team to formally adopt the carriageways and footways.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**k) Play Street – St Bartholomew's Court**

Andy Farrow was asked whether Play Streets can be provided in Flintshire following the November 2022 meeting of Council.

RESOLVED – that a reminder be sent to Andy Farrow.

**l) Farm Road – Footway Lighting**

The County Councillor has been advised by Bob Nicholson – Pochins that lights along the footway are not being installed by Pochins. As this is a private road, there is not a lot we can do. Wayne Jones has been asked to clear the leaves

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**m) Sealand Road – A548 – Extend Street Lighting**

On 27<sup>th</sup> November 2022 there was a tragic fatal accident on Sealand Road in the early hours of the morning. This happened near the Texaco garage where there are no highway lights. County Councillor Chris Jones has raised her concerns about the lack of lighting at this location. The Community Council has in the past requested highway lights along the entire length of Sealand

Road. The County Councillor and Council have requested a full reassessment to provide street lighting. Darell Jones has advised that he is waiting to receive details of the accident.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**n) Pot Holes – Foxes Lane and Manor Road**

RESOLVED – that the issue be referred to Wayne Jones

**o) Brookside – Need to provide a bund fronting the Sealand Drain**

RESOLVED – that the issue be referred to Claire Mortar.

**22/173 COUNCIL'S STREET LIGHTING**

All of the Council's 50 street lights are working.

At the October 2022 meeting it was resolved that Financial Regulations should be suspended with regards to securing three written estimates that should not apply with regards to the Council's required street lighting maintenance and adoption contract. The new contract is still awaited.

For the 2023/24 financial year 9 lights identified by Dylan Williams for upgrading and replacement are concrete columns 129,131,135,136 and 166 at Cedar Avenue. And steel columns 157,160, 161 and 162 at Riverside Park. Cost per column to have replaced and adopted is £2,150. Total cost £19,350.00.

Darell Jones Flintshire County Council -Operational North & Street Lighting Manager has advised that we have been very lucky and shielded this year for the street lighting energy against others as Council locked the price in until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, but here's the unfortunate and expected bad news Darell is predicting a cost raise of up to 44 pence per kwhr. This is not confirmed and there might be a slight variance in this, but Darell wants to give Council every opportunity to protect itself from this jump and hopefully by giving at least 4 months' notice this will help. What does this mean in real terms, it is an approximate increase of around 132% on the current rate, this is not a confirmed costing but a realistic and hopefully close prediction. Fortunately for Council it has over the years reduced its lighting stock from 165 lights to 50 lights with a further reduction in 2023/24. Estimated energy cost for 2023/24 for 50 lights is £3,000.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**22/174 SECTION 137 – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 – PAYMENT OF GRANT**

The appropriate sum for the S137 Expenditure Limit for the purpose of Section 137 (4) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972 for the calculation of the Free Resource Base is based on the local population taken from the current electoral role. The Welsh Government advised that the Section 137 Expenditure Limit for 2022/23 is £8.82 per elector. The electoral role from Flintshire County Council at December 2021 indicated a total of 2393. The amount per elector of £8.82 produces a total of £21,106.26. The expenditure on free school milk comes under well-being (Local Government Act 2000, Sections (1-5) – this power is again restricted again by the S137 limit £8.82 for 2022/23.

Allocated spend in 2022/23 is Section 137 grants of £3,000 and for school milk £1,500. Spend so far this year £1400.00 on grants.

A grant request has been received from Eye2Eye – up to date copies of bank statements have been provided.

RESOLVED – that in accordance with Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1971 that the Council should award a grant of £150.00 to Eye2Eye which is in the best interests of the area and its inhabitants.

## **22/175      PROVISION OF NOTICE BOARDS – PRAXIS AND POCHINS**

Both Pochins and Praxis have reacted positively regarding the Council's request. Details of notice boards including costs have been provided to both parties for their consideration.

RESOLVED: - that the report be noted.

## **22/176      PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

PA Number	Application details	Location
000710/22	Single story, side, and rear extension	10, Deeside Crescent, Sealand, Chester, CH1 6BY
000711/22	The installation and implementation of roof mounted solar PV array to existing buildings.	Iceland Frozen Foods PLC, Second Avenue, Sealand, Deeside, CH5 2NW

RESOLVED – that no objections be raised in respect of the reported planning applications

## **22/177      ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

RESOLVED: - that-

- i) the under mentioned accounts be approved for payment.
- ii) it be noted that the Lloyds Bank charges for the most recent period is £14.65 re £7.00 per month with an additional charge of 9 cheques x £0.85 = £7.65 = Total £14.65. and the month previous the total charge was £7.00

Cheque No	Payable to	Details	Amount	VAT	Vat Code	Expenditure Powers
003536	Jolora Ltd	Web site maintenance and support	£384.00	£64.00	29445 6859	Local Govt Act 1972 (S142)
003537	Jolora Ltd	Standard Hosting Package and Domain name renewal	£228.00	£38.00	29445 6859	Local Govt Act 1972 (S142)
003538	SLCC	Annual Subscription	£177.00			Miscellaneous Powers LGA 1972 (S111)

003539	P. Richmond	December 2022 Salary etc	£743.17			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)
003540	HMRC	December 2022 PR Tax - £448.40 and SCC NI - £50.05	£498.45			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)
003541	St. Bartholomew's Church	Payment from Chair's Fund	£300.00			Ancillary Power Local Government Act 1972 (S11).
003542	Waverton Handbells	Payment from Chair's Fund	£100.00			Ancillary Power Local Government Act 1972 (S11).
003543	Eye2Eye	Grant	£150.00			Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1971
<b>Total Spend</b>			<b>£2,580.62</b>	<b>£102.00</b>		

## **22/178      INCOME**

Lloyds Bank	Interest payment	£2.47 and £4.67
Total		£7.14

RESOLVED – that the income be noted.

## **22/179      CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no report.

## **22/180      FRIENDS OF SEALAND –ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH**

The Cafe is now open Monday to Thursdays.

## **22/181      CONSIDERATION TO PROVIDE AN UPDATED 2023 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER**

RESOLVED – that consideration be deferred to the January 2023 meeting of Council.

## **22/182      SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS – 2022/23 FINANCIAL YEAR**

The Clerk outlined the expenditure and income for the 2022/23 financial year up to cheque number 003541

<b>2022/23 Financial Year</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Anticipated</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Income</b>			
General Admin Inc. Precept	£40,000.00	£60,000.00	-£20,000.00
Bank Interest and Refund of Fees	£12.09	£6.00	£6.09
VAT Refund	£492.48	£500.00	-£7.52
<b>Total</b>	<b>£40,504.57</b>	<b>£60,506.00</b>	<b>-£20,001.43</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Anticipated</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Bank Charges	£79.60	£135.00	£55.40
Chairman's Fund	£300.00	£800.00	£500.00
Staffing Costs	£10,772.64	£13,190.00	£2,417.36
General Admin inc St Barts rental costs	£2,838.52	£3,670.00	£831.48
Insurances	£628.95	£700.00	£71.05
Play Schemes and New Play Equipment	£0.00	£10,800.00	£10,800.00
Street Furniture Repairs	£0.00	£400.00	£400.00
Street Lighting	£22,815.10	£21,700.00	-£1,115.10
Election Costs - Representation of the Peoples Act 1983 - RPA1983 S36C	£246.17	£4,500.00	£4,253.83
Council Web Site	£2,268 (inc VAT £378.00)	£2,304.00 (inc VAT)	£36.00
S137 - Grants	£1,400.00	£3,000.00	£1,600.00
School Milk - Section 137	£0.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£41,348.98</b>	<b>£62,699.00</b>	<b>£21,250.02</b>

Current Summary	Balance as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022 including £25,000 contingency fund.	£44,239.45
	Total expenditure	£41,348.98
	Total income	£40,504.57
	Balance	-£844.71
End of Year Prediction	<b>Overall balance as at 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022</b>	<b>£43,395.04</b>
	VAT Costs for 2022/23 financial year	£586.10
	Balance as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022 including £25,000 contingency fund.	£44,239.45
	Total anticipated expenditure	£62,699.00
	Total anticipated income	£60,506.00
	Anticipated balance for the year	-£2,193.00
	<b>Anticipated Overall Balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023</b>	<b>£ 42,046.45</b>



**22/183            DEFIBRILLATOR – ST BART’S CHURCH**

The Defibrillator Group have had a meeting with Jennifer and Stephen at St Barts and the group that is coming together with the Sealand Community Association. It was agreed that the defibrillator will go in the church grounds and SCA will take responsibility. Representatives from the Sealand Community Association Group met with members of Council prior to today’s Council meeting.

Councillors were advised that the church council has agreed that the church would supply the power source and pay for it once the unit has been installed. When the details of the installation have been worked out, they will be passed to the Diocese for consideration.

At present there is a shortfall in funds and it was suggested that the Sealand Community Association should apply for funding to the Sealand Parish Rooms Charity. The Sealand Community Association was asked to keep in touch with Council.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted

**22/184            2021/22 FINANCIAL YEAR ANNUAL FINANCIAL RETURN**

There was no report.

**22/185            GUIDANCE ON BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

All members in attendance at the December 2022 confirmed that they had read and understood the guidance as provided.

RESOLVED –that the report be noted.

**22/186            REQUEST FOR PUBLIC TO BE TEMPORARILY EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING**

RESOLVED: - that in view of the special nature of the business to be transacted it is advisable in the public interest that the public is excluded.

**22/187            FINANCIAL REPORT – 2022/23 and 2023/24**

The Clerk advised on the Financial Report as circulated: -

- a) that a precept is an order to the charging authority – Flintshire County Council to pay a requested sum to the precept authority – Sealand Community Council and that the schedule of payment from Flintshire County Council will be 3 equal instalments – on the last working days of April, August and December.
- b) the appropriate sum for the S137 Expenditure Limit for the purpose of Section137 (4) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972 for the calculation of the Free Resource Base is based on the local population taken from the current electoral role. The Welsh Government have advised that the Section 137 Expenditure Limit for 2023/24 is £9.93 per elector. The electoral role from Flintshire County Council at September 2022 was 2496. This has increased to 2538 at December 2022. So, per elector produces a total of £25,202.34

The Acting Headteacher at Sealand Primary School has confirmed that the school will not be

returning to provide milk to KS2 pupils – previously funded by Council.

Section 137 payments so far in the 2022/23 financial year are for grant payments to the Sealand Primary School £1,000, Sealand Happy Group £150.00, Eye2Eye £150.00 and for the Earl Haig Poppy Appeal £250.00.

- c) the Clerk is contracted for a working week of 16 hours. Payment is net with the Council deducting income tax at 40% on the full income and making payment to the HMRC. The Council also pays the employers National Insurance contribution to HMRC. Payroll being undertaken by Wainwrights Accountants.
- d) refer to Minute 21/80 – meeting 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

RESOLVED – that it be agreed that the Clerk should move to scale point 24 with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and then point 25 at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 and point 26 at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

Council also agreed under minute 21/80 that that with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 that the home allowance payment is £312. Noting that the internal auditor advised on 22nd April 2021 that this amount is non-taxable.

The NALC pay award 2022/23 has been advised on by the LGA via One Voice Wales and to be implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. Copies of the pay award details and salary scales were circulated to members of Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022.

Based on contracted 16 hours worked the salary for 2023/24 on scale point 25 £32,020 will be £13,846. Plus the home working allowance of £312 = £14,158.

This was noted by Council as its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> November under Minute no - 22/147 - NATIONAL PAY AWARD SETTLEMENT 2022/23

- e) that IT expenses will be reimbursed by the Council.
- f) non-IT expenses incurred in carrying out his duties are also reimbursed. The expenditure being incurred on behalf of the Council as part of its administration and running cost, i.e., stamps and travelling expenses. NJC rate for Casual Users / HMRC approved mileage rate being paid for car mileage within Sealand and as required mileage to venues outside Sealand – £0.45p per mile.
- g) the estimated income for the current 2022/23 financial year is £60,500 and estimated expenditure is £61,085. The opening balance at 1 April 2022 was £44,239. The estimated opening balance at 1 April 2023 is £43,654 assuming all planned expenditure takes place which may not be the case.

RESOLVED: - that the following funds be allocated: -

Annual Subscriptions	£750
Audit Fees	£725
Bank Charges	£150
Chair's Fund	£800
Chain of Office - Engraving	£10

Clerk's salary and allowance	£14,158
Conferences - attendance	£200
Council's Web Site	£2,400
Data Protection Registration	£35
Defibrillator – Energy – Garden City	£75
Free Resource Fund – Grants	£4,000
Free Resource Fund – School Milk	£0.00
Hire Costs – St Barts	£500
Insurances	£650
Joint funded project play areas	£5,000
NI Employers contribution	£690
Playleader Scheme	£6,378
Postage / Mileage	£800
Printer, Computers repairs etc. and printer cartridges	£500
Sealand Newsletter	£200
Stationery	£100
Street Furniture Repairs – Seats / Notice Boards	£200
Street Lighting – Energy £3,000 - Repairs, Maintenance - £3,450 and Replacement / Adoption of 9 lights at Riverside Park and Cedar Close- £19,350	£25,800
Councillors and Clerks Training Costs	£500
<b>Full Total</b>	<b>£64,621</b>

## 22/188      PRECEPT 2023/24

The Clerk advised that the Council has an indicated estimated expenditure of £64,621 for the 2023/34 financial year. Estimated income excluding precept for the 2023/24 financial year is £508. Estimated opening balance at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 is £43,554. To achieve an estimated balance at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 of £42,000 a precept of £62,559 is required.

The Clerk advised that the County Council require the completion of a precept mandate form to be signed by the Chairman and Clerk. This form will not be provided until late December 2022. The County Council has apologised for the delay.

Also awaited is the following information for Sealand -  
Current Tax Base of equivalent Band D properties  
The current Band D charge

RESOLVED: - that –

i) the precept for the 2023/24 financial year be agreed in principle at £62,000 for a review at the January 2023 meeting.

ii) Clerk be thanked for his usual excellent and informative and very clear financial report.

**22/189                    COUNCIL RESERVES – 2023/24**

The Council's policy on Financial Reserves recommends an amount to be held in reserves for contingency purposes should be proportionately 6-9 months of gross expenditure – estimated expenditure for 2023/24 is £64,621 – 6 months is equivalent to £32,310. The Clerk advised that of the estimated carry forward of £43,654 at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 an amount of £25,000 should be held as a Contingency Reserve to assist cash flow in the event of unforeseen occurrences. The remaining funds being required to cover council expenditure until the first precept payment is made by Flintshire County Council during the 2023/24 financial year. The Council's Policy on Reserves will need to be amended accordingly.

RESOLVED – that of the estimated carry forward of £43,654 at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 an amount of £25,000 will be held as a Contingency Reserve to assist cash flow in the event of unforeseen occurrences. The remaining funds being required to cover council expenditure until the first precept payment is made by Flintshire County Council during the 2023/24 financial year. The Council's Policy on Reserves will be amended accordingly.

**22/190                    LETTER FROM HM KING CHARLES 111**

The Clerk reported on a letter as copied to members of Council received from HM King Charles III thanking the Council and the community of Sealand for the Book of Condolence. A copy of the letter will be added to Council's web site

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**22/191                    MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

**22/192                    DATE OF COUNCIL'S NEXT MEETING – 16<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2023**

**22/193                    IN ACCORDANCE WITH SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT -  
DECLARATION OF INTEREST - NONE**

The meeting opened at 6pm and closed at 8.05pm

..... Signed    16<sup>th</sup> January 2023