

**SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 15<sup>th</sup> MAY 2023 AT ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH, OLD SEALAND ROAD, SEALAND, DEESIDE. CH5 2LQ**

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

Peter Richmond - Clerk and Financial Officer.

**23/1      APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Jean Fairbrother and Linda Thomas.

RESOLVED – that the apologies be received and accepted

**23/2      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.

**23/3      MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC**

A member of the public advised on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023 that there is a strip of land on Elm Tree RD (part of the High Grove estate) which is owned by the developer Stewart Milne Homes, known as a “ransom strip”. This strip of land is between the footpath and a hedge belonging to a local farmer.

Every year the member of the public asks Stewart Milne Homes to maintain this land and cut back the weeds and overgrowth etc. They have not maintained this land since 2021. Last year the footpath was un-useable due to the overgrowth. Is the Community Council able to assist the residents in getting the developers to look after their land. The residents believe it is not an unreasonable request. The Clerk advised that following a conversation with County Councillor Christine Jones he referred the issue to Mark Harris – Planning at Flintshire County Council on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

The Clerk had not received a request to hold a hybrid meeting.

RESPOLVED – that a reminder be sent to Mark Harris – Planning at Flintshire County Council

**23/4      CHAIR'S REPORT AND ACTIONS SINCE 17<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2023**

There was no report.

**23/5      ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THE COUNCIL YEAR 2023/24**

The retiring Chair thanked members of Council and the Clerk for their support during his year in office.

Members of Council expressed their thanks and appreciation for the work undertaken by the retiring Chair.

There was one nomination proposed and seconded – Councillor Ashley Griffiths

RESOLVED: - that Councillor Ashley Griffiths be elected Chair for 2023/24

The newly elected Chair thanked the retiring Chair for his work as Chair.

**23/6                    ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR FOR THE COUNCIL YEAR 2023/24**

There was one nomination proposed and seconded – Councillor Barbara Hinds

RESOLVED: - that Councillor Barbara Hinds be elected Vice Chair for 2023/24.

**23/7                    MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 17<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2023**

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

**23/8                    CHAIR'S FUND 2023/24**

The Clerk reminded Council that the agreed spend for the Chair's Fund for the 2023/24 financial year is £800.00. Payments being made under expenditure powers - Ancillary Power Local Government Act 1972 (S1).

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**23/9                    POLICE ISSUES**

**a)            Community Speed Watch**

Councillor Ashley Griffiths advised that further speed checks will be undertaken.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**b)            CA/ALM meetings**

It was previously agreed that the three issues from the Council are -

- Drugs – Garden City
- Anti-Social Behaviour – Garden City
- Speeding Traffic – Seahill Road

Details of the next meeting are awaited.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**23/10                    FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ISSUES.**

**a)            Underpass - Foxes Lane**

There was no report.

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

Robin Nursaw advised on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 that that he is still awaiting Welsh Government confirmation regarding grant allocation. He will update when confirmed.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

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

Following the April 2023 meeting Stef Connah was asked to provide a progress report and to be asked whether she has accessed all the records relating to this site over the past 12/13 years. A reminder has been sent.

RESOLVED – that a further reminder be sent to Stef Connah.

**d) Sealand Ditches**

Neil Parry advised on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023 that he has discussed the ditches opposite the Cottage Petrol Station with Wayne Jones and it is evident that Neil will have to undertake an inspection. This will shortly take place and at the same time Neil will undertake an inspection at Deeside Cottages and update Council. Neil has been asked to provide an update.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

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

Following the April 2023 meeting Stef Connah was asked to provide a progress report and be informed that the condition of the side access is getting worse and be asked to advise on whether the houses were ever given planning approval. A reminder has been sent.

RESOLVED – that a further reminder be sent to Stef Connah and copied to Karl Spilsbury.

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

It was previously reported that the requested tree lopping will shortly be undertaken – as advised by members of the school Governing Body. Members of the Governing Body present said that they will raise this with the Acting Headteacher.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

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

Wayne Jones advised on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023 that he has spoken to a NMWTRA supervisor and he is going to investigate as there is some confusion on who owns the fence either them or Sustrans.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

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

On 27<sup>th</sup> November 2022 there was a 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 previously advised that he is waiting to receive details of the accident.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

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

RESOLVED – that the issue be referred to Claire Morter and to David Harman at PRAXIS.

**j) Morriston Farm Green Lane**

The County Councillor advised on further complaints she has received which have been referred to Stef Connah Planning Officer – Enforcement together with Public Protection, Cabinet Member Councillor Bithell. The situation is getting worse.

RESOLVED – that Stef Connah be asked to provide a progress report.

**k) Parking on pavements, mainly on the cycle path/pavements at Welsh Road**

Wayne Jones has previously advised that this has been referred to Enforcement.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**l) Uneven Road Surface – Highway – RAF Sealand**

Wayne Jones advised on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023 that he has inspected the road and found nothing dangerous that requires urgent attention.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**m) River Dee Embankment – Coastal Path and Cycleway**

Following the April 2023 meeting of Council, the County Council were advised that there is a need for additional benches along the section between the A494 and Ferry Lane – can these be provided? There is also a need to repair 2 or 3 benches between the blue bridge and the railway bridge - Council has no record who installed these. Can these either be repaired or replaced?

On 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 Mike Taylor Coastal Ranger advised that there is a discussion to be had about this. He will discuss internally and provide feedback. Mike has been asked to provide an update.

Wayne Jones was asked to reinstall the removed seat previously located between the two road bridges. County Councillor Chris Jones advised against this.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**n) Complaint about the Chairs at the Sealand Youth Centre**

A complaint was raised regarding the condition of the chairs at the youth centre. It was reported that the chairs are in a poor condition and some could be unsafe.

RESOLVED – that this be taken forward by County Councillor Chris Jones.

**o) Flintshire County Council – Policy regarding responding to emails etc**

RESOLVED – that the Chief Executive be asked to outline the Council's policy relating to responding to external emails sent to Council officers by Sealand Community Council.

**23/11 COUNCIL'S STREET LIGHTING**

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

Flintshire County Council have been asked to upgrade and replace 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 - £19,350 in total. Jamie Bennet has advised that the lighting works will start in June 2023 with a likely adoption date of 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023. This will reduce the lighting stock to 41. Jamie Bennet has been asked to advise on the next 10 lights that should be replaced in 2024/25.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**23/12 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 have advised that the Section 137 Expenditure Limit for 2023/24 is £9.93 per elector. The electoral role from Flintshire County Council was 2538 at December 2022. So, per elector produces a total of £25,202.34. Allocated spend in 2023/24 is Section 137 grants of £4,000 and for school milk £0.00. Spend in 2023/24 so far is nil.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**23/13 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.

**23/14 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

PA Number	Application details	Location
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000133/23	Retrospective application for the replacement of office and shop buildings	Dandy's Topsoil Ltd, Sealand Road, Sealand, Deeside, CH1 6BS
000329/23	Installation of new sales cabin and removal of existing cabin and toilet block	Former Smithy Garage, Sealand Road, Sealand Manor, Sealand, Flintshire, CH1 6BS

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

### 23/15 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

Cheque No	Payable to	Details	Amount	VAT	Vat Code	Expenditure Powers
003568	JDH Business Services Ltd	Internal Audit Fee – 2022/23	£345.00	£57.50	771744412	Local Govt Act 1972 (S111)
003569	St. Bartholomew's Church Council	Hiring Charge April to July 2023	£180.00			Local Govt Act 1972 (S111)
003570	P. Richmond	May 2023 Salary etc	£806.09			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)
003571	HMRC	May 2023 Income Tax - £461.60 and Emp NI - £54.62	£516.22			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)
003572	Flintshire County Council	Steet Lighting Inspections and Repairs	£382.82	£63.80	636613732	Highways Act 1980 (301)
<b>Total Spend</b>			<b>£2,230.13</b>	<b>£121.30</b>		

### 23/16 INCOME

Lloyds Bank	Interest payment	£24.07
Flintshire County Council	First Precept Payment	£20,666.66
HMRC	Refund VAT 2022/23	£5,374.47
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>£26,065.52</b>

RESOLVED – that the income be noted.

**23/17**                      **CORRESPONDENCE - WELSH ROAD SKATE FACILITY**

Richard Roberts – AURA - Play Design Officer advised by email on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023 (email copied the same day to members of Council) that he needs to advise that the Skate Park at Welsh Road play area, Garden City, is coming to the end of its economic life after more than 21 years. Recent structural investigations underneath the ramps have indicated that corrosion of the steel ramps is occurring and this, in turn, is impacting negatively on the riding surface, especially for small wheels such as on scooters and skateboards. Settlement of the steel ramps has caused the tarmac surface to sink which, again, affects the riding experience. Based on the evidence of corrosion and wear, it would be pertinent to prepare for the decommissioning and removal of the skate ramps and to start the process of determining whether there is still demand for such a facility at Welsh Road, bearing in mind that young people's hobbies and interests evolve and change. I recognise that consultation with the local community will be required in relation to what users would like to see within the play area, whether that results in a replacement facility (pending confirmation and availability of capital costs) or an adaptation aimed at meeting current needs and trends.

RESOLVED – that the Council considers that a like for like replacement should be provided and for Richard Roberts to be advised accordingly.

**23/18**                      **FRIENDS OF SEALAND –ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH**

A Coronation Concert was held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and this coming weekend there is plant sale and model railway exhibition.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**23/19**                      **2023 COUNCIL INFORMATION BOOKLET**

Councillor Brian Ward updated Council and proposed that the Council should meet 15 minutes ahead of the June meeting to view his draft booklet.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**23/20**                      **PAYMENT TO MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS 2023/24 FINANCIAL YEAR**

The remaining 1 Councillor Jean Fairbrother is still to sign the required form.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

**23/21**                      **COUNCIL'S PHYSICAL ASSET REGISTER JUNE 2023**

The Clerk referred to the following documents that were recently emailed to members of Council Asset Register – June 2023 and Asset Register Summary April to June 2023 and the June 2023 Street Lighting Inventory.

Assets	Value – Purchase Price	Insurance Cover
Chairs of Office	£6,059.90	£9,934.03
Notice Boards	£2,451.52	£7,962.41
Office Equipment	£475.00	£700.00
Public Seats	£2,085.00	£9,786.47

<b>Street Lighting</b>	<b>£62,250</b>	<b>£62,250.00</b>
<b>Dummy Digital Recorder Cameras</b>	<b>£1,070</b>	<b>£2,546.16</b>
<b>Defibrillator and Cage</b>	<b>£1,184.00</b>	<b>£1,599.12</b>
<b>PR1000 Hand Held Radar Gun</b>	<b>£192.00</b>	<b>£237.31</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£75,767.42</b>	<b>£95,015.50</b>

RESOLVED – that –

- i) the report be noted.
- ii) it be noted that copies of the Council Asset Register – June 2023, Asset Register Summary April 2016 to June 2023 and the June 2023 Street Lighting Inventory have been added to the Council's web site replacing the existing documents.

## **23/22            INTERNAL AUDIT 2022/23 FINANCIAL YEAR**

The Clerk advised that the Internal Audit was completed by JDH Business Services Ltd following testing of the internal controls specified on the Annual Return for local councils in Wales. Based on the internal audit work carried out, in their view the council's system of internal controls are adequate for the purpose intended and effective. The Clerk reported on the internal auditor's internal controls and internal audit testing processes – a copy was circulated to all members of Council on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2023. A copy has also been added to the Council's web site. The internal auditor advised that no internal control issues were identified. The Council has maintained a robust set of books and records for the financial year.

RESOLVED: - that the report be noted.

## **23/23            SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS –2023/24 FINANCIAL YEAR**

The Clerk outlined the expenditure and income for the 2023/24 financial year up to cheque number 003571.



2023/24 Financial Year	Actual	Anticipated	Difference
<b>Income</b>			
General Admin Inc. Precept	£20,666.66	£62,000.00	-£41,333.34
Bank Interest and Refund of Fees	£24.07	£30.00	-£5.93
VAT Refund	£5,374.47	£500.00	£4,874.47
<b>Total</b>	<b>£26,065.20</b>	<b>£62,530.00</b>	<b>-£36,464.80</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Anticipated</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Bank Charges	£14.65	£150.00	£135.35
Chairman's Fund	£0.00	£800.00	£800.00
Staffing Costs	£2,416.92	£14,848.00	£12,431.08
General Admin inc St Barts rental costs	£936.55	£4,395.00	£3,458.45
Insurances	£642.45	£650.00	£7.55
Play Schemes and New Play Equipment	£0.00	£11,378.00	£11,378.00
Street Furniture Repairs	£0.00	£200.00	£200.00
Street Lighting	£0.00 (inc VAT £0.00)	£25,800.00(exc VAT)	£25,800.00
Council Web Site	£384.00 (inc VAT of £64.00)	£2,400.00(inc VAT)	£2,016.00
S137 - Grants	£0.00	£4,000.00	£4,000.00
School Milk - Section 137	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,394.57</b>	<b>£64,621.00</b>	<b>£60,226.43</b>

Current Summary	Balance as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023 including £25,000 contingency fund.	£41,104.96
	Total expenditure	£4,394.57
	Total income	£26,065.20
	Balance	£21,670.63
End of Year Prediction	<b>Overall balance as at 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023</b>	<b>£62,775.59</b>
	VAT Costs for 2023/24 financial year	£151.50
	Balance as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023 including £25,000 contingency fund.	£41,104.96
	Total anticipated expenditure	£64,621.00
	Total anticipated income	£62,530.00
	Anticipated balance for the year	-£2,091.00
	<b>Anticipated Overall Balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024</b>	<b>£ 39,013.96</b>

**23/24                      ANNUAL FINANCIAL RETURN – 2022/23**

The Clerk advised on an email dated 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023 (copied the same day to members of Council) from Deryck Evans - Audit Manager – Audit Development and Guidance Audit Wales. He has received numerous requests for the audit notice and documentation requirements for the 2022-23 audits. Unfortunately, we are not yet in a position to issue the audit notice setting out the date by which documents must be submitted or where to drop off records for the triennial full audits. We aim to resolve these issues shortly within the context of the larger Audit Wales programme of work.

To assist councils to prepare for the audit, Deryck enclosed details of the information they will require – this was outlined by the Clerk. The “Full audit Instructions” set out what additional information will be required for those councils having a full audit this year. Also included “TCC\_audit\_cycle\_by\_county” to help identify whether your council is subject to a full audit this year. Sealand CC full audit will be for 2023-24. Audit Wales will issue the audit notice as soon as they can. The Clerk outlined the additional supporting information required by Audit Wales.

The Clerk advised that as RFO/Clerk he had signed the Certification of the Annual Return on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023 certifying that the accounting statements contained in the Annual Return presents fairly the financial position of the Council its income and expenditure, or properly presents receipts and payments, as the case may be, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

RESOLVED – that -

- i) the report be noted.
- ii) it be noted that an interim copy of the Annual Return should be added to the Council’s web site with a final version being added on completion of the audit.
- iii) the Chair be authorised to sign the Annual Return under resolution 23/26 iii) confirming that the accounting statements and Annual Governance Statement are approved by Council.

**23/25                      MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

Blocked gullies / grids - Bridge View -Wayne Jones advised previously that work has started.

Blocked grids – Farm Road - Wayne Jones previously advised that work has now started.

**23/26                      MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

No matters were raised.

**23/27                      DATE OF COUNCIL’S NEXT MEETING – 19<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2023**

**23/28                      IN ACCORDANCE WITH SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT -  
DECLARATION OF INTEREST - NONE**

The meeting opened at 6pm and closed at 7.45pm

..... Signed    19<sup>th</sup> June 2023.