

SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL

DECISIONS SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 28th APRIL 2025 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, Bob James, and Alex Lewis.

Others: Robin Davies – Headteacher – Sealand Primary School.

One member of the public.

Two Members of GWELLA (Flintshire Libraries and Leisure Limited).

Officer: Ashley Griffiths – Clerk and Financial Officer.

24/301 APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Shelley Webber, Jean Fairbrother, Linda Thomas, Gwyneth Bullock, Norman Jones and Lionel Prouvé.

RESOLVED – that the apologies be received and accepted.

24/310 CHAIR'S FUND 2024/25 AND 2025/26

Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) reminded the Council that the agreed spend for the Chair's Fund for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial year is £800.00. Payments are being made under expenditure powers—Ancillary Power Local Government Act 1972 (S1). The full allocation for the 2024/25 was spent.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/314 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.

Spending in 2024/25 so far is £1650.00 – Sealand Happy Group £150.00, 50 Plus Action Group £150.00, Earl Haig Poppy Appeal £200.00, Eye 2 Eye £150.00, and Sealand County Primary School £1000.00.

The allocated spending in 2025/26 is Section 137 grants of £3,035.00.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/315 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

PA Number	Application details	Location
FUL/000056/25	The erection of two single-storey units and alterations to the associated bay layout	Plot A, The Airfields, Northern Gateway, Sealand, Flintshire, CH5 2RD.

FUL/0002 69/25	New single-storey rear extension, associated internal works and demolition of large existing conservatory. New solar panels for the main front and rear pitched roofs, and battery storage in the garage space.	1, St Bartholomews Court, Sealand, Deeside, CH5 2QT.
-------------------	---	--

RESOLVED – that –

No objections be raised in respect of the above planning applications - FUL/000056/25 & FUL/000269/25.

24/316 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 (28/03/2025) is £16.50 - re £8.50 per month with an additional charge of 8 cheques x £1.00 = £8.00.

Cheque No	Payable to	Details	Amount	VAT	Vat Code	Expenditure Powers
Direct Debit Payment	NEST	Pension	£49.95			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)
003691	Wainwrights Accountants	Payroll reporting/pension auto-enrollment	£366.00	£61.00	936721925	Local Govt Act 1972 (S111)
003692	Flintshire County Council	Street lighting supply and installation 1no 15w led/1 no photocell (Ferry Lane) Column No. CTM012	£262.80	£43.80	636613732	Highways Act 1980 (301)
003693	Flintshire County Council	Monthly street lighting inspections for January, February and March 2025	£313.90	£52.32	636613732	Highways Act 1972 (301)
003694	Jolora Ltd	Website Maintenance 2 months	£384.00	£64.00	294456859	Local Govt Act 1972 (S142)

003695	Jolora Ltd	Domain name renewal	£24.00	£4.00	294456859	Local Govt Act 1972 (S142)
003696	One Voice Wales	Annual Subscription	£718.00			Miscellaneous Powers LGA 1972 (S111)
003697	HMRC	PAYE – Income Tax and National Insurance January, February and March	£926.94			Local Govt Act 1972 (S142)
003698	Ashley Griffiths	April 2025, Salary & allowance	£969.47			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)
Total Spend			£4,015.06	£225.12		

24/323 SEALAND PLAY AREAS

Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) contacted Richard Robert (Play Design Officer) to formally request a comprehensive report outlining the projected lifespan of equipment in Sealand's play areas. The report identified any apparatus anticipated to reach the end of its functional life in the near future. This information is sought to enable the Council to make a fully informed and strategic decision regarding prioritising and scheduling future equipment replacements.

RESOLVED— that Richard Roberts be asked to clarify the match funding of the items identified.

24/325 CURRENT SAVINGS STRATEGY

Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) reported to the Council that the previous Clerk had thoroughly analysed how the Council holds its reserves and deduced that the current method of having all monetary assets with one banking group was satisfactory and in line with savings expectations.

The Council has considered the proposal to transition from traditional cheque book payments to online banking platforms to modernise financial operations.

AND WHEREAS, the Council acknowledged the potential benefits of online banking, including increased efficiency and convenience, but also recognises the associated cybersecurity risks, including data breaches, phishing attacks, and unauthorised access to financial information;

AND WHEREAS, the Council affirms the importance of maintaining secure, reliable and verifiable practices, particularly an institutionally approved cybersecurity framework to support online transactions;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, following thorough deliberation, the Council adopts the following resolution.

RESOLVED—That the Council shall continue to use chequebook payments as the primary method of financial transactions, as this method currently presents lower cybersecurity exposure and maintains

a verifiable paper trail until the banking institution discontinues chequebook services or until the Council is satisfied that sufficient cybersecurity protocols and risk mitigation measures are in place to support a secure transition.

24/327 SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL – BANK RECONCILIATION – 31ST MARCH 2025

In line with the Council's Financial regulations and audit requirements, the Clerk submits details of the Council's overall bank balance in respect of – as at the 30th June, 30th September, 31st December and 31st March each year.

Account – No 0388217 - £6,346.66 - Account – No 7326098 - £58,664.97. Total - £65,011.63

Unpaid – Cheque number	Payable to	Amount - £
003678	Jolora Ltd	384.00
003681	Information Commissioner Office	52.00
003682	Jolora Ltd (JUNE REPLACEMENT)	384.00
003687	Sealand County Primary School	50.00
003688	50 Plus Action Group	50.00
003689	St Bartholomew's church council	50.00
Total		970.00

Total bank accounts - £65,011.63 less unpaid cheques of £970.00 as outlined above, leaves a net balance of £64,041.63. This amount cross-references with the summary of income and expenditure report as at 31st March 2025.

The Vice Chair signed two hard copies of the bank reconciliation statements.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

24/328 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25 FINANCIAL YEAR

The Clerk outlined the requirements for the internal audit and referred to the audit form completed to the members of Council for information on how the audit is conducted. The form must include various working papers and documentation; failure to do so may result in a delay in completing the council's internal audit and additional audit costs. Subsequently, this could delay the External Audit.

The Clerk advised Council that he had submitted the Audit checklist form and annual return, uploaded various documents to the online portal for JDH Business Services Ltd, and handed over additional documents for the internal audit on April 24, 2025, at Pontblyddyn Cricket Club.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

24/329 EXTERNAL AUDIT – ANNUAL FINANCIAL RETURN 2024/25 FINANCIAL YEAR

The Clerk gave an overview of the requirement to Council for the external audit noting that the documents can be sent to the Cardiff office via recorded delivery or By secure data transfer via Objective Connect with a deadline of the 30th June 2025 and mandated the Council to publish an audit notice by the 16th of June on all notice boards and Council website for a minimum of 14 calendar days, after the forementioned period it is the requirement of Council to allow the electors 20 working days

of inspection from the 1st July to the 28th of July. Section 30 of the Public Audit Wales Act 2004 gives the rights of the elector to inspect the Council's accounts.

The clerk received the audit notice 2025 for the audit of accounts and noted to council that he will send the relevant documents to the auditors in the near future after he has received the internal audit back and outlined the accounts for Council in the Local Council for Wales Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Annual governance statement – Part 1 We acknowledge as the members of the Council our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 as outlined by the Clerk.

Expenditure under S137 Local Government Act 1972 and S2 Local Government Act 2000 Section 137(1) of the 1972 Act permits the Council to spend on activities for which it has no other specific powers if the Council considers that the expenditure is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, the area or any part of it, or all or some of its inhabitants, providing that the benefit is commensurate with the expenditure. Section 137(3) also permits the Council to incur expenditure for certain charitable and other purposes. The maximum expenditure that can be incurred under both section 137(1) and (3) for the financial year 2024-25 was £10.81 per elector. In 2024-25, the Council made payments totalling £1,650.00 under section 137. These payments are included within 'Other payments' in the Accounting Statement.

The Clerk advised that the report / Annual Return will again be presented to the Council following the completion of the internal audit. Following certification by the Responsible Financial Officer, the Council is required to approve the Annual Governance Statement Part 2.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

24/331 ONE VOICE WALES DIGITAL MATURITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVED DIGITAL OPERATIONS

Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) informed the Council that he had completed the One Voice Wales programme of Digital Maturity Assessments for councils and had received the conclusion, which included several recommendations that were not mandatory. Furthermore, he informed the Council that he had one quote for a hosting package and the current provider's CMS Proposal for integration on the current website.

RESOLVED—Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) will present the Council with further hosting packages at the next meeting.

24/332 PAYMENTS TO MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS 2025/26 FINANCIAL YEAR

The Clerk has circulated a form for completion concerning the 2025/26 financial year to 7 Councillors present at the meeting, whom completed and signed the form advising that they declined the payments. This leaves 6 Councillors to complete and sign the form.

RESOLVED—that the report be noted.

24/336 DATE OF COUNCIL'S NEXT MEETING – 19th MAY 2025.

24/337 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 24/312(b).

The meeting opened at 6:00 pm and closed at 8:40 pm.

..... Signed 19th May 2025

Chairperson of the Council