

**SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 19<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2021 ON LINE VIA GO TO MEETING**

**PRESENT: Councillors** Barbara Hinds (Chair), Gwyneth Bullock, Jean Fairbrother, Ashley Griffiths, Bob James, Chris Jones (County Councillor), Norman Jones (Vice - Chair), Alex Lewis, Mary Southall, Mike Walker, Brian Ward and David Wisinger.

Peter Richmond: Clerk and Financial Officer  
One member of the public

**20/279                    REPORT – ANNUAL FINANCIAL RETURN – 2019/20**

The Clerk advised that he has been informed by BDO that on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales, they have now completed the audit. They provided the following documents; - Notice of Conclusion of Audit - Notes regarding the advertisement of the Conclusion of the Audit - Issues arising from the audit - Annual Return. These have been emailed to members of Council.

The following matter has been raised to draw items to the attention of Sealand Community Council. This matter came to the attention of BDO LLP during the audit of the annual return for the year ended 31 March 2020

Issue Raised - Responsible Financial Officer certification after approval by council. The Clerk should have signed and dated the Certification before the council meeting date of 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

The Clerk advised that a copy of the Issues Reports and the Annual Return has been added to the Council's web site. The Notice of Completion of Audit has been added to the Council's web site and notice boards.

RESOLVED - that the –

- i)        report be noted.
- ii)      Annual Return as received from BDO on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales be approved and accepted by Council.
- iii)     reported Issue Raised be noted as reference for completion of future's years Annual Returns.

**20/280                    SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL – BANK RECONCILIATION –**  
**31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2021**

The Clerk advised that in line with council's Financial Regulations and audit requirements he submits details of the Council's overall bank balances in respect of – as at 30th June, 30th September, 31st December and 31st March each year.

The position as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 is – Account - no – 0388217 - £10,954.17 and Account - no – 7326098 - £35,565.61. Total - £46,519.78

Less unpaid cheques –

Cheque number	Dated	Payable to	Amount
003403	15 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	Jolora Ltd	£576.00
003409	15 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	ICO	£40.00 – presented on 16 <sup>th</sup> April 2021
Total			£616.00

Total bank accounts – £46,519.78 less unpaid cheques of £616.00 leaves a nett balance of £45,903.78. This amount cross references with the summary of income and expenditure report as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 as circulated by the Clerk. The bank reconciliation statement including copies of the appropriate bank statements was circulated to all members of Council by email 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2021 and three copies and have been signed by Vice Chair.

RESOLVED: - that the report be noted

## **20/281      SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS – 2020/21 FINANCIAL YEAR**

The Clerk outlined the finalised expenditure and income for the 2020/21 financial year and advised that the 2020/21 VAT claim for £799.60 has been sent to HMRC. This information was circulated by email before the meeting.

2020/21 Financial Year		Actual	Anticipated	Difference
<b>Income</b>				
General Admin Inc. Precept		£57,000.00	£57,000.00	£0.00
Bank Interest		£10.58	£22.00	-£11.42
Cancelled payment from 2019/20		£50.00	£0.00	£50.00
VAT Refund		£467.56	£400.00	£67.56
Milk Claims		£109.13	£400.00	-£290.87
<b>Total</b>		<b>£57,637.37</b>	<b>£57,822.00</b>	<b>-£184.73</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Bank Charges		£90.12	£60.00	-£30.10
Chair's Fund		£800.00	£800.00	£0.00
Staffing Costs		£11,205.99	£10,669.00	-£536.99
Admin Costs inc printer cartridges		£3,334.74	£2,840.00	-£494.74
Council Web Site		£3,262.00	£2,304.00	-£958.00
Insurances		£770.12	£875.00	£104.88
Defibrillator – LGA Act 2000(S2)		£0.00	£75.00	-£75.00
Play Schemes and New Equipment		£1,743.28	£10,500.00	£8,756.72
Highways		£0.00	£2,500.00	£2,500.00
Street Lighting		£30,087.72	£23,700.00	-£6,387.72
CCTV Maintenance		£0.00	£250.00	£250.00
Grants – Section 137		£1,350.00	£2,500.00	£1,150.00
School Milk – Section 137		£165.00	£2,800.00	£2,635.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>£52,808.95</b>	<b>£59,873.00</b>	<b>£7,064.05</b>
Current Summary	Balance as at 31 March 2020 including £25,000 contingency fund.	£41,075.46		
	Total expenditure	£52,808.95		
	Total income	£57,637.27		
	Balance in year spend	£4,828.32		
	Overall balance as 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021	£45,903.78		
VAT Costs for 2020/21 financial year		£799.60		

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**20/283**            **INTERNAL AUDIT 2020/21 FINANCIAL YEAR**

The Clerk has previously outlined the requirement on council for the internal audit and referred to the audit form (that has been emailed to members of council for information) he is required to include various working papers and documentation when presenting for audit. Failure to do so may result in a delay in completing council's internal audit and additional audit costs. The internal audit commenced Thursday 15th April 2021 with a return of all documents on Thursday 22nd April 2021.

RESOLVED: - that the report be noted.

**20/284**            **SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS – 2021/22 FINANCIAL YEAR**

The Clerk outlined the expenditure and income for the 2020/21 financial year up to cheque number 0034198. This information was circulated by email before the meeting.

2021/22 Financial Year	Actual	Anticipated	Difference
<b>Income</b>			
General Admin Inc. Precept	£0.00	£57,000.00	-£57,000.00
Bank Interest	£0.29	£5.00	-£4.71
VAT Refund	£0.00	£800.00	-£800.00
Milk Claims	£0.00	£200.00	-£200.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£0.29</b>	<b>£58,005.00</b>	<b>£58,004.71</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Anticipated</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Bank Charges	£0.00	£60.00	-£60.00
Chair's Fund	£0.00	£800.00	-£800.00
Staffing Costs	£933.50	£11,396.00	-£10,462.50
Admin Costs inc printer cartridges	£875.33	£2,640.00	-£1,764.67
Council Web Site	£0.00	£2,400.00	-£2,400.00
Insurances	£669.51	£770.00	£100.49
Defibrillator – LGA Act 2000(S2)	£0.00	£75.00	-£75.00
Play Schemes and New Equipment	£0.00	£10,500.00	-£10,500.00
Highways	£0.00	£1,600.00	-£1,600.00
Street Lighting	£0.00	£26,950.00	-£26,950.00
Grants – Section 137	£0.00	£2,200.00	-£2,200.00
School Milk – Section 137	£0.00	£2,000.00	-£2,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,478.34</b>	<b>£61,391.00</b>	<b>£58,912.66</b>

Current Summary	Balance as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021 including £25,000 contingency fund.	£45,903.78
	Total expenditure	£2,478.34
	Total income	£0.29
	Balance	£2,478.05
	Overall balance as 19 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	£43,425.73
End of Year Prediction	VAT Costs for 2021/22 financial year	£0.00
	Balance as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021 including £25,000 contingency fund.	£45,903.78
	Total anticipated expenditure	£61,391.00
	Total anticipated income	£58,005.00
	Anticipated balance for the year	-£3,386.00
<b>Anticipated Overall Balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022</b>		<b>£ 42,517.78</b>

The Clerk advised on email communications received from Audit Wales on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and copies sent to all members of Council on the same day.

The new Audit arrangements have been deferred for one year.

The Clerk detailed the accounts for Council in the Local Council for Wales Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2021.

<b>31-Mar-20</b>	<b>31-Mar-21</b>	
<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
£38,499	£41,075	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the council's financial records.
£57,000	£57,000	Total amount of income received in the year from local taxation (precept).
£1,105	£637	Total income or receipts recorded in the cashbook minus the amounts included in line 2. Includes support, discretionary and revenue grants.
£10,687	£11,206	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and related expenses e.g. termination costs
£0.00	£0.00	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the council's borrowings (if any).
£44,842	£41,602	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook minus staff costs and loan/interest expenditure/payments.
£41,075	£45,904	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year.

£0.00	£0.00	Income and Expenditure Accounts only. The value of debts owed to the council at the year end.
£41,075	£45,904	All accounts. The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and investments held as at 31 March. This must agree with the reconciled cash book as per the bank reconciliation.
£0.00	£0.00	Income and expenditure accounts only. The value of monies owed by the council (except borrowing) at the year end
£41,075	£45,904	Total balances

£128,211	£113,705	The asset and investment register value of all fixed assets and any other long-term assets held at 31 March.
£0.00	£0.00	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties.
N/A	N/A	Trust Fund Disclosure

### 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 2020, that:

	Agreed - Yes or No
We have put in place arrangements for – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective financial management during the year and</li> <li>• the preparation and approval of the accounting statements.</li> </ul>	YES
We have maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	YES
We have taken all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice, that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the Council to conduct its business or on its finances.	YES
We have provided proper opportunity for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.	
We have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the Council and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and / or external insurance cover where required.	YES
We have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the Council and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	YES
We have maintained an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting records and control systems throughout the year and have received a report from the Internal Auditor.	YES
We have considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year end, have a financial impact on the Council and, where appropriate have included them on accounting statements.	YES

We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in previous reports from internal and external audit.	YES
Trust funds – in our capacity as trustee we have discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s) including financial reporting and if required, independent examination or audit.	N/A
We have prepared and approved minutes for all meetings held by the Council that accurately record the business transacted and the decisions made by the Council or committee.	YES
We have ensured that the Council's are available for public inspection and have been published electronically.	YES

**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 2020-21 was £8.32 per elector.

In 2020-21, the Council made payments totalling £1515.00 under section 137. These payments are included within 'Other payments' in the Accounting Statement.

The Clerk advised that the above will again be presented to Council at its next meeting following completion of the internal audit. Following certification by the Responsible Financial Officer the Council is required to approve the Annual Governance Statement Part 2

The Clerk referred again to the letter dated 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021 received from Audit Wales that had been emailed to members of Council on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021 that advised -

1. Following completion of the internal audit the annual return must be certified by the RFO and approved by Council, by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020
2. Council must send the completed annual return and all requested information by 1st September 2021. Requested information consists of -

**Accounting statements**

1. Bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2021.
2. Explanation of variances between the 2019-20 and 2020-21 accounts in the 2020-21 annual return.
3. If applicable, an explanation of any differences between the 2019-20 accounts included on the 2019-20 annual return and the 2019-20 accounts reported on the 2020-21 annual return.

**Annual Governance Statement**

1. For those councils subject to the requirements of the Well-being of Future



Generations Act 2015, a copy of the Council's report on how it is contributing to the wellbeing of its area. This is not required for Sealand.

2. A copy of the Clerk and RFO contract of employment.
3. Where the Clerk/RFO salary is not specified in the contract or is set annually, minutes of the meeting at which the salary was agreed by the Council.
4. Payslips and tax record for Clerk/RFO for October 2020.

RESOLVED: - that the report be noted.

**20/286            NOTICE OF AUDIT- 2020/21 FINANCIAL YEAR**

The Clerk referenced the Notice of Appointment of Date for the Exercise of Electors' Rights, Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2021.

The Clerk advised that each year the Council's annual return is audited and any person interested has the opportunity to inspect and make copies of the annual return and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts relating to them.

The Clerk outlined the public notice and details of the public inspection arrangements. Inspection runs from 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021 to 17<sup>th</sup> September 2021

The notice is required to be displayed on the Sealand notice boards and the Council's web site no later than 6<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

RESOLVED: - that the report be noted

**20/287            PAYMENT TO MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS 2021/22 FINANCIAL YEAR**

The Clerk advised on information received from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales which had been emailed previously to all members of Council.

Table 9: Community and Town Council Groupings

Community and Town Council Group Income *or* Expenditure in 2019/20 of:

A £200,000 and above

B £30,000 - £199,999 - Sealand Community Council is in Group B

C Below £30,000

Determination 42 which relates to Councils in Group A and B making a payment available to each of their members of £150 per year for the costs incurred in respect of telephone usage, information technology, consumable etc. The payment of £150 is mandated for every member unless they advise the appropriate officer that they do not want to take it in writing. A form for completion will shortly be circulated by the Clerk.

Determination 44: Community and town councils in Groups B or C can make an annual payment of up to £500 each to up to 5 members in recognition of specific responsibilities. This is in addition to the £150 payment for costs and expenses.

Determination 45: Community and town councils can make payments to each of their members in respect of travel costs for attending approved duties. Such payments must be the actual costs of travel by public transport or the

HMRC mileage allowances as below:

- 45p per mile up to 10,000 miles in the year.
- 25p per mile over 10,000 miles.
- 5p per mile per passenger carried on authority business.
- 24p per mile for private motor cycles.
- 20p per mile for bicycles.

Determination 46: If a community or town council resolves that a particular duty requires an overnight stay, it can authorise reimbursement of

- subsistence expenses to its members at the maximum rates set out below on
- the basis of receipted claims:
- £28 per 24-hour period allowance for meals, including breakfast where not provided.
- £200 – London overnight.
- £95 – elsewhere overnight.
- £30 – staying with friends and/or family overnight.

Determination 47: Community and town councils can pay financial loss compensation to each of their members, where such loss has actually occurred, for attending approved duties as follows:

- Up to £55.50 for each period not exceeding 4 hours
- Up to £110.00 for each period exceeding 4 hours but not exceeding 24 hours

Determination 48: All community and town councils can provide a payment to the mayor or chair of the Council up to a maximum of £1,500. This is in addition to the £150 payment for costs and expenses and the £500 senior salary if these are claimed.

It was noted that the Council has previously agreed to have a Chair's Fund in place which is not an allowance.

Determination 49: All community and town councils can provide a payment to the deputy mayor or deputy chair of the Council up to a maximum of £1,500. This is in addition to the £150 payment for costs and expenses and the £500 senior salary if these are claimed.

In addition, the report pointed out that in relation to payment to members for the 2020/21 financial year then these need to be listed and sent to the Panel and displayed on the council's web site and Council notice boards – refer to Minute 20/257

RESOLVED: That in relation to the 2021/22 financial year, the determinations required concerning payments to members be as follows:

Determination 42 - Payment of £150 paid to Members – to be paid by Council

Determination 44 – Is applicable as relating to Councils in Group B

Determination 45 – Is applicable as relating to Councils in Group B

Determination 46 – Is applicable as relating to Councils in Group B

Determination 47 – Is applicable as relating to Councils in Group B

Determination 48 – Is applicable as relating to Councils in Group B

Determination 49 – Is applicable as relating to Councils in Group B

The meeting opened at 6pm and closed at 7.40pm

..... Signed 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021