

SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 16th September 2024 AT SEALAND COUNTY
PRIMARY SCHOOL, FARM ROAD, GARDEN CITY. CH5 2HH

PRESENT: Councillors: Barbara Hinds (Chair), Christine Jones (County Councillor), David Wisinger (Vice-Chair), Brian Ward, Lionel Prouve, Linda Thomas, Shelley Webber, Mary Southall and Jean Fairbrother.

One member of the public.

Robin Davies – Deputy Headteacher- Sealand Primary School.

Richard Roberts – Aura Wales – Play Design Officer.

Ashley Griffiths – Clerk and Financial Officer.

24/91 APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Norman Jones, Alex Lewis, and Gwyneth Bullock.

RESOLVED – that the apologies be received and accepted.

24/92 NOTICE UNDER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972 (Section 87 (2))

VACANCY FOR ONE COUNCILLOR

Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) advised that Flintshire County Council had informed him that no request for an election had been received within fourteen days of the original Notice date, and it is for the Council to fill the vacancy by co-option. Council is required to give public notice of co-option in accordance with Section 116 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

The Council agreed to readvertise the public notice of co-option for the week commencing the 23rd day of September, which will be advertised until the 13th day of October per the recommendation of the Democratic Services department of Flintshire County Council. This will be emailed to Council members, attached to the notice boards, and added to the Council's website.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/93 CODE OF CONDUCT DECLARATION

RESOLVED— that it should be noted that one declaration of interest (Cllr Norman Jones) was made to the Council before the meeting concerning 16th September 2024, Agenda item number 8, PA Number COU/000659/24.

During the meeting, Cllr Christine Jones declared an interest in minute number 24/99 (c).

24/94 MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) had not received a request to hold a hybrid meeting.

24/95 CHAIR’S REPORT AND ACTIONS SINCE 15th JULY 2024

Barbara Hinds (Chair) affirmed that the monthly meetings between the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Clerk are highly beneficial for discussing any matter prior to the meeting, which the Vice-Chair and Clerk echoed. The Chair reported to the Council that a point taken from the monthly meetings has played a pivotal role in planning for the in-house Councillor training to go over a particular topic of interest from One Voice Wales.

The Chair, amongst other delegates from Sealand Community Council, attended the Flintshire County Council Chairman's Civic Service on September 8th, 2024.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/96 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 15th JULY 2024

RESOLVED—that the minutes of the Council meeting held on July 15th, 2024, be confirmed as a true and correct record.

24/97 CHAIR’S FUND 2024/25

Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) reminded the Council that the agreed spend for the Chair’s Fund for the 2024/25 financial years is £800.00. Payments are being made under expenditure powers—Ancillary Power Local Government Act 1972 (S1).

Payments to date -

The Chair proposed a payment of £50.00 to 50 Plus Action Group (Flintshire), which works within the Sealand community.

RESOLVED – that the proposed payment be endorsed and the Chair’s Fund should cover the refreshments at St Bartholomews Church for the Remembrance Service on Sunday, November 10th at 10:30 AM and the Christmas Concert on Wednesday, December 18th at 7:00 PM.

24/98 POLICE ISSUES

a) Community Speed Watch

PCSO Aled Hughes communicated to the Council on August 1st that he would monitor the speeding traffic along Welsh Road.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

b) PCSO Aled Hughes – 3292

PCSO Aled Hughes reported to the Council on September 11th that he would conduct patrols in Sealand and investigate the ongoing issues surrounding motorbikes.

RESOLVED – that the PCSO Aled Hughes should be informed about the ongoing issues on Ferry Lane.

24/99 MATTERS REFERRED TO FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

a) A-frame barrier amendment proposals

Mike Taylor, Flintshire County Council (Senior Coastal Ranger), reported to the Council on September 14th that the proposals to add a radar gate are currently on hold.

When discussing the issue,

a member of the public, who is also a resident, voiced their concerns, stating that the A-frame barriers are working to stop antisocial behaviour issues regarding motorbikes.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

b) Sealand Ditches

i) The Main River watercourse is adjacent to Dandy's.

Neil Parry, Flintshire County Council (Project Engineer), reported to the Council on July 4th, 2024, that Dandy's had removed the impediments.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

ii) The main river watercourse is located in England and crosses beneath Seahill Road.

Neil Parry, Flintshire County Council (Project Engineer), informed the Council on July 4th, 2024, that the Environment Agency is writing to the landowners about removing impediments from within the main river watercourse.

RESOLVED – that Neil Parry be asked if the Environment Agency has opened dialogue with the landowners.

iii) Banks Farm

Neil Parry, Flintshire County Council (Project Engineer), stated on July 4th, 2024, that he visited the site but could only inspect some of the watercourses due to the time of year. He will revisit the site in the Autumn when the vegetation dies back and will liaise with the Streetscene department if there is any highway flooding or specific issues.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

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

Glyn Jones, Flintshire County Council (Chief Officer, Planning, Environment, and Economy), reported on June 27, 2024, that he had received a response from the agent and been advised that the agent is not instructed in this matter any further; therefore, Glyn Jones has assured the Council that he will now be taking this matter directly to the developer. Furthermore, Mark Tami (MP for Alyn and Deeside) informed the Council on August 16, 2024, that Glyn Jones, Flintshire County Council (Chief Officer, Planning, Environment and Economy), had told him he was following up on the matter directly with the developer.

Cllr Christine Jones declared an interest regarding the condition of the side access to the Spar Shop.

RESOLVED— that the Clerk will photograph and measure the depth of the potholes, forward the information to Glyn Jones, and copy Mark Tami, Neil Cockerton, and Andrew Farrow.

d) Sealand Road – A548 – Extend Street Lighting

Lee Shone, Flintshire County Council (Streetscene Officer), reported to the Council on May 21st, 2024, that he would check what information can be shared from the police report and relay this information back to the Council.

RESOLVED – Lee Shone, Flintshire County Council (Streetscene Officer), will be asked if the stretch of road meets the criteria for extended street lighting.

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

Mike Taylor, Flintshire County Council (Senior Coastal Ranger), has previously advised that the repair cost is £200.00 per bench. The funding source is being investigated, possibly in collaboration with Wilson Auctions. The Council has agreed that the seat formerly situated between the two road bridges should replace one of the four existing seats, as mentioned above. Wayne Jones, Flintshire County Council (Streetscene Officer), has advised that he is waiting on Mike Taylor's regarding the funding.

RESOLVED – that Mike Taylor, Flintshire County Council (Senior Coastal Ranger), be asked for a further progress report on funding measures.

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

Chris Povey, Flintshire County Council (Housing Officer), reported on June 24th, 2024, that he observed overgrown trees on North Green, Sealand Manor. They do not appear to be an immediate risk or obstruction, although visible roots broke up the tarmac, creating a trip hazard on the pathway. These have been raised with the capital works team for inspection and to address the issue. The Council had been informed that the proposed scheme walk on the 12th of July 2024 had been postponed until the 19th of July 2024.

RESOLVED – that Chris Povey, Flintshire County Council (Housing Officer), be asked for an update on the scheme walk.

g) Foxes Lane – Underpass - Water leakage and Graffiti

Wayne Jones, Flintshire County Council (Streetscene Officer), informed the Council on June 24th, 2024, that he would ask the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent (NMWTRA) to inspect the underpass again.

RESOLVED—that Ken Skates (Cabinet Secretary for North Wales and Transport) should be asked about the continued issues regarding the underpass.

24/100 COUNCIL'S STREET LIGHTING

Jamie Bennett, Flintshire County Council (Highways and Trunk Road Operational Manager), advised Council on the 10th May 2024 that the following eight lights to be replaced in the 2024/25 financial year will cost £2,250 per column due to the increased commuted sum of £850 from the previous fee of £750. Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) advised Council that the increase in the commuted fee has added £800 to the upgrade's overall cost, taking the overall fee to £18,000 from £17,200.

The Council agreed to the increased expenditure and, therefore, sanctioned the replacement of 8 lights. These will be the six remaining lights at Riverside Park and two at Cedar Close, then leaving 33 to be replaced and adopted. Twelve years ago, the Council had 169 lights. All current 41 lights are working.

Dylan Williams, Flintshire County Council (Streetlighting Team Leader), informed Council on September 3rd 2024, that the column replacements had started.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/101 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 has advised that the Section 137 Expenditure Limit for 2024/25 is £10.81 per elector. The electoral roll from Flintshire County Council was 2538 in December 2022. So, per elector produces a total of £28,062.76.

The Allocated spend in 2024/25 is Section 137 grants of £3,035.00 and for school milk £0.00.

Spending in 2024/25 so far is £300.00.

A grant request has been received from 50 Plus Action Group (Flintshire) – An up-to-date copy of the bank statement has been provided.

RESOLVED—that, in accordance with Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1971, the Council should award 50 Plus Action Group (Flintshire) a grant of £150.00, which is in the best interests of the area and its inhabitants.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/102 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

PA Number	Application details	Location
COU/000 659/24	Conversion of existing shippon and store to dependant relative annex and store.	Meadowbrook Farm, Green Lane East, Sealand, Deeside, CH5 2LH.
FUL/0004 26/24	Extension to front and rear of the property and creation of a dormer bungalow. Change the external appearance from brick and stone finish to a modern off-white K-Render.	10, Manor Road, Sealand, Deeside, CH5 2SA

RESOLVED – that no objections should be raised with respect to the above planning applications.

24/103 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 £7.85 - re £7.00 per month with an additional charge of 1 cheque x £0.85 = £0.85

Cheque No	Payable to	Details	Amount	VAT	Vat Code	Expenditure Powers

003639	One Voice Wales	Annual Subscription	£677.00			Miscellaneous Powers LGA 1972 (S111)
003640	Flintshire County Council	Monthly street light inspection for 41 columns, April - June 2024	£313.90	£52.32	636613732	Highways Act 1972 (301)
003641	Jo-Lora Ltd	Web Site Maintenance	£384.00	£64.00	294456859	Local Govt Act 1972 (S142)
003642	Ashley Griffiths	August 2024 Salary etc	£939.84			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)
003643	Ashley Griffiths	September 2024 Salary etc	£939.84			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)
Direct Debit Payment	Nest	Pension	£46.90			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)
003644	50 Plus Action Group (Flintshire)	Grant	£150.00			Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1971
003645	50 Plus Action Group (Flintshire)	Payment from the Chair's Fund 2024/25	£50.00			Ancillary Power Local Government Act 1972 (S1)
003646	Flintshire County Council	Supply and installation of 1 Lantern	£237.00	39.50	636613732	Highways Act 1980 (301)

Chair's Signature:

		(Riverside Park)				
Total Spend			£3738.48	£155.82		

24/104 INCOME

Lloyds Bank	Interest payment 09/08/2024	£53.26
Flintshire County Council	Second precept payment	£21333.33
Lloyds Bank	Interest payment 09/09/2024	£49.64
Total Income		£21,436.23

RESOLVED – that the income received be noted.

24/105 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no additional correspondence to report on.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/106 FRIENDS OF SEALAND –ST. BARTHOLOMEW’S CHURCH

Brian Ward (Friends of Sealand) informed the Council that the church had a successful Bart Art exhibition and now has a book swap facility.

RESOLVED- that the report be noted.

24/107 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. On the 30th of April 2024, Richard Roberts advised the Council that Flintshire County Council had allocated £105,000 for its 2024/25 budget for the match-funding of improvement works to children's play areas and informed the Council if they wanted to proceed with the agreed program.

Richard Roberts advised the Council on September 16, 2024, that an order for graphics for a mini scooter and trike area has been put on hold until the Council decides which option to pursue.

Option A, Scooter, and trike area graphics: This cost has been agreed upon, and Sealand Community Council has paid the agreed sum of £1100. Match funding has been processed and allocated at £1100, with a total cost of £2200 for the purchase price and installation. Aura Wales has agreed to pick up the cost of superficial tarmac repairs.

Option B: One skate ramp, approximate cost of £20000, plus a new tarmac surface costing £15000 to allow the operator to function correctly and safely in terms of the transition from ramps to tarmac, total cost of the project approximately £35000.

Option C, A Concrete free-standing skate park costing £85000

RESOLVED— that Richard Roberts, AURA (Play Design Officer), should be advised of the Council's views on the proposed plan.

24/108 PLAY SCHEMES - 2024

Darren Morris (Lead Officer for play development) informed the Council on August 12, 2024, that attendance was significantly up from the previous year, per the snapshot taken that day.

RESOLVED—The council awaits the Clerk's email to Darren Morris regarding all the data on attendance on both sites and any feedback from the children on what they liked and disliked.

24/109 SEALAND COMMUNITY FLOOD PLAN AND FLOOD WARDENS

The Flood Warden team members will meet on October 21st, 2024, at 5:30 PM to discuss the previous Flood Volunteer event held on March 21st, 2024, and how they can work as effectively as possible within the team.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/110 CURRENT SAVINGS STRATEGY

Clerk Ashley Griffiths reported to the Council that the previous Clerk thoroughly analysed how the Council holds its reserves and deduced that the current way of having all monetary assets with one banking group was satisfactory and in line with savings expectations. Furthermore, the Clerk announced he would get more guidance from One Voice Wales on options available to the Council.

RESOLVED – that the Clerk will report to the Council with further guidance.

24/111 REVIEW OF COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Clerk Ashley Griffiths advised that the Council is required to review on an annual basis its policies and procedures – these consist of the Biodiversity Policy / Notice - Annual Investment Strategy - Complaints Procedure –Data Protection Policy - Financial Regulations - Freedom of Information Access Arrangements - Health and Safety Policy – Grants Policy – Information Asset Register, Information Security- Internal Financial Controls Policy - Press and Social Media Policy - Public Participation Protocol - Records Management Policy - Retention of Records Policy - Risk Assessment Processes -

Scheme of Delegation, Multi Location Meetings Policy, Members Self-Regulatory Protocol, Standing Orders and Training Plan. The only documents that need to be updated and endorsed/adopted are the Annual Investment Strategy - Biodiversity Policy / Notice – Information Asset Register, Internal Financial Controls Policy, Risk Assessment Processes, and Training Plan. (Copies have been circulated by email). Copies of all other documents referenced above can be found on the Council’s website.

RESOLVED- that -

- a) the report be noted.
- b) consideration of the Clerk’s Risk Assessment Report be accepted as the formal risk assessment for the 2025/26 financial year.
- c) The key risks relate to the Council’s assets, bank accounts, internal controls, and insurance cover for statutory and other purposes.
- d) The arrangements highlighted in the Risk Assessment detail are that the Council takes all the appropriate steps to minimise risks in conjunction with the documented Internal Financial Controls and that the Risk Assessment 2025/26 be noted.
- e) JDH Business Services Ltd be reappointed as the Council’s internal auditor.
- f) The Annual Investment Strategy 2025/26 - Biodiversity Policy / Notice – Information Asset Register, Internal Financial Controls Policy 2025/26, Risk Assessment Processes and Training Plan be approved.
- g) the following be endorsed without requiring amendments – Complaints Procedure –Data Protection Policy - Financial Regulations - Freedom of Information Access Arrangements - Health and Safety Policy – Grants Policy - Information Security- Press and social media Policy - Public Participation Protocol - Records Management Policy - Retention of Records Policy - Scheme of Delegation, Multi Location Meetings Policy, Members Self-Regulatory Protocol and Standing Orders.

24/112 SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS –2024/25 FINANCIAL YEARS

Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) outlined the expenditure and income for the 2024/25 financial year up to cheque number 003646.

**Sealand Community Council - Summary Accounts
2024/25 Financial Year**

		Actual	Anticipated	Difference
Income	Precept	£42,666.67	£64,000.00	-£21,333.33
	Bank Interest and Refund of Fees	£326.72	£500.00	-£173.28
	VAT Refund Flintshire County Council	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	VAT Refund HMRC	£1,050.52	£2,000.00	-£949.48
	Total	£44,043.91	£66,500.00	-£22,456.09

		Actual	Agreed Spend	Balance
Expenditure	Bank Charges	£62.40	£150.00	£87.60
	Chairman's Fund	£50.00	£800.00	£750.00
	Staffing Costs	£9,170.38	£15,375.00	£6,204.62
	General Admin etc	£1,778.86	£4,500.00	£2,721.14
	Insurances	£625.99	£650.00	£24.01
	Play Schemes and New Play Equipment	£0.00	£18,665.00	£18,665.00
	Street Furniture Repairs	£0.00	£200.00	£200.00
	Street Lighting	£864.80	£26,200.00	£25,335.20
	Council Web Site	£1,152.00	£2,400.00	£1,248.00
	S137 - Grants	£300.00	£3,035.00	£2,735.00
	Total	£14,004.43	£71,975.00	£57,970.57

Current Summary	Balance 1st April 2024 inc £25,000 contingency fund	£55,951.88
	Total Expenditure	£14,004.43
	Total Income	£44,043.91
	Balance	£30,039.48
	Balance as at 16 September 2024	£ 85,991.36
	VAT Costs for 2024/25 Financial Year	£478.94

End of Year Prediction

	Balance as at 1st April 2024	£55,951.88
	Total Anticipated Expenditure	£71,975.00
	Total Anticipated Income	£66,500.00
	Balance Expenditure compared with income at 31st March 2024	-£5,475.00
	Anticipated Closing Balance as at 31 March 2025	£ 50,476.88

Chair's Signature:

24/113 EXTERNAL AUDIT - ANNUAL FINANCIAL RETURN – 2023/24 FINANCIAL YEAR AND NOTICE OF AUDIT

Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) conveyed the council's external audit requirement, noting that the documents will be partly delivered to South Wales via recorded delivery and that the remainder will be uploaded to the objective portal. He also mentioned the public notice and details of the public inspection arrangements for the 2023/24 financial year, specifically that they are on the Council website and notice boards. Inspection runs from the 1st of July to 26 July between 10:00 and 17:00 on Monday to Friday in line with Section 30 of the Public Audit Wales Act 2004, which gives the elector the right to inspect the Council's accounts.

The Clerk advised that the completed Annual Return and most of the requested information were uploaded to the objective portal on July 10th, 2024, and 2 documents were posted via special delivery to Audit Wales on July 18th, 2024.

Publication of audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024

Regulation 15(5) of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 (as amended) requires that by 30 September 2024, Sealand Community Council publish its accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 together with any certificate, opinion, or report issued, given, or made by the Auditor General. The accounting statements in the form of an annual return have been published on the Council's website. However, the accounts are published before the conclusion of the audit.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/114 MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

One Member of the Public raised concerns about activities on Ferry Lane.

24/115 MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

24/116 DATE OF COUNCIL'S NEXT MEETING – 21st OCTOBER 2024.

24/117 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT

DECLARATION OF INTEREST—Two Council members, Cllr Norman Jones, declared an interest to the Council before the meeting concerning 16th September 2024, Agenda item number 8, PA Number COU/000659/24. Cllr Christine Jones declared an interest in minute number 24/99 (c).

The meeting opened at 6 pm and closed at 8:22 pm.

..... Signed 21st October 2024

Barbara Hinds, Chair of the Council