

## **LOPEN PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held in The School Room, Church Street, Lopen 14 December 2017, 7 pm**

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

In attendance : L Wilson - Parish Clerk

Members of the Public : 3

The meeting commenced at 7.02 pm

#### **Chairman's Report & Public Session:**

- Closure of road between Brimclose Lane and the pub, Dinnington scheduled for a 5 week period from the 8th January 2018
- Somerset Community Fund : a scheme to request Winter Fuel Allowances be donated to needier individuals
- "Nottingham Knockers" - two recent reports to Police from Lopen residents. Be alert to door to door "salesmen", who may not be genuine
- Somerset Waste - Christmas collection details
- New planning application received yesterday (too late to be listed on Agenda) for Probiotics at Lopenhead. No site notice yet posted. Requirement is for a minimum 3 weeks notice, therefore Parish Council will be requesting extension to respond. Comprises substantial new construction.

MOP comments that whilst the Planning conditions' hours of operation for the site are 8-5.30 pm, they are generally operating around the clock.

One councillor informed the meeting of a recent car accident at Snapant.

The formal meeting commenced at 7.12 pm

**247/17 Apologies:** received from Cllr Crispin Raikes. Cllr Adam Dance had indicated he may be able to attend later in the meeting. Cllr Burrows was not present.

**248/18 Dispensations & declaration of interests :** None

**249/17 Approval of Minutes :** Minutes of the meeting of the 18 October 2017 were approved with two minor amendments.

#### **250/17 Planning :**

Vine House, Frog Street :- Due to an unusual covenant, any permitted development has to proceed through full planning permission procedure. SSDC have agreed the application (installation of three Velux windows in ground floor roof at rear of property ) subject to approval by Lopen Parish Council. After discussion, taking into account two letters of support from adjacent neighbours, and no objections from other residents, the Council voted unanimously to make a no objection response. Action : NJ to advise Andrew Gunn of decision.

8 Water Street :- The amended plans (with new garage now omitted) comprise converting existing garage plus a first floor extension, were discussed and it was agreed and

resolved, after a unanimous vote, to make no objections to the application but to pass comment that it should be ensured that parking is adequate.

Bailiff's Cottage :- those present were informed that the earlier application for the installation of solar panels had now been approved with some conditions.

The School Room :- the earlier application for removal of the chimney had been approved.

#### **251/17 Matters Arising :**

- Signs to indicate location of Defibrillator - NJ had prepared and laminated some signs and they would be distributed at locations including the gate, church room, noticeboard.
- Electoral Review - NJ confirmed he had replied via the website form confirming that Lopen wished boundaries to remain as they currently are.

**252/17 SID** - Merriot and Seavington Parish Councils had been consulted about the possibility of sharing a device with Lopen. Merriot raised the matter at a recent Parish meeting with a positive response. Seavington intended to raise the subject at their next meeting (they had recently applied for their own SIS). NJ & Roger Gurner had obtained quotes from six suppliers with 2 yet to come. A spreadsheet for comparison would be available at the next meeting. SSDC consider running a scheme on a paying basis when the existing ones ends in March 2018 (revealed very recently), but it would depend upon take up - without knowing how many parishes would take part they can't yet indicate a cost. SSDC couldn't yet indicate whether they were to sell their old devices. One Councillor asked whether it would be an option to rent out a purchased device to another parish.

Provisional costings for new at the moment (& as supplied to SSDC) :

- a) 1 x SID £3000, plus approx £300 p.a. other costs. 24 weeks total coverage (12 in each of 2 locations) at a cost of £55 p.w.
- b) 1 x SID, but three locations, drops the weekly cost to £36 p.w.
- c) Shared purchase as in scenario a) ; even split; 24 weeks each parish; £27 p.w. each.

SSDC are not in favour of a device with anything other than the standard display.

The Chairman indicated that budget-wise the Parish could fund a half share of a device without much difficulty and raised the potential of fund-raising for the balance. In the meantime, other costs would be investigated as follows :

- Insurance Costs
- Training and equipment costs
- Legal agreement procedure and costs for shared device
- Agreement of sites - some possibilities raised - near the wall of Councillor Crane's house & by the pumping station
- Further request to Highways to allow non-standard display - colour; tick/cross etc
- Further , Roger Gurner had arranged for a site trial of a device by Traffic Technology on the 22 Jan; NJ was to obtain agreement from Highways
- Councillor Frackiewicz suggested and volunteered an approach to Somerset Community Association for funds

**253/17 Lawnmower** - NJ had undertaken extensive repairs and welding of the 9 year old lawnmower (photos circulated). It seems its poor state had never been alerted to the Parish Council by the company servicing it annually. The deck, only now available in the

US at a cost of \$300, requires replacement in due course (estimate 1-2 years max.) so it's uneconomic to repair. Discussed and agreed that funds should be put to one side for it's replacement; at present the mower may have a little value as a trade-in. Agreed to review in the Spring.

**254/17 Social Committee** - Angela Naunton-Davies appraised the meeting of the existing social clubs and events that operate out of the school room : Just Women; History Group (on sabbatical); Coffee Stop; occasional charity supper events; one-off events like Wadham School's recent one. Cllr Frackiewicz to investigate further possibilities and issues e.g. insurance (although this was thought to be covered by the PCC where they are renting the space out.)

**255/17 Local Plan** - First step was thought to be a demographic profile. Face to face introductions would be beneficial, but anonymous views (in view of data protection) could be canvassed by questionnaire, and could include questions such as whether residents wish to engage with the Parish Council via a Facebook Page, Twitter, continue only via the Lopen Eye etc. Another option would be to obtain a local service directory of trades and services in the village. The question could be posed whether residents wished for the precept be kept to a minimum or whether they would wish to pay more for further investment into the village amenities. It was agreed that Cllr Frackiewicz would liaise with Angela Naunton-Davies on the method used for the last plan.

**256/17 South Somerset District Consultation** - The Chairman summarised the purpose and main points of the extensive consultation document (deadline 8 Jan) which relates to the District Plan for 2015-2028 - how many houses to build; what employment to allocate. South Petherton has exceeded its minimum target for housing and industrial building (provided for by the Lopenhead site). It was discussed and resolved that a response should be made which NJ would prepare.

**257/17 Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Draft Risk Management Plan Consultation 2018-2022** - The Chairman appraised the meeting of some of the 76 page document and his views. The Parish are not obliged to respond, but NJ indicated he may do so.

**258/17 PACT Consultation (Partner And Community Together)** - Councillors are invited to attend a meeting at The Edgar Hall, Somerton on Thursday 15 February at 6.30 pm. It was agreed that Cllrs Moore and Jones would attend and the Clerk would notify the organisers.

**259/17 Finance** The list of payments made since the last meeting were presented and agreed.

Lopen Parish Council

List of Payments since last meeting of 18 October 2017

Date	Payee	Details	£
291017	Nick Jones	Refund re Defibrillator Batteries	19.75
291017	Mike Constable	Refund of fuel for mower	11.98

021117	SSDC	Ranger - Sep.	150.96
021117	Footprintz	Lopen Eye Printing Oct. & Nov.	90.00
071217	SSDC	Ranger - Oct.	150.96
071217	L Wilson	Clerk's salary M9	417.72
071217	HMRC	PAYE	104.60
071217	L Wilson	Refund Clerk re stamps	3.90
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Total			949.87

## 260/17 Budget

It was discussed and resolved to instruct Phil Smith as internal auditor for this financial year at a cost in the region of £100 (dependant upon how many hours required). He is recommended by SALC. His quote and CV were presented and discussed in the summer as one of a number of prospective candidates; he has confirmed his rate is unchanged.

Preliminary information was provided for the forthcoming budget. Costs for most items remain the same. Clerk costs have increased as has the rate for hire of the School Room; these are known costs. The reserves are strong. The Chairman proposes that some reserves require no further additions this year. The Churchyard fund could be called upon. However funds from the now defunct Lengthsman Fund could be used for extraordinary village maintenance.

In past years, excess funds have been put into a reserve. As a new lawnmower is necessary in due course, this could be an item on which to use some of those funds. At the moment there appears on the spreadsheet to be an excess of £1400, but this will be checked; for example, future VAT rebates are not calculated by the spreadsheet.

On the figures presented, the precept will need to increase by 3.8%; the principle reason being the reduction of the grant to £20 this year (next year it will be zero). One Councillor comments that it perhaps represents the real rate of inflation in any event. There is always the possibility that the Union will increase hourly rates and further training costs may be required in the event of a new Councillor joining.

Budget to be dealt with further at the next meeting.

**261/17 Future Meeting Dates** Agreed for Monday 22 January and Thursday 22 March, subject to confirmation with Liz Constable regarding the use of the School Room.

**262/17 Any Other Matters to Note** Cllr Crane updated meeting on the hole in the road outside John Pitcher's property.

The meeting was concluded at 9.20 pm

For the purposes of minute taking the meeting was recorded.