

LOPEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held in The School Room, Church Street, Lopen 7 pm, Monday 13 March 2017

Present : N Jones (Chairman), S Crane, E Moore

In attendance : L Wilson, Parish Clerk; Cllr C Raikes and Cllr A Dance (SSDC); Members of the Public : 5

The meeting commenced at 7.02 pm.

134/17 District Councillor's Report : Councillor C Raikes confirmed that the District Council element of Council Tax for a Band D property had increased by £5 p.a., but taking into account other area rises such as the Rivers Authority etc the total rise is £15.45 p.a.

Discussion took place concerning the Frogmary traffic through Lopen including complaints received by Cllr Crane that the regularity of the digestate-carrying tractors kept them awake at night. This is despite Frogmary Green's agreement that Lopen would not be used as a through route. Cllr Raikes suggested that residents could communicate with the farmer concerned and one member of the public asked for the Parish Council to write.

135/17 Apologies : received from Cllr Christopher Le Hardy; Cllr Jed Burrows and Cllr Adam Dance.

136/17 Interests to Declare : Cllr Crane confirmed that one of the planning issues to be discussed related to a property next door to his residence, albeit some 200 m distant. A Dispensation was declared; the issue was likely to be non-controversial and otherwise the Council would not be quorate

137/17 Minutes of the last meeting : There was to be one amendment to the section referring to the dog waste-bins where it should have read "District Council" not "County Council". The minutes thereafter were agreed and signed.

138/17 Matters arising :

- Confirmation that the precept notification had been submitted with the increase of 2.65%, half of which related to the drop in the CTB.
- SIS - The Parish Council had pursued a response, but still await the amendments.
- The dog waste-bin had now been installed by the footpath gate situated at the meeting point of Water Street and Kitchen Lane. Thanks to both Cllr Dance and Georgia at SSDC for their work in obtaining this for the village.
- Cllr Moore had spoken to Sarah Mason regarding the queries on whether annual maintenance/inspection was required and she had agreed to speak to the supplier; as a reply was awaited, it was suggested that the Council write to Mrs Mason.
- Mill Lane : The Chairman had spoken to Mike Hicks o SSDC who was able to confirm that a further retrospective Planning Application with regard to the additions to the chicken house would be arriving with LPC shortly.

139/17 Village Meeting : The Chairman confirmed that about 15 residents attended.

140/17 Working Party for Footpaths : Recap on aims to make this a community event with a purpose. Cllr Moore, as organiser, proposes a couple of hours of tackling the most overgrown paths, a treasure hunt for children, followed by a BBQ. A date was fixed of Sunday 21 May.

141/17 Roadworks : The recent roadworks in Holloway were summarised. It was confirmed that neither Highways nor residents were informed of works in advance and Highways were quick to act, putting a stop order on the works. As more issues arose, the Parish Council, via the Clerk, were in regular communication with the contractor and SSDC in an effort to resolve the position. The contractors were made to return to sweep the road again and they also carried out window cleaning along the relevant section of the road as some effort at recompense for the inconvenience caused.

142/17 Litter Bin : The Chairman raised for discussion whether the village should have a waste bin and indicated that Cllr Dance believes he can get funding for one. Members of the public felt it could create more of a problem and some commented it wouldn't help as people who throw rubbish from moving cars are unlikely to stop to put rubbish in a bin.

7.40 pm Cllr Dance joins the meeting. He confirms funding has not yet been requested, but that other villages find residents pick up stray litter and put it in

the bin as much as putting their own litter in. Furthermore, the ranger could be asked to use ten minutes or so of his allocated time collecting litter.

Due to the relatively negative response, it was agreed that the idea will be shelved for the time-being.

143/17 School Buses : It was agreed that due to the persistent speeding, reported by many residents and confirmed now by Speedwatch, who had recorded two buses (carrying children) driving at 41 mph and 42 mph respectively, it was time to write a letter to the various Bus Companies, copying in the County Council.

144/17 Speedwatch Roger Gurner of Speedwatch updated the meeting on the first few months of the scheme's operation. Eight sessions recorded 2200 vehicles, 69 of which were exceeding 36 mph, 21 exceeding 40 mph (including the two school buses) and one exceeding 50 mph. SID's have been in place three times since Christmas, which has an effect of reducing speed, but there were still vehicles speeding even after braking as the SID came into view. 10 villagers were now trained to operate the equipment, but more would still be welcome.

145/17 Parish Bier : The Bier has been stored for many years in the house of a resident, who had sadly recently passed away. Angela Naunton-Davies stated that she believes it had been established in the past that the Bier belonged to the village, not the PCC. It was agreed that details of the executor of the estate would be provided so that The Parish Council could make contact.

146/17 Bank Account : The Chairman had spoken to the bank to explore options for higher interest accounts; unfortunately the highest interest rate is 0.01%, therefore there is no advantage in opening a new account. However, it was agreed that the sum of £10,000 would be transferred from the current account to the Money Manager account.

147/17 Bank Signatory : It was agreed that the Bank should be advised to remove ex Councillor Teresa Sienkiewicz from the list of signatories.

148/17 Invoices for payment : Cheques were signed for the invoices due to Footprintz (Lopen Eye) in the sum of 45.00; Loxston GroundCare Ltd (annual mower repairs and overheads) in the sum of £132.88; PCC - £100 for hire of the Sunday School Room, £100 annual donation to All Saints PCC & £100 contribution towards the addition of names to the All Saints War Memorial.

149/17 Planning :

1. Cabscot Planning Application Number 17/00901/FUL : it was considered and agreed that the application would be supported with the recommendation of a proviso that any future conversion of the said extension into private accommodation would require full Planning Permission from SSDC; in this way to prevent permissive development.
2. The Chairman updated the meeting on the granting of the previous application for Toad Hall.
3. Since drawing up the Agenda for this meeting, further Planning Applications had been received, namely Mendip View in Seavington, The Trading Post and Mill Lane. There was also a minor application at 1 Kitchen Lane, but although it appeared on the Council website, it is unlikely it will be sent to the Parish Council for consideration as it is minor works relevant only to the neighbouring properties. In view of the former applications however, it was agreed that a separate meeting to deal with those Planning matters would be required in the near future. The Chairman would request extra time from the Council for responses.

Matters for future consideration : It was mentioned that the Pensions Regulator had a requirement for a point of contact; now that Councillor Teresa Sienkiewicz had retired, a new contact would need to be decided in due course.

The public session concluded at 8.35 pm

The planning applications and plans were considered, but as no decisions were possible, the issues were left until the planning meeting, date to be agreed mutually.

HR : The Clerk re-presented time-sheets for the last quarter, and expense receipts for purchases of stamps, printer paper, toner cartridge, post-it notes and address labels. These expenses were agreed, as were the overtime and training element hours and mileage allowance.

The meeting concluded at 9.15 pm

Note: For the purpose of minute-taking, this meeting was recorded. This was announced by the Chairman prior to the meeting commencing