

**Lopen Parish Council meeting
At 7pm Friday 24th October
Sunday School Room**

Present: Cllr. B. Davolls (Chairman)
Cllr. N. Norman
Cllr. Teresa Sienkiewicz

Ms. Kim McDonald (Clerk)

Members of the public: 4

57/14 Apologies

Received from District Cllrs. Barry Walker and Paul Thompson and County Councillor Christopher Le Hardy. Apologies received from Parish Councillor Sarah Mason.

58/14 Declarations of Interest

All Councillors present declared an interest in Planning Application: 14/04232/FUL Orchard House, Lopen, as Applicant and near neighbours on Broomhill Lane.

59/14 District Councillors' Reports

None provided

60/14 County Councillor Report

None was provided

61/14 To approve the Minutes of the last meeting 2nd September

These were approved as a true statement of the meeting and were duly signed.

62/14 Matters Arising from the minutes

Managing Lopen's weight Restriction through the village. Lacklustre response to call volunteers. Lopen EYE Editor Les Farris would Call for volunteers again in the EYE. Cllr. Sienkiewicz has also been in contact with PCSO Sturt regarding the issue and writes to businesses where she can identify they have broken the restriction, but more assistance is needed to gather photographic evidence.

Defibrillator. Cllr. Davolls. Confirmed we are now in a position to order the case for the unit for fixing into the Church as full approval is now given.

Lengthsman (Now Parish Ranger.) Visits every 3rd Tuesday of the month. This is being coordinated by Cllr. Norman. We have received good feedback to footpath trimming undertaken so far down Kitchen Lane, but more village engagement is required. Cllr. Norman can be contacted by phone, email or at the Coffee mornings.

63/14 Discus the potential removal of Lopen's public phone box

It had been reported and noted that a public consultation notice had been placed in the BT box informing villages of the intention of BT to remove the box due to lack of use by villagers and passing public. The box is not a coin operated unit. No formal consultation had been received by the Parish Council from BT or SSDC regarding this, and the discussion at the meeting was on how to respond to the consultation that was due to close at the end of October. The feeling from the council and the audience was not to object to the removal and

it was noted there was some history with wanting this box removed in the past. No representations had been received from the villagers and it was generally considered to be a bit of an eyesore. Cllr. Sienkiewicz, whilst agreeing with the recommendation in this instance, did point out that Public Phone Boxes were an important tool for the deaf and hard of hearing who could not easily use mobiles.

64/14 Update and invite comments on the proposed Eggwood Hill site lease

Cllr. Davolls updated the members on the latest developments in the pursuit of progressing the lease at Eggwood and the recent correspondence and informal meeting with Merriott and Hinton St George on Saturday 19th October. These Parishes were once again uncomfortable with the three Parishes' liability for removal of illegal occupants (which Somerset County Council had made very clear early on in the process was a requirement of the lease that could not be varied, and which all Parishes had agreed to). It was noted that SCC had now lost all patience with the continued delay. Cllr. Davolls had however asked the Solicitor to report back to SCC regarding the last informal meeting and request a new deadline of the end of the year to conclude matters. Cllr. Davolls who has taken over managing this from Peter Little (Thanks to Peter for his considerable efforts and guidance on this to date) and reported that additional legal costs could be required to progress this matter to the next stage as some amendments did now need to be made to the lease (which had all been agreed by the Parishes). Lopen Parish Councillors had all been sent the latest lease and correspondence for their information and comments.

65/14 To agree the Parish Council's response to planning applications:

- **14/03989/FUL Hewins Timber Ltd Mill Lane, Lopen.**

- **The erection of extensions to two commercial buildings**

After a presentation of the plans and a representation from the owners of the Flax Mill, neighbouring the Hewin's yard, and following a discussion it was agreed to respond to the District Council supporting the proposal to extend building 1 as members raised no objection on the basis that the offer of a "substantial hedge along the western boundary with a small return at the northern end would provide extra screening from the village".

In respect of building 2, the members did not believe sufficient information had been provided for anyone to fully understand the impact on the adjacent listed building/dwelling. None of the drawings or details provided clarity on the relationship between the proposed store extension and the dwelling. The members felt that the proposed structure would dominate and overshadow the listed building, which was an important and significant building in the history of the village. Without further consideration by SSDC of the impact on the listed dwelling, the members felt they could not support this aspect of the proposal. Lastly, any approval, members felt, should be conditioned to ensure the removal of the storage trailers that the planning proposal sought to replace.

- **14/04232/FUL Orchard House, Lopen**

- **The erection of a detached garage with studio in roof to include roof lights and two dormer windows.**

All members attending the meeting declared an interest in this application, as Applicant and/or close neighbours. The Chairman therefore delegated the matter to the Clerk who would be tasked with responding to SSDC in consultation with all LPC members.

66/14 Parish bulb planting

A lacklustre response to this had been received following a call for volunteers and areas for planting in a recent Lopen EYE. Editor Les Farris undertook from the floor to drum up some support from villagers.

67/14 Other matters to note

Lopen EYE – to be included in Lopen EYE, Area North Planning Committee to approve Probiotics Building E at Lopenhead, Bulb Planting.

Increase in Lopen Parish Council Size – We are still awaiting feedback from SSDC following the public consultation as to whether Lopen PC should extend its members from five to seven.

The meeting closed at approximately 8.30pm