

SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 18th NOVEMBER 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, Mary Southall, Alex Lewis, Gwyneth Bullock, Linda Thomas, Shelley Webber, Jean Fairbrother and Lionel Prouve.

One member of the public.

Ashley Griffiths – Clerk and Financial Officer.

24/145 APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Norman Jones.

RESOLVED – that the apologies be received and accepted.

24/146 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 was emailed to Council members, attached to the notice boards, and added to the Council's website.

RESOLVED – that the Clerk notified the Council that no applications were received for the current vacancy, and the Clerk would liaise with Flintshire County Council regarding readvertising the co-option notice.

24/147 CODE OF CONDUCT DECLARATION

RESOLVED— that it should be noted that one declaration of interest during the meeting, Cllr Christine Jones declared an interest in minute number 24/153 (c).

24/148 MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

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

24/149 CHAIR'S REPORT AND ACTIONS SINCE 21st October 2024

Barbara Hinds (Chair) informed the Council that she attended the Remembrance Service at St Bartholomew's church and read one of the lessons. The chair hosted the regular monthly meeting between the Chair, Vice Chair, and Clerk. This has enabled the Council meetings to run more smoothly by discussing matters before the scheduled meetings for effective management.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/150 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 21ST October 2024

RESOLVED—that the minutes of the Council meeting held on October 21st, 2024, be confirmed as a true and correct record.

24/151 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). At the September, 16th 2024 meeting Minute Number 24/97, it was agreed that 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.

Spent so far - £50.00 to 50 Plus Action Group (Flintshire).

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/152 POLICE ISSUES

a) Community Speed Watch

There was no report.

b) PCSO Aled Hughes – 3292

PCSO Aled Hughes reported to the Council on November 1ST, 2024, that he would attend the November meeting and continue to liaise with the local Councillors through various means of communication on matters requiring the police's attention.

RESOLVED – that the PCSO Aled Hughes be reinvited to attend another Council meeting at his earliest convenience due to police matters stopping him from attending the meeting.

24/153 MATTERS REFERRED TO FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

a) A-frame barrier amendment proposals

Christine Jones (County Councillor) reported to the Council that an amendment to remove the A-frame barriers has been passed, and a pilot project has started with police monitoring a number of areas after several barriers have been removed.

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 November 18th, 2024, that he would be attending several sites on November 21st, 2024, to reinvestigate the ongoing issues and will notify the Environment Agency to write to the landowners about removing impediments from within the main river watercourse once again.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

iii) Banks Farm

Neil Parry, Flintshire County Council (Project Engineer), informed the Council on November 18th, 2024, that he would inspect the watercourse at one of the landowners' sites on November 21st, 2024.

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 November 10, 2024, that Glyn Jones, Flintshire County Council (Chief Officer, Planning, Environment, and Economy), had told him that he had not received any further communication from the developer and would, therefore, seek advice from the Council's legal department on what course of action may be available to the local planning authority to secure a resolution.

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

RESOLVED— that the Council will await a response from the Flintshire County Council's legal department with a December deadline.

d) Sealand Road – A548 – Extend Street Lighting

Lee Shone, Flintshire County Council (Streetscene Officer), reported to the Council on November 18th, 2024, that he has put together a shortlist for funding for areas within the ward to the Welsh Government for extended street lighting. He informed the Council that this particular area has been added to the shortlist and clarified that the criteria for such street lighting consider road traffic incidents.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

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.

Mike Taylor, Flintshire County Council (Senior Coastal Ranger), reported to the Council on 23rd October that he has been diverted to dockside improvements and will return to this issue after Christmas.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

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.

Dawn Kent, Flintshire County Council (Housing Manager), reported on 14 November 2024 that she will request an update from Chris Povey and respond to the Council in due course.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

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 Wayne Jones, Flintshire County Council (Streetscene Officer), be asked to meet for a site meeting with the Chair, Vice Chair, and Clerk to discuss the ongoing situation.

24/154 COUNCIL'S STREET LIGHTING

Jamie Bennet has been asked to advise the Council on which lights should be replaced in the 2025-26 financial year so that the Council can make an informed decision. All the current 33 street lights are working.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/155 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.

The Welsh Government advised the Council on November 4th, 2024, that the Section 137 Expenditure Limit for 2025/26 is £11.10 per elector. The electoral roll from Flintshire County Council in September 2023 was 2565. So, £11.10 per elector produces a total of £28,471.50.

A grant request has been received from Eye 2 Eye – An up-to-date copy of the bank statement has been provided.

RESOLVED – that

- i) The report be noted

- ii) In accordance with Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1971, the Council should award a grant of £200.00 to the Earl Haig Poppy Appeal, which is in the best interests of the area and its inhabitants.
- iii) In accordance with Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1971, the Council should award a grant of £150.00 to Eye 2 Eye Social Club, which is in the best interests of the area and its inhabitants.

Spending in 2024/25 so far is £650.00.

24/156 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Clerk advised the Council that he had not received any planning applications.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/157 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 £8.70 - re £7.00 per month with an additional charge of 2 cheques x £0.85 = £1.70

Cheque No	Payable to	Details	Amount	VAT	Vat Code	Expenditure Powers
Direct Debit Payment	Nest	Pension	£46.90			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)
003656	Society of Local Council Clerks	Subscription Renewal	£190.00			Miscellaneous Powers LGA 1972 (S111)
003657	Ashley Griffiths	November 2024 Salary etc	£939.84			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)
003658	Ashley Griffiths	Refund – Cable ties for the street poppies x2	£10.98			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)

003659	Earl Haig Poppy Appeal	Grant Payment	£200.00			Local Govt Act 1972 (S137)
003660	Eye 2 Eye	Grant Payment	£150.00			Local Govt Act 1972 (S137)
Total Spend			£1,537.72	£0.00		

24/158 INCOME

Lloyds Bank	Interest payment 11/11/2024	£54.00
Total Income		£54.00

RESOLVED – that the income received be noted.

24/159 CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk informed the Council that the majority of the Councillors had attended the in-house Code of Conduct training prior to the meeting starting at 6:00 PM. He also advised the Council that he had collected the Communication board from the health authority.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/160 FRIENDS OF SEALAND –ST. BARTHOLOMEW’S CHURCH

Brian Ward (Friends of Sealand) informed the Council that the remembrance service went well, with several Councillors in attendance, and the Christmas service will be on December 18th.

RESOLVED- that the report be noted.

24/161 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 October 22, 2024, that an order for graphics for a mini scooter and trike area has been placed and will be completed when the weather conditions are best

suited for the hydration process and to ensure proper hardening, attaining desirable strength and durability is met.

RESOLVED— that the report be noted.

24/162 PLAY SCHEMES - 2024

Darren Morris (Lead Officer for play development) informed the Council on November 18, 2024, that all parents were sent a link to their end-of-summer survey and the Playscheme Facebook page. He will circulate that information soon. Furthermore, Darren Morris informed the Council that some Councils have considerably more money to spend on playschemes, which is why some areas have seen additional staff, food sourced, and additional items.

RESOLVED—that the report be noted.

24/163 SEALAND COMMUNITY FLOOD PLAN AND FLOOD WARDENS

The Clerk has organised a hybrid Flood Warden meeting with Gwenno from Natural Resources Wales on behalf of the Flood Warden team members for 5:30 PM on January 13th, 2025.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/164 CURRENT SAVINGS STRATEGY

The Clerk (Ashley Griffiths) reported to the Council that two banking groups were brought to his attention because some Councils use them.

i) Co-Operative bank

95 Day Notice

- Withdrawals made via telephone banking to your current account
- Interest rate 2.40% gross / 2.42% AER variable calculated daily and paid twice a year

35 Day Notice

- Withdrawals made via telephone banking to your current account
- Interest rate 2.03% gross / 2.04% AER variable calculated daily and paid twice a year

Business Select Instant Access

- Instant access online, by phone or in branch
- Interest rate 1.53% gross / 1.53% AER variable calculated daily and paid twice a year

ii) Unity trust bank

90 Day fixed term deposit account

- **3.06%** Interest Rate* (£85k to £10 million), **3.16%** Interest Rate* (£10m and above) (as of December 2023)
- 90-day fixed term (no access)

30 Day fixed term deposit account

- 2.96% Interest Rate (as of August 2023)
- 30-day fixed term (no access)

Instant access savings account

- 2.60% Interest Rate (as of 06/09/2024)
- Variable access with no notice of withdrawal required

RESOLVED – that the Clerk would report to the Council with additional information regarding the notice period.

24/165 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 003660. Note that an outstanding cheque (No: 003632) from June has not been banked by the organisation that received it, totaling £384.00.

**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	£437.54	£500.00	-£62.46
	VAT Refund Flintshire County Council	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	VAT Refund HMRC	£1,050.52	£2,000.00	-£949.48
	Total	£44,154.73	£66,500.00	-£22,345.27

		Actual	Agreed Spend	Balance
Expenditure	Bank Charges	£79.80	£150.00	£70.20
	Chairman's Fund	£50.00	£800.00	£750.00
	Staffing Costs	£12,162.80	£15,375.00	£3,212.20
	General Admin etc	£2,231.84	£4,500.00	£2,268.16
	Insurances	£625.99	£650.00	£24.01
	Play Schemes and New Play Equipment	£7,663.20	£18,665.00	£11,001.80
	Street Furniture Repairs	£0.00	£200.00	£200.00
	Street Lighting	£19,747.50	£26,200.00	£6,452.50
	Council Web Site	£1,536.00	£2,400.00	£864.00
	S137 - Grants	£650.00	£3,035.00	£2,385.00
	Total	£44,747.13	£71,975.00	£27,227.87

Current Summary	Balance 1st April 2024 inc £25,000 contingency fund	£55,951.88
	Total Expenditure	£44,747.13
	Total Income	£44,154.73
	Balance	-£592.40
	Balance as at 18 November 2024	£ 55,359.48
	VAT Costs for 2024/25 Financial Year	£714.06

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

24/166 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.

24/167 MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

24/168 MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

One Member of the Public raised concerns about the removal of the A-frames and the impact it is causing on residents.

24/169 DATE OF COUNCIL'S NEXT MEETING – 16th December 2024.

24/170 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT

DECLARATION OF INTEREST— One Council member declared an interest to the Council. Cllr Christine Jones declared an interest in minute number 24/153 (c).

The meeting opened at 6 pm and closed at 8:00 pm.

..... Signed 16th December 2024

Barbara Hinds, Chair of the Council