

LOPEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM

At 7pm Monday 20 May 2013

MINUTES

Present : Cllr. B. Davolls (Chairman)

Cllr. P. Finlayson

Cllr. T. Sienkiewicz

Cllr. S. Crane

Cllr. Christopher Le Hardy SCC

Ms. Kim McDonald (Clerk)

Members of the public: 6

22/13 Election of Chairman

Cllr. Peggy Finlayson nominated Cllr. Barry Davolls for the position of Chairman and this was seconded by Cllr. Teresa Sienkiewicz. Cllr. Barry Davolls accepted the position and a form of Acceptance of Office was to be signed, as agreed, following the meeting.

23/13 Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr. Barry Davolls nominated Cllr. Nicola Norman for the position of Vice Chair by and this was seconded by Cllr. Teresa Sienkiewicz. Cllr. Nicola Norman, although not present at the meeting, had earlier indicated her acceptance to continue in the role of Vice-Chair of Lopen PC.

Tribute to Bruce Bezance

Cllr. Barry Davolls invited Cllr. Peggy Finlayson to say a few words in tribute to our departed friend Mr Bruce Bezance, who will be sorely missed by the residents of Lopen.

24/13 County Councillor's Report

Cllr. Davolls welcomed Cllr. Christopher Le Hardy to his first meeting with LPC and congratulated him on his success in the County Council elections. At this point, Cllr. Davolls also took a minute to formally thank outgoing County Councillor Paul Maxwell for his efforts on behalf of Lopen, which he said were widely recognised and appreciated throughout the village.

Cllr. Le Hardy thanked Cllr. Davolls for his welcome and said he was very pleased to be able to attend the meeting and to take up the role of County Councillor. He also paid tribute to the work completed by Paul Maxwell.

Cllr. Le Hardy told the meeting that there was a lot happening at SCC and that a full meeting was to be held on May 21st. He went on to explain he had accepted the role as Chair of the Somerset Armed Forces Community Covenant (SAFCC). He also told the meeting that there was a wish to communicate more at the local level generally, and for strengthening the linkages and activity between County and District councils. The District was in the early stages of discussions regarding a new committee to bring together issues from the wider local area and the County would be involved in these. He advised that smaller Parishes may want to consider coming together in the future for a stronger voice. Cllr. Davolls responded that in Lopen's case, as we sat between a Rural Centre (SP) and the largest Parish (Merriott), we would be better to work with Dinnington as our issues will be similar.

Cllr. Davolls highlighted Lopen's outstanding County matters:

1. Traffic calming on Holloway – SID results were to be used at county level to draw up measures for additional pedestrian safety and traffic calming for the main route through Lopen
2. Road Surface Holloway – potholes and poor surfaces particularly on the Snapant corner have been, for a considerable time, badly damaged but not considered sufficient to warrant repair. This is a concern for residents as defects fill with water, freeze and creates a skid pan. Lopen PC requests that

- this area is looked at again as vehicles are sent off balance when negotiating these dangerous corners
- 3. Water Issue – near Church Street on Holloway. There is a water leak near the BT phone box, which is believed to be a spring but could be a mains leak. This needs investigating.
 - 4. Lorries leaving Lopen Mill can't turn left. Instead of continuing onto the Lopen Head roundabout and returning through village, they are opting to reverse into Frog Street as a quicker option causing a hazard and a nuisance to villagers. Cllr. Le Hardy was asked if a sign could be put up, or a bollard be erected. Can a solution be found to the junction of Mill Lane and Holloway to resolve this?
 - 5. Cllr. Davolls reported on the County Council's Flood Mitigation Fund of £200,000 for local initiatives to help local parishes/groups/individuals on projects to help reduce the risk of flooding. He had sent these details to the residents of Hinton Cottage (Holloway and Hinton Road junction, where water runs of the fields, floods the junction and the property. This is a known problem spot and acknowledged by Highways) Lopen Mill was also mentioned as a problem area, but it was noted that this was probably the landowner's responsibility to maintain and manage the brook. Blocked drains in Frog Street and Kitchen Lane were raised as an ongoing issue. Cllr. Le Hardy commented that maintenance was now on 2 yearly cycle, but residents responded that some local drains had not been touched in this time period. Cllr. Le Hardy said that some of the contractors had been a problem and some of the issues were down to communication.

Potholes: Cllr. Le Hardy described new equipment that SCC was in the process of testing for roll out across the county. This new system would employ cameras and a GPS system. Pictures would also measure the depth of the pothole and it would be logged on a central database for action as required. Currently under trial for roll-out this Autumn.

25/13 District Councillors' Report

There were none. Cllr. Davolls in their absence reported on the outcome of the area North Committee's new Chair and Vice Chair. The new Chair was Cllr. Shane Pledger and the Vice Chair Cllr. Paul Thompson.

26/13 Apologies for Absence

Received from: Cllr. Barry Walker and Cllr. Paul Thompson both SSDC Councillors and Cllr. Nicola Norman

27/13 Declarations of Interest

None applicable.

28/13 Agreement of minutes for meetings held on 21st January and 1st February 2013

The Minutes were agreed by all as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman Barry Davolls.

29/13 Matters arising from the minutes

There were none.

30/13 2012/13 Year end financial statement

Presented by Cllr. Davolls including a full review of all income and expense-opening and closing balances for the period 2012/13. The accounting statement section of the annual return was presented and was unanimously approved by the members.

31/13 Review and agree LPC's annual return documents and governance statement

Cllr. Davolls presented the completed annual return to 31st March 2013 including the internal auditors report, the accounting statements, the annual governance statement and all supporting documents. He proposed all aspects of the annual return be signed signed and minuted as required before being sent to the External auditor. There were no questions, and this was unanimously approved. Cllr. Davolls expressed the Council's thanks for the assistance given by Ian Benfield our new internal auditor.

32/13 Discuss the various options and agree a way forward for the Lopen defibrillator

After a briefing of the merits and challenges of the two options of defibrillator service: 1: First Responder and 2: Publicly accessible defibrillator (PAD). The Council opted for the latter. The reason for this was mainly that Merriott operated a very effective first responder system for the local area via the 999 service; that Lopen (being so small) was not set up to offer such a comprehensive emergency medical service to

villagers (which may also need to encompass the surrounding area); and finally, that the PAD system was simpler, more easily managed and could be taken to all gatherings such as the village picnic. Cllr. Davolls undertook to discuss with the PCC the option of siting the defibrillator PAD within the Sunday School room as this was the village's defacto village hall and offered the best compromise solution for security, accessibility and temperature control required by the unit. Cllr. Davolls said that the plan for locating the device could be reviewed should a better solution offer itself in the future. Les Farris has undertaken to manage the familiarization day and liaise regarding the appointment of a qualified person for the system.

33/13 Planning related updates:

- ▲ **Lopenhead** – planting was expected to begin Autumn and over winter. The landscaping to the east of the road has not yet happened and there is little communication on this from the council.
- ▲ **Delegated to Clerk - Frogmary Green Farm – Planning application 13/01507/FUL - Frogmary Green Farm change of use to D1/D2, extension and formation of meeting room, cookery school and meeting hall.** South Petherton Parish Council recommended approval. LPC require further clarification of maximum usage of the cookery school building and therefore vehicle movements and car parking facilities. Once this was known the clerk would respond in consultation with members.
- ▲ **SSDC Local Plan Public Consultation** – Following a public examinations of the Local Plan, it was believed that the inspector would put SSDC on notice regarding their approach to the employment figures and, in particular, the resulting employment land allocations. These aspects may ultimately be considered as unsound by the inspector.

34/13 Other updates:

- ▲ **Egwood Hill lease transfer** – There were no new developments on this. Peter Little would provide Cllr. Le Hardy with the background detail in order that he could investigate the progress delay on our behalf. At this point there was no reason to assume that the transfer of lease would not go ahead. Cllr. Davolls reiterated that once the lease contract was drawn up there would be a debate and a decision made on whether or not to proceed.
- ▲ **Village picnic** – Cllr. Davolls was now to sit on the Village Committee in Cllr. Finlayson's place. The event would be coordinated by Carolyn White and would be held on the Canton's field on August bank holiday weekend.
- ▲ **Lengthsman** – The Lengthsman scheme would be funded for 2013-14. Under the scheme, Lopen receives 3.5 hours of Lengthsman's services per week. Therefore requests for trimming public rights of way/footpaths and other odd-jobs could not be acted upon. It was known that South Petherton has applied for a single year of the new warden scheme, but it was not known if this had been approved. Cllr. Le Hardy would follow this up.

35/13 Litter on the increase

It was noted that there was a general and disappointing increase in the amount of litter in the village. This was seen as coming from a variety of sources including (as a result of the large amount deposited along Mill Lane) lorry drivers and visitors to the trading estate. There were some concerns raised over the potential for increased litter as a result of the opening of the Indian takeaway/restaurant. Cllr. Davolls said there was very little assistance available from the District council for the clearance of litter. It was up to us all to pick it up as and when we see it. If the problems persisted (or in the case of the restaurant-materialise) suggestions for reducing litter included sending letters to the site/restaurant owners alerting them to the problems /requesting them to take some action, and to the District council to request paper recycling bins.

36/13 Future meeting dates and times

August 19th at 7pm, in the Sunday School Room.

37/13 Any other business

Cllr. Peggy Finlayson gave her notice to resign having sold her property. Cllr. Davolls accepted this and expressed the wish of the council that Cllr. Finlayson remained in place as a Councillor for as long as she could, until the sale or at least the exchange of contracts had taken place.

Close 8.25pm