

LOPEN PARISH COUNCIL

MEETING HELD 7pm Tuesday 19th May 2015 IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM

Present: Cllr. B. Davolls (Chairman for this meeting)
Cllr. T. Sienkiewicz (newly elected Chairwoman)
Cllr. S. Crane
Cllr. S. Mason
Cllr. N. Jones

Ms. Kim McDonald (Clerk)

Members of the public: 1

11/15. To elect a Chairman of the Council

Cllr. Davolls asked not to be considered for the position of Chairman. Stephen Crane proposed Cllr. Sienkiewicz as Chair and this was seconded by Cllr. Davolls. Cllr. Sienkiewicz accepted the nominations and the Members unanimously voted to accept Cllr. Sienkiewicz as the new Chair of Lopen Parish Council. However, due to a number of issues including sickness, it was agreed that Cllr. Davolls would continue to Chair this meeting.

12/15. To receive declarations of acceptance of office (Chairman and Councillors)

The acceptance of office forms were distributed and duly signed and returned to the Clerk.

13/15. Issue Declaration of Interests forms to all members

The Declaration of Interest forms were distributed to the Members with an explanation of what they were and why they were required and the date by which they needed to be completed and returned to the Clerk. This was within 28 days of this meeting (or by June 16). The Clerk will then scan and send copies to SSDC.

14/15. To elect a Vice-Chairman of the Council?

There was some discussion as to whether LPC required a Vice-Chairman as any of the Members could be asked to Chair a meeting in the absence of the Chairwoman, but it was agreed a Vice-Chair would be appointed. Cllr. Sienkiewicz then proposed Cllr. Crane. This was seconded by Cllr. Mason and Cllr. Crane was then unanimously voted in as Vice-Chairman.

15/15. District Councillors' welcome and comments

It was noted that our new District Councillors following the election were Cllr. Adam Dance and Cllr. Crispin Raikes. Apologies were received from Cllr. Adam Dance.

16/15. County Councillor report

There was no report for this meeting.

17/15. Apologies and welcome

All LPC Members were present. The meeting welcomed Nick Jones, who was the only new member of the Council following the May elections.

18/15. Declaration of Interests

Cllr. Mason declared a pecuniary interest in Planning Application 15/01749/FUL 2 Cross Tree, Holloway Road, Lopen. Erection of detached outbuilding (part retrospective), as owner of the dwelling.

19/15. To approve the minutes of the Meeting held on 26th January 2015 and to note the aborted meeting of 24th April 2015

The Minutes of the January meeting were agreed to be an accurate record and were duly signed. It was noted for the record that the planned meeting for April had been abandoned due to being inquorate.

20/15. Matters arising from the minutes of January 26th

There were none.

21/15. Discuss and agree the co-option approach to fill Parish Council vacancies

The discussion concluded that the vacancies should be advertised in the EYE and on the village website. We already had one expression of interest and this would be pursued by Cllr. Sienkiewicz as the new Chair. This expression of interest would be accepted at the next meeting should we not exceed the full number of vacancies (x2). All Cllrs to encourage interested Villagers to put themselves forward for potential co-option onto the Council.

22/15. To consider and agree Councillors' specific responsibilities

Highways (inc. drains) - continues with Cllr. Crane

Planning – Cllr. Sienkiewicz and Cllr. Davolls continue with this brief and will be joined by Cllr. Jones

Footpaths – Cllr. Jones

Lengthsman (now Parish Ranger scheme) – Cllr. Davolls

Health and Wellbeing (although a new title for this would be sought as it would also cover an element of leisure and youth activities) – Cllr. Mason

23/15. Discuss and agree the proposed Risk Register

Cllr. Sienkiewicz explained that all councils, even Parish Councils, are expected to maintain an up-to-date Risk Register and undertook to action this for further discussion at the next meeting. Cllr. Davolls said it was now time to also review the Standing Orders (how the council agrees to operate) and the Financial Regulations (which controls all aspects of financial management) and to update the Bank Mandate to obtain more signatories. We currently have three: Cllr. Davolls, Cllr. Sienkiewicz and Cllr. Crane). Updating would be discussed again at a later meeting.

24/15. To review the accounts for year ending March 2015 and to agree the annual return - accounting and governance statements

Cllr. Davolls led the meeting through the annual accounts and related matters to this such as clarification of the various reserves and asset register updating.

He then led Members through the Governance statements and explained the process, including a amendment in the way accounts were expressed from 2013/14 to 2014/15 where amounts were now rounded up to the nearest pound and the changed accounting of the Council Tax Benefit grant paid to the Parish Council. The governance papers have been amended to the now correct protocols and annotated accordingly. LPC annual accounts were now open for public inspection by appointment and were currently undergoing internal audit. Once this process was completed, the accounts would be sent to the external auditor – Grant Thornton. Lopen PC accounts and the results of the external audit will be posted on the noticeboard and also on the village website for further public inspection in due course.

The Members were asked to agree that the governance statement was a full and correct record and that the Parish Council was complying with the correct controls and procedures. The Members voted unanimously that this was the case. The return and governance papers were duly signed-off.

25/15. To agree the Parish Council's response to planning applications:

- **15/01749/FUL 2 Cross Tree, Holloway Road, Lopen. Erection of detached outbuilding (part retrospective)**

Cllr, Mason was asked to leave the table for this discussion and decision. Cllr. Davolls led the Members through the application documents and plans. It was noted that no adverse comments had been made to the District Council and so it was proposed by Cllr. Davolls that the application should be recommended for approval. Members unanimously agreed to do so.

26/15. Other matters to note

Renewal of LPC Insurance – AON insurance had quoted LPC the same rate for insurance for this year. There was an option to receive a 5% discount if the Council signed up for 5 years. This offer did not mean that the rate quoted would remain static, just that a 5% discount would remain in place for each of 5 years. The

Members were asked if they wished to:

- accept the insurance offer from AON as is, without the discount, or accept the offer from AON and commit to 5 years to achieve the discount, or
- shop around for a new insurance provider

The Members agreed that the service from AON had been good and that all the required elements were covered satisfactorily and agreed to renew the insurance for the rate quoted for the single year. This instruction would be actioned by the Clerk.

Resignation of the Clerk – Cllr, Davolls confirmed that he had received a formal notice of resignation from the Clerk on May 18th. The Clerk had confirmed she would remain in place until a replacement could be found. The position would be advertised in the Lopen EYE.

The resignation of Cllr. Nicola Norman – it was noted that Cllr. Norman had stood down from her role as Vice-Chairman at the time of the elections. Ms Norman had served as a Member of the Council for over 20 years and the LPC Members formally wished to express their thanks for Ms Norman's outstanding service to the community. Cllr. Davolls informed the meeting that two David Austen Heritage Roses had been purchased for Ms Norman as a thank you and had been delivered with a card.

Speed Indicator Device (SID) – Cllr. Sienkiewicz highlighted some results from the latest SID results. She also reiterated that overweight lorries were still continuing to travel through the village and that this was an ongoing campaign.

Meeting closed at 9.00pm