

SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 19th MAY 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, Alex Lewis, Shelley Webber, Jean Fairbrother, Gwyneth Bullock, Norman Jones, Lionel Prouvé and Linda Thomas (Hybrid).

OFFICER: Ashley Griffiths – Clerk and Financial Officer.

25/1 APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

RESOLVED – that all members of the Council were present; no apologies were necessary.

25/2 IN-HOUSE TRAINING

It was noted that in-house training will be organised and scheduled in the forthcoming months. Further details will be communicated in due course.

25/3 SEALAND COMMUNITY FLOOD PLAN AND FLOOD WARDENS

Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) and Shelley Webber (Flood Warden) liaised with Gwenno (NRW) to develop a draft plan, which NRW will transcribe into the official flood plan document.

RESOLVED – that Gwenno be contacted to organise a hybrid meeting once the official flood plan has been drafted.

25/4 CODE OF CONDUCT DECLARATION

RESOLVED - that it should be noted that two declarations of interest during the meeting were made:

- Cllr Christine Jones declared an interest in minute number 25/12 (b).

- Cllr Lionel Prouvé declared an interest in minute number 25/15.

25/5 MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

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

25/6 CHAIR'S REPORT AND ACTIONS SINCE 28th APRIL 2025

Barbara Hinds (Chair) formally noted that the scheduled monthly meeting between the Chair, Vice Chair, and Clerk was duly convened and expressed the hope that such regular meeting would be maintained moving forward, in the interest of continuity and effectiveness. In addition, the Chair reported her attendance at the recent VE Day service held at St Bartholomew's church, and expressed gratitude to the Council for its ongoing support and community throughout the year.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

25/7 ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THE COUNCIL YEAR 2025/26

A single nomination was put forward and duly proposed and seconded – Councillor David Wisinger.

RESOLVED – that Councillor David Wisinger be elected as Chairman of Sealand Community Council for 2025/26.

The chairman signed the required Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

25/8 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR FOR THE COUNCIL YEAR 2025/26

There were two nominations proposed and seconded – Councillor Alex Lewis and Councillor Shelley Webber.

RESOLVED – that Councillor Alex Lewis be elected as Vice Chairman for 2025/26.

25/9 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 28TH APRIL 2025

RESOLVED—that the minutes of the Council meeting held on April 28th, 2025, be confirmed as a true and correct record.

25/10 CHAIR'S FUND 2025/26

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

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

25/11 POLICE ISSUES

a) Community Speed Watch

There was no report.

b) PCSO Aled Hughes – 3292

It was reported that PCSO Aled Hughes had recently contacted County Councillor Christine Jones to discuss the ongoing drug issues and will monitor the situation.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

25/12 MATTERS REFERRED TO FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

a) Sealand Ditches

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

Neil Parry (Project Engineer, Flintshire County Council) reported to the Council on May 19, 2025, that all previously identified impediments have been addressed. Nevertheless, he has requested external clarification from NRW concerning the installation of the piped drainage system. He received notice to consult the planning department within the organisation.

RESOLVED – that Neil Parry will be asked for a report on the piped drainage system from the planning department.

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

Neil Parry, Project Engineer (Flintshire County Council), informed the Council on May 19, 2025, that he had visited the site and met with NRW regarding the impediments within the main river watercourse. He has requested NRW to conduct a site survey.

RESOLVED – that Neil Parry will be asked for the NRW report once the survey has been completed.

iii) Banks Farm

Neil Parry, Project Engineer (Flintshire County Council), informed the Council on May 19, 2025, that he had inspected the watercourse at one of the landowners' sites and observed that one

section had been cleared of all impediments and received confirmation from the landowner that all impediments have been removed, further adding a site visit is scheduled for the autumn.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

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

Glyn Jones, Flintshire County Council (Chief Officer, Planning, Environment, and Economy), reported to the Council on March 17, 2025, that Flintshire County Council attempts to seek a reasonable address of any issues without the need to resort to formal action. However, where our reasonable attempts do not yield the desired outcome, we will pursue formal action where it is expedient. Further correspondence will be reported in due course.

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

RESOLVED— that Glyn Jones be asked to provide a further update on the progress of the ongoing legal issues.

c) Sealand Road – A548 – Extend Street Lighting

Lee Shone, Streetscene Officer (Flintshire County Council), reported to the Council on November 18, 2024, that he has compiled a shortlist of funding areas within the ward for extended street lighting in collaboration with the Welsh Government. 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 Lee Shone and Darrel Jones be requested to provide an update on the shortlist.

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

Mike Taylor, Senior Coastal Ranger (Flintshire County Council), informed the Council on May 19, 2025, that round 2 of the UK SPS Fund is scheduled to commence imminently. He has thoroughly reviewed the funds allocated for the benches in question and is currently obtaining further quotations for similar benches to be installed along the coastal path. Along with a possible 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 for Mike Taylor regarding the funding.

RESOLVED – that Mike Taylor be requested to provide a further update on the progress of the quotations and funding.

e) Problem with Trees- Orchard Way and North Green/South Green at Sealand Manor

Councillor Christine Jones reported to the Council that Alex Philips (Housing Officer) was unavailable for a scheduled walkabout to examine the trees on Sealand Manor and Orchard Way.

RESOLVED—Alex Philips (Housing Officer) be requested to provide a comprehensive report regarding the tree inspection and the removal of the tree stump on Orchard Way.

f) Foxes Lane – Underpass - Water leakage and Graffiti

Wayne Jones, Streetscene Officer (Flintshire County Council), informed the Council on January 14th that he would investigate this issue further. However, he conveyed that during his last inspection, groundwater was present due to the very high-water table resulting from current conditions.

RESOLVED—that Ken Skates (Cabinet Secretary for Transport) be asked for a further update on the site inspection and that Wayne Jones be informed that an inspection is needed and arrangements be made for the underpass to be jet washed.

g) Garden City - HGV Issues

Councillor Christine Jones updated the Council on safety measures in Garden City, informing them that more prominent signage has been ordered in response to concerns about HGV vehicles and the size of the temporary signage.

RESOLVED— that Ian Bushell (Streetscene Maintenance Manager for South and Structures) be asked to amend the signage on the Garden City Industrial Estate.

h) Ferry Lane Footbridge

Robin Nursaw (Streetscene Maintenance Management Team) informed the Council on March 24, 2025, that a specialist consultant will have to be appointed to provide a detailed report on the footbridge's ongoing issues. The previous report was not available.

RESOLVED— that Ian Bushell be asked for an update and the Chief Executive of Flintshire Council be copied into the email.

i) Pavements - Sealand

Barbara Hinds (Chair) informed the Council that some of the pavements around Sealand have been cleared, but many overgrown branches and moss still cover the pathways.

RESOLVED— that the Council will contact Wayne Jones, Flintshire County Council (Streetscene Officer).

j) Banks Farm

Glyn Jones reported to the Council that most large arable farms have what most would call heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) visiting such sites, and any speeding issues need to be reported to North Wales Police.

RESOLVED— that the Council will contact PCSO Aled Hughes regarding the speeding issues.

25/13 COUNCIL'S STREET LIGHTING

Dylan Williams (Street Lighting Team Leader) has been asked to advise the Council on several of the selected replacement lights for the 2025-26 financial year. All 33 of the current street lights are working.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted

25/14 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 spending in 2025/26 is Section 137 grants of £3,035.00.

Spending in 2025/26 so far is nil.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

25/15 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

PA Number	Application details	Location
FUL/000366/25	Rear one-storey ground floor extension and window change.	74 Sealand Road, Deeside, CH5 2RJ.
FUL/001090/24	Retrospective application for extension to recycling unit and hard surfacing of an outside storage area to the north of the building extension, and full planning permission for new drainage infrastructure to the south of the building.	Unit 103 Welsh Road, Deeside, CH5 2LR
ADV/000292/25	X2 internally illuminated fascia signs, X2 internally illuminated totem signs.	Plot 2A, The Airfields, Northern Gateway, Sealand, CH52RD

Cllr Lionel Prouvé declared an interest regarding planning application number: FUL/000366/25

RESOLVED – that – No objections be raised in respect of the above planning applications - FUL/000366/25, FUL/001090/24 AND ADV/000292/25.

25/16 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 (30/04/2025) is £10.50 - re £8.50 per month with an additional charge of 2 cheques x £1.00 = £2.00.

Cheque No	Payable to	Details	Amount	VAT	VAT Code	Expenditure Powers
Direct debit	NEST	Pension	£49.95			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)
003699	GWELLA	Fitting of the Communication board at the Welsh Road play area	£135.60	£22.60	477945233	Local Govt (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 Section 19
003700	Zurich Municipal	Insurance	£492.27			Local Govt Act 1972 (S111)
003701	JDH Business	Internal audit 2024/25	£403.20	£67.20	771744412	Local Govt Act 1972 (S111)

	Services Ltd					
003702	Ashley Griffiths	May Salary, allowance & mileage claims	£986.47			Local Govt Act 1972 (S112)
Total spend			£2,067.49	£89.80		

25/17 INCOME

Flintshire County Council	1 st Precept payment 2025/26	21,333.34
Lloyds Bank	Interest Payment 09/05/2025	£49.95
HMRC	VAT Refund 2024/25	£976.18
Total Income		£22,359.47

RESOLVED – that the income received be noted.

25/18 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no additional correspondence to report on.

25/19 FRIENDS OF SEALAND –ST. BARTHOLOMEW’S CHURCH

Brian Ward (Friends of Sealand) informed the Council that the annual plant sale and a model railway exhibition on Saturday and Sunday, 11th May 2025, was a success.

RESOLVED- that the report be noted.

24/20 WELSH ROAD SKATE FACILITY

Richard Roberts (Play Design Officer) reported to the Council that the graphics for the mini scooter and trike area will be installed within the next 2 weeks.

RESOLVED— that the report be noted.

25/21 WELSH ROAD PLAY AREA

Richard Roberts (Play Design Officer) advised the Council that the Communications Board has now been affixed to the fence in the Welsh Road play area.

RESOLVED— that the report be noted.

25/22 SEALAND PLAY AREAS

Richard Robert (Play Design Officer) informed the Council on 30th April that, after the Council requested a comprehensive report outlining the projected lifespan of equipment in Sealand’s play areas. The report identified two rotating play items, estimated to be over 20 years old, on the Welsh Road and Sealand Manor play areas, which require replacement with inclusive roundabouts to meet the needs of all individuals.

RESOLVED— that the Council agreed to match fund the replacement of the Welsh Road play area roundabout in the 2025/26 financial year and replace the Sealand Manor roundabout in the 2026/27 financial year.

25/23 PLAY SCHEMES – 2025

There was no report

25/24 SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS – 2025/26 FINANCIAL YEARS

Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) outlined the expenditure and income for the 2025/26 financial year up to cheque number 003702. Note that outstanding cheque numbers not banked by organisations:

- (No: 003692) from April 2025, totalling £262.80
 - (No:003693) from April 2025, totalling £313.90
 - (No:003694) from April 2025, totalling £384.00
 - (No:003695 from April 2025, totalling £24.00
- Totalling £984.70

Sealand Community Council - Summary Accounts 2025/26 Financial Year						
Income				Actual	Anticipated	Difference
	Precept			£21,333.34	£64,000.00	-£42,666.66
	Bank Interest and Refund of Fees			£89.72	£525.10	-£435.38
	VAT Refund Flintshire County Council			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	VAT Refund HMRC			£976.18	£1,000.00	-£23.82
	Total			£22,399.24	£65,525.10	-£43,125.86
Expenditure				Actual	Agreed Spend	Balance
	Bank Charges			£10.50	£150.00	£139.50
	Chairman's Fund			£0.00	£800.00	£800.00
	Staffing Costs			£2,913.78	£14,592.65	£11,678.87
	General Admin inc			£1,556.20	£4,266.64	£2,710.44
	Insurances			£492.27	£650.00	£157.73
	Play Schemes and New Play Equipment			£135.60	£16,813.00	£16,677.40
	Street Furniture Repairs			£0.00	£200.00	£200.00
	Street Lighting			£576.70	£28,750.00	£28,173.30
	Election Costs			£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	Council Web Site			£408.00	£2,400.00	£1,992.00
	S137 - Grants			£0.00	£3,035.00	£3,035.00
		Total			£6,093.05	£71,657.29
Current Summary	Balance 1st April 2025 inc £25,000 contingency fund			£64,041.63		
	Total Expenditure			£6,093.05		
	Total Income			£22,399.24		
	Balance			£16,306.19		
	Balance as at 19th May 2025			£ 80,347.82		
	VAT Costs for 2025/26 Financial Year			£306.72		
End of Year Prediction						
	Balance as at 1st April 2025			£64,041.63		
	Total Anticipated Expenditure			£71,657.29		
	Total Anticipated Income			£65,525.10		
	Balance Expenditure compared with income at 31st March 2025			-£6,132.19		
	Anticipated Closing Balance as at 31 March 2026			£ 57,909.44		

25/25 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024/25 FINANCIAL YEAR

The Clerk advised the Council that JDH Business Services Limited reported on 7 May 2025 that the Council's systems of internal controls are in place, adequate for the intended purpose, and effective, subject to the issue reported in the action plan.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

25/26 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 for 2025, which pertains to the audit of accounts, and informed the council that he would send the relevant documents to the auditors soon after receiving the internal audit report and outlining the accounts for the Council in the Local Council for Wales Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The Clerk advised that, as RFO/Clerk, he had signed the Certification of the Annual Return on the 19th May 2025, certifying that the account statements contained in the Annual Return present fairly the financial position of the Council, its income and expenditures or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be, for the year ended 1 March 2025.

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 website, with a final version being added on completion of the Audit.
- iii) the Chair be authorised to sign the Annual Return under resolution 25/26 iii) confirming that the accounting statements and Annual Governance Statements are approved by Council.

25/27 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 two 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.

Ashley Griffiths (Clerk) informed the Council that Dyfrig Henson (Audit Wales) contacted the Council on the 30th day of January to ask for further information to be sent to the audit office due to the previously uploaded documents to the Objective Connect portal having become inaccessible to him 14 because the information was not extracted. Dyfrig Henson is working on the file, so all previously sent information has been reuploaded to the portal.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

25/28 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, the Clerk presented a comprehensive report outlining a range of website hosting and content management system options, including the current provider and alternative packages. The report included a comparative analysis of features, costs, ease of use, and feedback from other Councils.

Following a thorough discussion and consideration of the options, members recognised the advantages of the Clerk's preferred choice, particularly in terms of value for money, user-friendliness, and positive experiences reported by comparable councils.

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

RESOLVED— that the Council shall proceed to explore the setup and migration to the alternative hosting provider, in line with the Clerk's recommendation.

25/29 PAYMENTS TO MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS 2025/26 FINANCIAL YEAR

The Clerk has recirculated a form for completion concerning the 2025/26 financial year to the Councillors who were unable to attend the April meeting. These Councillors completed and signed the form, bringing the total number of completed forms to 12, and advised that they declined the payments. This leaves one Councillor to complete and sign the form.

RESOLVED—that the report be noted.

25/30 MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

25/31 MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

25/32 ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PASSING OF FORMER COUNCILLOR

With great sadness, it was reported that the funeral of the former long-serving Councillor and chairperson, John A. Dodds, would take place at St. Bartholomew's Church, Sealand, on May 22, 2025.

25/33 DATE OF COUNCIL'S NEXT MEETING – 16th JUNE 2025.

25/34 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT DECLARATION OF INTEREST— Two Council members declared an interest to the Council. Cllr

Christine Jones declared an interest in minute number 24/312(b) and Cllr Lionel Prouvé declared an interest in minute number 25/15.

The meeting opened at 6:00 pm and closed at 8:02 pm.

..... Signed 16th June 2025, Chairperson of the Council