

LOPEN PARISH COUNCIL

<https://www.lopenparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Minutes of the Meeting of Lopen Parish Council held in the Sunday School Room on Monday 29th June 2026 at 7.00pm

26/74 Attendance and Apologies

Present: Cllrs Jones, Crane, Feeney, King and Armstrong; Mrs Larsson (Clerk)

Apologies: None

Public: There were no members of the public present

26/75 Declarations of Interest / Dispensations

None.

26/76 Parish Councillor Vacancies: No applications received.

26/77 Minutes of the meeting held on 18th May 2026

RESOLVED to approve the minutes as a true record of the previous meeting, which were duly signed by the Chair.

26/78 Planning Applications

a. New Applications: None

b. Updates and Enforcement:

Class Q application 26/00938/PAMB has not yet been decided. There have been additional responses from consultees.

There are still some issues with the SC planning portal functionality.

Details of applications and the council's full responses are available to view against the respective applications on the Somerset Council planning portal [Link to Planning Portal](#)

26/79 Financial Matters

- a. Financial statement: Financial statement with bank reconciliation to 31/5/26 was circulated in advance of the meeting. No queries were raised and the reconciliation was verified by Cllr Feeney.
- b. Payments requiring authorisation

Members RESOLVED to authorise the following payments:

Clerk salary & PAYE to 30/6/26 (restricted information under GDPR)	
Clerk SLCC membership contribution	£53.13
Admin expenses	£7.69

Query was raised on 2 invoices for the ranger service, which will be resolved before payments are released.

The following payments made since the last meeting were noted

Unity Trust monthly fees – May '26	£7.00
Insurance renewal	£295.37

26/80 Insurance Renewal

Members noted renewal of the council's insurance with Zurich, with a premium of £295.37. The insurers have agreed to increase the volunteer personal accident cover in line with members and staff at no extra charge.

26/81 Orchard Land lease

Feedback has been received from Somerset Council Legal regarding the proposed amendments to the lease. Somerset Council agreed to the majority of the points raised. RESOLVED that HK Law will be instructed to incorporate the agreed amendments into the draft lease and submit it to Somerset Council for formal approval.

26/82 Training

Current training availability was circulated to councillors. No requests for training were made by councillors at this time.

The following requests were made by the clerk, with proposal for the costs to be split equally between council employers:

Data Protection & GDPR via SLCC – total cost £46.20

Principles of Internal Auditing via SLCC – total cost £168.

RESOLVED for the clerk to undertake the GDPR and Principles of Internal Auditing, with costs split equally between council employers.

The Clerk advised they have registered for training on the new AGAR online submission portal being introduced next year, which is free of charge via SLCC.

26/83 Updates and actions on the following areas:

- a. Highways: Members noted a traffic accident on Holloway. There are a number of potholes, which are being reported. An abandoned caravan opposite Niddons Farm has been reported but not recovered yet.
- b. Rights of Way: Cllr Feeney has received 3 reports of issues from residents and is looking into these. One of which involves a damaged gateway, which will need to be remedied by SC Rights of Way. Some PROWs are noted as becoming overgrown, and it's hoped these can be cleared by councillors and volunteers walking to the routes.
- c. Flooding: The flood group continue to work with the EA on the telemetry project for early flood warning, with the community emergency plan now ready to be published. In addition, a memorandum of understanding has been provided to the group for the implementation of three flood warning signs.
MP Adam Dance has asked parishes to identify and share their local priorities following the announcement of £50 million in government funding for flood resilience improvements. Members to consider any matters to submit.
Grant funding remains available through the Somerset Rivers Authority. The flood group is aware, and Cllr Armstrong will liaise with the group to identify any eligible projects for a possible application before the August submission deadline.
- d. Local Community Network: The LCN AGM is on Tuesday 30th June at the Millennium Hall, Seavington St Mary. The agenda has been published.
LCN meetings are open to members of the public – more information can be found here: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/local-community-networks/>
- e. Community Emergency Plan: The plan is now ready to be published. This will be available in the parish council website once received from the flood group.
- f. Website: The website is now live. Further content from local groups still needs to be added, and members were asked to liaise with their contacts to ensure the information is reviewed.
The clerk will continue to progress with adding content.

26/84 Matters for report only

The Somerset Local Plan Scoping Consultation (Regulation 20) is currently open. Further information and the response form are available at: <https://somerset.gov.uk/localplan>. Cllr Jones expressed concern regarding the limited publicity and short timeframe for such an in-depth consultation.

26/85 Items for the next meeting

- a. Savings & investments
- b. Financial regulations review

Any additional proposals to be submitted to the Clerk in line with standing orders.

26/86 Date of next meetings: Monday 27th July 2026, 7.00pm in the Sunday School Room.

Exempt Business: The Parish Council resolved that in view of the confidential/sensitive nature of the business about to be transacted (legal, personal or commercial), the press and public be excluded in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

26/87 Somerset Council Chair's Award for Service to the Community

Members agreed that it was difficult to select just one nominee for the Somerset Council Chair's Award for Community Service, recognising that many individuals and groups give their time and support to the community. The Council expressed appreciation for all those who support the parish's wellbeing and community life, and recorded its thanks to everyone involved.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 20.10pm.

SignedN. Jones, Chair.....

Date ...27 July 2026.....

Initial ...NJ.....