

SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 18th MARCH 2024 AT SEALAND COUNTY
PRIMARY SCHOOL, FARM ROAD, GARDEN CITY. CH5 2HH

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

Robin Davies – Acting Headteacher- Sealand Primary School
Peter Richmond - Clerk

23/228 APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Jean Fairbrother, Norman Jones and Alex Lewis.

23/229 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.

23/230 MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

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

23/231 CHAIR’S REPORT AND ACTIONS SINCE 27th FEBRUARY 2024

There was no report

23/232 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 27th FEBRUARY 2024

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 27th February 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

23/233 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)

Spent so far – £100 to Dee-Sign BSL Choir and £240.00 St. Bartholomew’s Church Council. Total £340.00.

The Chair proposed payments of £100.00 to the Sealand Happy Group and £360.00 to Sealand Primary School.

RESOLVED – that the proposed payments be endorsed.

23/184 **POLICE ISSUES**

a) Community Speed Watch

The Chair asked if other members of Council wanted to help with future speed watches.

b) PCSO Aled Hughes – 3292

It was reported that Aled had recently visited the school and had talked to the children outlining his role in the community.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

23/234 **MATTERS REFERRED TO FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

a) Ferry Lane Footbridge

i) Project to improve the footbridge to reduce the noise nuisance

There was no report.

ii) A frame barrier amendment proposals

The County Councillor advised the A frames have been installed and shortly afterwards a number of bolts had been removed. The A frames have now been repaired.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

b) Dandy's Top Soil – Sealand Road

On 12th December 2023 Matthew Linford – Planning Enforcement Officer advised that he understands that all the previous unauthorised development on site has either been removed or regularised through planning applications / lawful development certificates. Matthew will however go out and look at the site and confirm this. The County Councillor advised that she awaits a progress report from Matthew. This will again be requested

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

c) Sealand Ditches

i) Deeside Crescent.

Neil Parry advised on 8th March 2024 that the watercourse to the rear of Deeside Crescent has now been desilted.

ii) Main River watercourse adjacent to Dandy's.

Neil has reported to NRW possible impedance and culverting of the Main River watercourse adjacent to Dandy's. He is aware that NRW have undertaken an inspection but ne has not yet been advised of the outcome of that inspection.

iii) Main River watercourse located in England which crosses beneath Seahill Road.

Neil confirmed that he has exchanged correspondence with colleagues at CWAC and the E.A. about the Main River watercourse located in England which crosses beneath Seahill Road. The E.A. are saying that there is minimal risk of flooding to property and consequently are not willing to undertake any works. However, Neil understands that the E.A. do have Powers to serve Notice on Riparian Owners and Neil proposes to facilitate a meeting on site between FCC, CWAC and the E.A. to determine by mutual agreement what remedial works are required.

iv) Stuart Banks.

Neil is still in the process of arranging a meeting with Stuart Banks

RESOLVED – that the reports be noted.

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

Glyn Jones advised on 11th March 2024 that he has reviewed the situation since we met at the site and, as promised, advice has been offered in the following broad terms to the applicant's agent in the matter.

The S.106 agreement entered as part of the permission pertaining to the site required details to be submitted by the owner and approved by the Council to secure the resurfacing and the future maintenance of the private access road adjacent to 31 Welsh Road, Garden City in accordance with the planning permission and subsequent reserved matters application.

The approved layout plan indicates an improvement in width to 3.7 m of the private access road which would involve alteration to the kerb line on the easterly side of the roadway. Following an inspection by colleagues in Street scene this raised a safety concern as people alighting down the steps when leaving the Spar shop would step into the carriageway. Street scene have agreed that the width of the access road shall be widened to 3.45 m to provide for a safe refuge and for this reason it is suggested that the proposed layout plan should be amended to reflect this and a non-material amendment application be submitted to Reserved Matters Approval Ref: 057808, under S.96A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The specification for the works provided is considered acceptable. However, noting that the initial length of the roadway is highway, to widen the private roadway to 3.45 m this will involve modifications of the radius kerbs on the easterly side of the access road to tie into the channel line along Welsh Road. Discussion has been had about the possibility of the work to widen and resurface the roadway being undertaken by the Council's DLO and this would be acceptable. If, however, the works were carried out by a third-party contractor they will require the consent of the Highway Authority to undertake the works required within the adopted highway network and a 12-month maintenance period will be required.

The applicant has therefore been invited to provide the amended plan via an NMA application and provide the required details in terms of future maintenance as required by the S.106 Agreement.

I trust this updates the position of you and the members of your Council. I shall notify you when the required details are submitted, but please note that an NMA application is not a matter which requires formal consultation.

RESOLVED – that Glyn Jones be advised that Council is very concerned about the continuation of the dreadful state of the side access which is dangerous for both members of the public crossing the access and for vehicles using it. There clearly is no timeline for when the essential work will be carried out.

e) Damaged fencing – Cycle Bridge – A494

NMWTRA have now started to repair / replace the damaged fencing.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

f) Sealand Road – A548 – Extend Street Lighting

There was no report.

g) River Dee Embankment – Coastal Path and Cycleway – Bluebridge to the Railway Bridge

Mike Taylor has previously advised that the repair cost is £200.00 per bench. Source for the funding is being investigated. Council has agreed that the seat formerly situated between the two road bridges should replace one of the existing 4 seats as above. Wayne has advised that he is waiting on Mike re-funding.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

h) Foxes Lane – Pot Holes – Need to carry out repairs

There was no report.

i) Problem with Trees- Orchard Way and North Green at Sealand Manor

RESOLVED – that Chris Povey – Housing Officer be asked to provide an update regarding the reported tree issues.

j) Foxes Lane – Underpass - Water leakage and Graffiti

This has been referred to Wayne Jones – StreetScene.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

23/235 COUNCIL'S STREET LIGHTING

Jamie Bennett has been asked to advise on the next 8 lights that should be replaced in the 2024/25 financial year. These will be the 6 remaining lights at Riverside Park and 2 at Cedar Close. Then leaving 33 to be replaced and adopted. 12 years ago, the Council had 169 lights.

All current 41 lights are working.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

23/236 **SECTION 137 – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 – PAYMENT OF GRANTS**

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. The Section 137 Expenditure Limit for 2024/25 is £10.81 per elector. The electoral role from Flintshire County Council at December 2023 was 2596. So, per elector produces a total of £28,062.76.

Spend in 2023/24 so far is £1,900.00 - Sealand Primary School £1,500, Earl Haig Poppy Appeal £250.00, and St. Bartholomew’s Church - £150.00.

Allocation for 2024/25 is £3,035.00

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

23/237 **PROVISION OF NOTICE BOARDS – PRAXIS AND POCHINS**

Councillor Linda Thomas has the key for the Praxis notice board and Councillor Ashley Griffiths is awaiting to receive the key for the Pochins notice board.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

23/238 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

PA Number	Application details	Location
None received		

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

23/239 **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 £17.20 - re £7.00 per month with an additional charge of 12 cheques x £0.85 = £10.20. The next months will be £10.240

Cheque No	Payable to	Details	Amount	VAT	Vat Code	Expenditure Powers
003616	Information Commissioner	Annual Data Protection Fee	£40.00			Local Govt Act 1972 (S111)
003617	P. Richmond	March 2024 Salary etc	£786.77			Local Govt Act 1972 (S142)

003618	HMRC	February 2024 Income Tax - £489.60 and Emp NI - £64.19	£555.79			Local Govt Act 1972 (S142)
003619	Sealand Happy Group	Payment from the Chair's Fund	£100.00			Ancillary Power Local Government Act 1972 (S1)
003619	Sealand Primary School	Payment from the Chair's Fund	£360.00			Ancillary Power Local Government Act 1972 (S1)
Total Spend			£1,842.56	£0.00		

23/240 INCOME

Lloyds Bank	Interest payment	£55.28
Lloyds Bank	Interest payment	£51.81
Total Income		£107.09

RESOLVED – that the income be noted.

23/241 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no additional correspondence to report on.

23/242 FRIENDS OF SEALAND –ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

Council was advised recent events - Table Tops Sale on 2nd March 2024 and Bart Art 9th to 11th March 2024.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

23/243 WELSH ROAD SKATE FACILITY

At the Annual Finance Meeting held on 11th December 2023 Council resolved to allocate £11,000 to jointly fund the skate ramps outlined by Richard Roberts – AURA - Play Design Officer in the 2024/25 financial year. Richard Roberts has been advised of Council's decision. Richard responded on 12th December 2023 for the project to go ahead is subject to the County Council continuing the match-funding scheme in 2024/25 the County Council normally finalises its budget in mid-February so Aura's funding for 2024/25 should be confirmed shortly after and subject to the maximum limit for match-funding contributions which may change in 2024/25.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

23/244 **PLAY SCHEMES - 2024**

There was no report.

23/245 **CLERK'S RESIGNATION AND RETIREMENT**

The interview panel consisting of Councillors Gwyneth Bullock, Barbara Hinds, Norman Jones, Lionel Prouve, David Wisinger interviewed on Monday 11th 2024 and Ashley Griffiths was appointed. The new Clerk was formally offered the post and has replied formally by email.

Copies of the new Clerk's contract were given to the new Clerk and Vice Chair for signing.

The Vice Chair advised members of Council on 29th February 2024 that last year Council discussed the importance of ensuring a smooth transition when it became necessary to appoint a new clerk following Peter's resignation. The following proposals were agreed by members of Council

The new clerk would work closely with Peter. The new clerk would be appointed from April 1st 2024, taking full lead on all work with Peter in a supporting role. This would mean there would be two paid clerks for April 2024.

2. The new clerk would transfer all the historical information, data, resolve any email issues, copy word and excel documents onto their laptop.
3. Peter would also discuss in more detail all aspects of the new role.
4. The new clerk can then take the lead on all aspects of the audit process for 2024 so avoiding any issues or confusion.
5. Peter and the new clerk can then meet as and when needed.
6. The new clerk does all the work for the April meeting to ensure a smooth transition.
7. Peter is happy to attend the April meeting, sitting at the back of the room so being available to answer any questions or queries.

Wainwright Accountants who provide payroll services to Council have advised that they will issue the 2024/25 payroll information during April. They will also send a copy of the retiring Clerk's P45 during April and P60 for 2023/24.

The newly appointed Clerk has completed the new starter checklist and the information has been passed to Wainwright Accountants.

Wainwright Accountants advised that the new Clerk will need to be automatically enrolled into a pension scheme. In this case they could set up a NEST pension scheme and enrol the employee. The charge to do this is £100+VAT. If the employee stays in the scheme, we can manage the monthly pension submissions for £240+VAT per year, alternatively, Council may prefer to manage the scheme yourselves. This is for the new Clerk to actions.

The Clerks are meeting on Friday 19th March 2024 at the Clerks home regarding the handover of records, documents etc

Councillor Ashley Griffiths advised that he will shortly be submitting his resignation as a Community Councillor.

RESOLVED – that -

- i) it be noted that the new Clerk is appointed from 1st April 2024 taking the full lead on all work with the retiring Clerk providing transitional support.
- ii) current Clerk should remain on payroll until 31st May 2024 providing transition cover from 1st April to 31st May 2024 and for the payroll provider to be advised accordingly.
- iii) Council should at a later meeting give consideration to setting up the new Clerk on a pension scheme

23/246 SEALAND COMMUNITY FLOOD PLAN AND FLOOD WARDENS

Councillors Shelley Webber, Mary Southall, Gwyneth Bullock, and Brian Ward will be attending the Flood Volunteer event March 21st 2024 in Llandudno Junction). This was attended by Flood Wardens from all over North Wales as well as various responding organisations. One of the morning activities involved working through a fictional flood scenario together, to understand which organisations take action and when, as well as what communities and individuals can do to prepare for flooding. NRW created a fictional place that is facing the specific challenge of rapid flooding, caused by weather that has been difficult to forecast locally.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

23/247 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ELECTIONS(WALES) ACT 2021 - ANNUAL REPORT
2023/24

From April 2022 community and town councils have a duty to prepare and publish a report about the council's priorities, activities, and achievements. The first report related to the financial April 2021- March 2022 and was published in April 2022.

The Clerk referred to the circulated draft Annual Report for 2023/24

RESOLVED: - that the Annual Report 2023/24 be approved and added to the Council's website.

23/248 SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS –2023/24 FINANCIAL YEAR

The Clerk outlined the expenditure and income for the 2023/24 financial year up to cheque number 003618.

2023/24 Financial Year	Actual	Anticipated	Difference
Income			
Precept	£62,000.00	£62,000.00	£0.00
Refund VAT Flintshire County Council	£578.66	£0.00	£578.66
VAT Refund HMRC	£5,374.47	£500.00	£4,874.47
Bank Interest and Refund of Fees	£472.86	£30.00	£442.86
Total	£68,425.99	£62,530.00	£5,895.99
Expenditure	Actual	Anticipated	Difference
Bank Charges	£128.00	£150.00	£22.00
Chairman's Fund	£340.00	£800.00	£460.00
Staffing Costs	£15,488.30	£14,848.00	-£640.30
General Admin inc St Barts rental costs	£2,066.43	£4,395.00	£2,328.57
Insurances	£642.45	£650.00	£7.55
Play Schemes and New Play Equipment	£7,477.60	£11,378.00	£3,900.40
Street Furniture Repairs	£0.00	£200.00	£200.00
Street Lighting	£22,596.10 (inc VAT £541.02)	£25,800.00 (exc VAT)	£3,754.80
Council Web Site	£2,532.00 (inc VAT of £422.00 net £2,110.00)	£2,400.00 (inc VAT)	£252.00
S137 - Grants	£1,900.00	£4,000.00	£2,100.00
Total	£53,170.88	£64,621.00	£11,450.12

Current Summary	Balance as at 1 st April 2023 including £25,000 contingency fund.	£41,104.96
	Total expenditure	£53,170.88
	Total income	£68,425.99
	Balance	£15,255.11
	Overall balance as at 18th March 2024	£56,360.07
	VAT Costs for 2023/24 financial year	£1,050.62
End of Year Prediction	Balance as at 1 st 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
	Anticipated Overall Balance as at 31st March 2024	£ 39,013.96

23/249 PAYMENT TO MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS 2024/25 FINANCIAL YEAR

The Clerk advised on information received from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales which had been emailed to all members of Council on 1st March 2024. The Panel has decided to make limited changes. Determination 6: Members of Community and Town Councils will be paid £156 a year (equivalent to £3 a week) towards the extra household expenses (including heating, lighting, power, and broadband) of working from home. And Councils must either pay their members £52 a year for the cost of office consumables required to carry out their role, or alternatively councils must enable members to claim full reimbursement for the cost of their office consumables

All other Determinations set out in the 2022 /2023 Annual Report of the Panel remain valid. Refer to Minute - 21/268 - PAYMENT TO MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS 2022/23 FINANCIAL YEAR and it was then resolved - That in relation to the 2022/23 financial year, the determinations required concerning payments to members are noted and that the Council will not introduce an attendance allowance for members.

In relation to payment to members for the 2023/24 financial year then these will need to be listed and sent to the Panel and displayed on the council’s web site and Council notice boards. This has been actioned. A form for completion concerning the 2024/25 financial year has been circulated by the Clerk to all 13 Councillors. 9 Councillors present signed that they have declined the payments this leaves 3 Councillors to complete and sign the form.

RESOLVED: that –

- i) the report be noted.
- ii) should a member of Council decide to request a payment of £156 then payment would be held back to March 2025.
- iii) Council should affect a payment of £52 for office consumables rather than pay on a reimbursement basis. Should a member of Council decide to request a payment of £52 then payment would be held back to March 2025.
- iv) that in relation the previous determinations as required concerning payments to members be again noted re Minute 21/268.

23/250 MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

23/251 MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

23/252 DATE OF COUNCIL’S NEXT MEETING – 15th APRIL 2024.

**23/253 IN ACCORDANCE WITH SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT -
DECLARATION OF INTEREST - NONE**

The meeting opened at 6pm and closed at 7.40pm.

..... Signed 15th April 2024
Chair of the Council