MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF

LOOSE PARISH COUNCIL (LPC)

Monday 21 September 2026 at 7.30pm

in the Loose Parish Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, ME15 9RG.

Councillors taking part: Cllr. Mick Westwood (MW) (Vice Chair) who chaired the meeting; Cllr. Jim Andrew (JA), Cllr. Sue Hill (SH), Cllr. Sarah Leeson (SL), Cllr. Elaine Lawford (EL), Cllr. Loryl Nixon (LN) and Cllr. Velma Bennett (VB).

Also present: Nicky Bourne (Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)) (NB) who took the minutes, Amanda Baker (Deputy Clerk) (AB), Eve Poulter (Assistant Clerk) (EP), Stacey Champion (Assistant Clerk) (SC), Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) Linton & Loose Ward Cllrs: Cllr. Simon Wales (SW) & Cllr. Brian Clark (BC), Kent County Council (KCC) Division Cllr: Cllr. Paul Thomas (PT).

There were 7 members of the public present. MW explained the housekeeping rules.

1. **To receive and record any apologies for absence.**
   Previously received apologies from Cllr. Vianne Gibbons (Chair) and Cllr. Matthew Cooper (MC) were accepted by the Council. Apologies were also received from Kent County Council (KCC) Division Cllr. Robert Ford (RF), PC Harry Greenfield and PC Lee Tallon.

2. **To receive and agree any decision regarding any item to be taken as confidential.**
   None.

3. **To receive any declarations of pecuniary interest or other significant interest on items on the agenda**. (In accordance with the LPC Code of Conduct adopted on 17 June 2019 (paragraphs 12-16 and Appendices A & B) and LPC Standing Orders Section 13).
   None.

4. **To receive any signed dispensation requests for any item on this agenda.**
   (Councillors to approve/disapprove as appropriate and to agree the reason for the dispensation if approved (see dispensation form). This follows the agreement made by the LPC at the meeting held on the 17 July 2017- item 17).
   Agenda Item 11c: MW advised that he is an allotment holder at the Loose allotments (McAlpine Trust) and proposed that he would contribute to the discussion but would not participate in any decision-making. The Council **AGREED** the proposal.

5. **To agree and to sign as a correct record the following minutes:**
   - LPC minutes for the meeting held on 20 July 2026 (Pages 2117-2122)

   The minutes for the LPC meeting on 20 July 2026 were **AGREED** and signed by MW.

   The following approved minutes to be noted and adopted by the Parish Council:
   - Environment Committee Meetings: 11 May 2026 (Pages 481-484) and 27 July 2026 (Pages 485-488)
   - Finance & Administration (F&A) Meeting: 22 April 2026 (Pages 253-255)
   - Planning Committee Meetings: 15 June 2026 (Pages 773-775), 29 June 2026 (Pages 776-777), 13 July 2026 (Pages 778-779), 27 July 2026 (Pages 780-782) and 10 August 2026 (Pages 783-785)
   - Neighbourhood Plan Working Group 9 June 2026 (Pages 55-57) and 14 July 2026 (Pages 58-61)

6. **To receive any reports from the Loose & Linton Ward Councillors. (BC & SW)**
SW updated on the impact of the government's pause on the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process which may see election dates changing. No further details are available at this time.
SW met with the new head of parking services at MBC and has requested increased enforcement visits to the area to deal with the continued parking on double yellow lines.
BC advised that the Loose Valley Conservation Area Appraisal returns to the Strategic Planning Committee on 16 October 2026 for a decision, with documents published the week before.
The Guidance for Landscape Character Assessment will go out to public consultation on 21 October 2026. The final decision will be made by the Strategic Planning Committee on 27 January 2027.
The Article 4 directive on office spaces has now been extended (it was originally only looking at Sessions House) and will go to the Strategic Planning Committee on 18 November 2026.
The Call for Sites responses are currently being reviewed by officers. BC will advise of the timeline.
Action: BC.

7. **To receive any reports from KCC Division Councillors (PT).**
A motion to extend the times for the senior citizen free bus pass was blocked by full council.
Updated on the gas mains replacement: Work on the A229 had to be postponed on discovery of a water leak and a section has been skipped as it requires new plans to link some properties further away from the carriageway. Work in Norrington Rd had to be stalled following the excavation of asbestos but is nearing completion. Pickering Street works restart on 5 October for up to 2 weeks. These works cover the most difficult narrow section from the scout hut to Leonard Gould estate.
Current KCC consultations include the Kent Minerals Sites Plan.
KCC voted through the freedom of the county to the Kent Brigade of Gurkhas and celebration events are being planned.
With the postponement of LGR PT is trying to find out more about whether the Town Council elections will go ahead. MW advised that the Parish Conference did not provide a definitive answer.
PT met with Kent Police recently and encouraged all contact with the Police to be logged, and if PT is copied in, he can assist with following up matters.

8. **To receive any reports/information from the Police and from E-watch.**
NB read a report received from PC Lee Tallon. There has been little activity in Loose with no further reports of nuisance bikes on the King George V playing field. There have been a couple of recent catapult incidents, one at Hazlitt Place and a group of youths seen with a catapult were stopped on Loose Road near Norrington Road. A surgery was held recently in the YMCA car park with another booked for 13/11/26 at 17.00 hrs. The Office will publicise the surgery. Action: SC.
E-watch reports for Loose since the last meeting had been pre-circulated and were noted.

9. **To receive any questions/comments from the public or organisations.**
(To include any letters/e-mails received by the Clerk from members of the public)
Closure of the letter box in Church Street – a resident attended to advise that Royal Mail blocked up the letter box on 16 September 2026, without any notification to residents. As it is the only box in the village the resident asked if LPC would contact Royal Mail to find out if a box could be installed at an alternative nearby site. After discussion, the Council **AGREED** that the protocols for closing a box should be researched and an approach made to Royal Mail to find out why there has been no consultation and what plans they have for offering a service to residents in the village. BC offered his support with the matter. Action: NB.

Complaint about noise from outside events at the Chequers – Correspondence had been received from a resident following noise nuisance from outdoor events at the public house. NB shared the history of similar issues, including meetings and an informal agreement restricting the number of events. After discussion the Council **AGREED** that MBC are the formal body who have the appropriate officers to deal with noise and licensing issues, therefore residents should direct the

matter to MBC. The Ward Councillors have been made aware and can offer support as required. Action: NB.

Speed cameras – EL raised the matter of mobile speed enforcement for the A229 having seen a presence elsewhere recently. After discussion it was **AGREED** that PC Greenfield should be consulted to find out the criteria for mobile camera deployment, having shared previously that he had completed speed gun training. Action: NB. SC has recently taken on reviving the Speedwatch scheme for Loose. Action: SC.

10. Loose Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (LNPWG) – to receive information and make any necessary decisions

An update on the work of the LNPWG had been pre-circulated, along with the guide to the Loose Neighbourhood Plan (LNP) Pre-submission consultation documents. The public consultation was launched on 10 September, and the first pop-up event took place on Saturday 19 September at Boughton Parade with a display and a steady stream of engagement. The next drop-in will be Tuesday 22 September at the YMCA 10-4pm, then Tuesday 29 September at the Loose Pavilion 2.30-5pm followed by a presentation by consultant Alison Eardley at 7.30pm. The final drop-in will be Sunday 4 October 2.30-4.30pm at the Loose Pavilion. Documents and consultation forms are available via the LPC website and hard copies are on display at the YMCA, Loose Pavilion and Coxheath library. A summary document has also been produced. MW encouraged all councillors to complete the survey and encourage neighbours, friends and family to do so because a community plan needs community input. Action: All Councillors. MW passed on thanks to the working group members and to the Office for all their work to get to this stage. A LNPWG member present thanked MW for his leadership and for driving the project so effectively.

11. To receive and discuss any items escalated by councillors, committees or the office and make any necessary decisions.

a. Finance & Administration Committee – to review recommendations for Chair and Vice Chair

At the F&A meeting on 24 August the Committee put forward a recommendation that full council should elect VG as Chair and MW as Vice Chair of the F&A Committee. This was unanimously **AGREED** by the Council.

b. To receive an update on Maidstone Borough Council land disposal and transfer of assets

MW and AB attended the MBC Parish Conference on 16 September 2026 and the slides from the presentation by Mark Green had been circulated. Despite the pause of LGR the transfers will continue. LPC's interest in the freehold of Richmond Way Green has been identified to MBC and the accurate boundary is under discussion. Action: NB/MW.

At the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) webinar on asset transfers under LGR on 24 August 2026 legislation for the transfer of allotments was highlighted, which has implications for the Carlton Gardens site in north Loose. NB has requested clarification from MBC regarding this site. The transfer to LPC will have implications for budget and administration. NB has also requested details of any other Loose Parish community assets that may fall within the disposal policy criteria and MBC will confirm details shortly. Action: NB/MW to continue investigations.

c. To receive an update on the Loose Valley Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

MW updated on the plan's progress and the need for agreement on two matters in relation to the proposed enlargement of the conservation area. After discussion on the objection raised by Loose Gardeners to the proposed inclusion of the allotments into the new conservation area, the Council felt that adequate protection and control measures were already provided by LPC's ownership and the trustee arrangements. LPC **AGREED** the site should not be included in the new conservation area. The Council discussed a complaint lodged by Boughton Monchelsea PC (BMPC) with MBC about their failure to include the land between the southeast section of Loose Valley Conservation Area and the Boughton Monchelsea Quarries Conservation Area. Inclusion of this land was

suggested by both BMPC and LPC in early consultation. As a change at this stage would cause significant delay, the Council **AGREED** that they note the complaint and suggest the process moves forward, but without losing sight of the proposal which should be revisited in the future. Action: NB to inform the Conservation Officer of the decisions.

d. To receive an update on actions relating to the Brooks Field/allotments land collapse

NB has completed the actions requested by the McAlpine Trust and LPC. The independent reports have all been recirculated to the trustees and the MBC Tree Officer's comments were sought on the impact of the dead trees. SL reported on the site visit with an arborist to clarify the impact of the dead elm trees and this concurred with the MBC Tree Officer that through the natural decaying cycle, the roots will continue to anchor the soil. One elm is due to be felled for safety reasons (there is a slight chance it could fall in reach of the allotments), but others are not considered a safety risk as they will fall downslope. Action: SL to take the information to the next McAlpine Trust meeting.

e. To discuss a forthcoming Councillor training opportunity

The Council discussed interest in the forthcoming KALC "Nuts & Bolts for Councillors" course on 26 November 2026. Action: NB to clarify the booking arrangements.

12. To review the "Enquiries, Concerns and Complaints" Spreadsheet.

A report detailing the enquiries and concerns received since the last meeting had been pre-circulated to councillors and was noted. EL advised that she has followed up a manhole cover issue she reported to KCC in April 2026.

13. Finance & Funding.

a. To ratify payments made on Appx A for 17 August 2026.

The Appendix A for 17 August 2026 was ratified by the Council. Payments were authorised by VG and MW.

b. To ratify payments made on Appx A for 21 September 2026

The Appendix A for 21 September 2026 was ratified by the Council. Payments were authorised by VG and MW.

MW advised the Council that transfers will soon need to be made into the current account from the instant access deposit account to meet payments. All transfers will be authorised by two signatory Councillors as per the financial regulations. Action: NB.

c. To receive an update on the insurance contract

The insurance is in its last year of a 3-year contract. The renewal documentation has been received, and the premiums were noted as follows (including Insurance Premium Tax and broker fee) General insurance: £2,526.66 (last year £2,480.59), Cyber Insurance: £395.25 (last year £410.25). NB advised that a new contract will need to be researched. Action: NB.

d. To receive an update on the bank accounts and make any necessary decisions

NB is reviewing several different deposit accounts but the research is not yet complete. Action: NB to bring to the next LPC meeting.

e. To review the Parish Online subscription and make any necessary decisions

The renewal is due 1 October to be paid before 31 October. Last year the mapping software subscription was £150 + VAT. After discussion the Council **AGREED** to go ahead with the renewal unless the price significantly increased. Action: NB.

f. To review the broadband contract and make any necessary decisions

The broadband service is currently £38.99 + VAT pre month. The provider has offered a slightly reduced price to tie into a new contract but the current contract runs until January 2027. As initial research has shown similar prices from other providers and many different levels and speed options, NB proposed a needs analysis should be completed with the support of MC as

the required service for the Pavilion is only basic. Findings will be brought to the next meeting. The Council **AGREED** the proposal. Action: NB.

g. To receive an update on the 2025/26 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)
Nothing to report as there has been no further communication from the external auditor (Forvis Mazars). Their deadline is 30 September. Action: NB will advise when conclusion of audit has been received and publish the necessary information.

14. To review Terms of Reference of committees being delegated to carry out LPC business.

a. Finance and Administration Committee Terms of Reference
b. Environment Committee Terms of Reference
c. Highways Working Group Terms of Reference
Additionally, the Pavilion and Community Hub (PCH) Terms of Reference were pre-circulated following the change in responsibility for the King George V playing field. The Council ratified the Terms of Reference for these four committees as proposed. Action: NB.

15. To review the following policies:

a. Dignity at Work Policy
The Dignity at Work policy had been circulated to councillors and was **AGREED** with no changes. Action: NB.

b. Procedures & Policy for Authorisation of Payments
The Procedures & Policy for Authorisation of Payments had been circulated to councillors. SL and NB noted a number of amendments are required to align with current procedures. The Council **AGREED** NB should update the policy and circulate it to the signatories, then the revised policy to be taken to the next LPC meeting for ratification. Action: NB.

c. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations Policy
The Disclosable Pecuniary Interests & Dispensations Policy had been circulated to councillors and was **AGREED** with amendments proposed by MW to include other interests. Action: NB.

d. Financial Reserves Policy
The new Financial Reserves Policy had been agreed by the F&A committee on 24 August 2026 and was **AGREED** by the Council. Action: NB.

16. To review the following GDPR policies:

a. GDPR- General Privacy Notice
b. GDPR- Staff Privacy Notice
c. GDPR- Hirer Privacy Notice
d. GDPR- Councillor Privacy Notice
e. GDPR- General Policy
f. GDPR- Data Audit Schedule & Impact Assessment
The GDPR policies had been circulated to councillors and were **AGREED** with no changes. Action: NB.

17. To review the Accessibility Statement for the LPC website and make any necessary decisions.
The website Accessibility Statement had been recently updated by SC and MC. After clarification of some content the Council **AGREED** the statement with minor amendments. The document will be added to the Policy Review schedule. Action: NB.

18. Loose Fete and Fun Dog Show – to receive an update and make any necessary decisions.
Next year's fete will be on 12 June 2027 12-4pm. AB asked all councillors to note the date and try to make themselves available to help on the day for a few hours. Tombola prizes can be donated at any time. Action: Councillors.

19. **Volunteers – to receive an update and make any necessary decisions.**
MBC has invited several litter pickers to a lunch at the Town Hall on 1 October. The Environment Committee would like to propose that LPC puts on a thank you event for all volunteers (including litter pickers, planter volunteers, Neighbourhood Plan working group members, pond works and other environment volunteers). After discussion the Council **AGREED** to host an event. Action: Clerks' Office to consider dates and an event plan. The Greenway posters, suggested by SL have generated 8 enquiries to help with maintenance. A database has been created and all working party dates will be circulated to these volunteers. Action: NB.

20. **To ratify any Round Robins since the last meeting on 20 July 2026.**
None.

21. **Promotion of Loose Parish Council & Articles.**
    a. **To review information for publications and the website and make any necessary decisions**
    A Community Alert will go out next week featuring the Neighbourhood Plan consultation. The next "In & Around Loose" deadline is 19 October 2026. Any items for inclusion should be sent to the Office. Action: NB. Councillor recruitment strategies were discussed.
    MW asked about availability of data on the website and social media engagement. SC has been looking at different approaches to produce more meaningful data. Action: SC.

22. **Information Only**
    - PCH plans – plans proposed by the PCH Committee for internal improvements to the Pavilion had been shared to ensure that all Councillors were up to date. Quotes are being sought.
    - Councillors have been invited to Loose Collective Art Show preview on Friday 2 October 5-7pm in Church Street chapel. Councillors to RSVP directly if attending. The exhibition is open to the public from 10am – 5pm on 3 & 4 October.
    - Councillors have been invited to the Mayor's meal on 24 September. Councillors to RSVP directly if attending.
    - The date, venue and proposed invitees to the Christmas meal were discussed. The Office will provide further information when confirmed.
    - AB gave information on a proposal by a neighbouring parish to employ a Community Warden and will obtain further information.

23. **Next meeting of the LPC –** 19 October 2026 at 7.30pm**.**

The meeting ended at 9.38 pm.

Dated……. Signature ……

Appendix A - Finance 26/27

As at 17 August 2026

Balance as at 31 July 2026					
Current	UTB	Current account	20360513		89,977.62
Savings	UTB	Instant Savings account	20416234		108,997.33
					198,974.95
Direct Debits paid already taken off balances above- INFO ONLY					
All	Monthly	Lloyds Bank- Credit card	Monthly use plus x £3 charge per user		310.21
Admin	Monthly	Clear Business	Broadband at Pavilion		46.79
PCH	Monthly	EDF Energy	Gas Charges for Pavilion		29.89
PCH	Monthly	EDF Energy	Electricity Charges for Pavilion		64.81
PCH	Monthly	Countrystyle Recycling	Waste Collection		35.50
Admin	Monthly	NEST	Staff Pension Payments		530.36
ENV	Monthly	Wynsdale Waste Management	Emptying of bins in Salts Wood		149.21
					1,166.77
Details of Credit Card Gross Payments as debited by DDR- Lloyds Bank-INFO ONLY					
PCH	CC-NB	Amazon	Pavilion supplies - blue roll		11.04
PCH	CC-NB	Amazon	Pavilion supplies - loo roll		26.99
PCH	CC-NB	Amazon	Pavilion supplies - ant spray		6.36
PCH	CC-NB	Amazon	Pavilion supplies - ant powder		3.79
PCH/Fete	CC-NB	Amazon	Fete - high viz vests		39.46
PCH/Fete	CC-NB	Amazon	Fete - gazebo weights		19.98
Admin	CC-NB	Canva	Publishing software annual subscription		99.99
Admin	CC-NB	Amazon	Stationery - printer paper		31.98
Admin	CC-NB	Amazon	Stationery - laminating sheets		13.28
Admin	CC-NB	Amazon	Stationery - miscellaneous		25.45
Admin	CC-NB	HP Instant Ink	Printer ink subscription		20.99
Admin	CC-NB	Lebara	Mobile Phone Plan		4.90
Admin	ALL	Lloyds	Charges		6.00
					310.21
Payments authorised 17 August 2026 and ratified by LPC meeting 21 September 2026					
PCH		Hirers	Hirer Deposits Returned		100.00
PCH		Furniture At Work	12 replacement chairs for pavilion		439.20
PCH/Fete		Matthew Stephens	Fete PA system		494.00
LPC		Isle Landscapers	Regular Maintenance Jul 2026		3,659.26
Admin		Flotek Ltd	IT host services		437.32
Admin		Staff	Expenses		57.35
Admin		MI Payroll Services	Payroll Expenses		50.00
Admin		Salaries	Total Salaries and NI Contributions		9,303.18
		Hinckley & Rugby	Transfer to deposit account		50,000.00
		Payments out since last statemt		DR	64,540.31
		Current Account Unity Trust Bank Plus Any Income		**CR**	**90,668.62**
	Current a/c after committed payments			**CR**	**26,128.31**
UTB Deposit				**CR**	**108,997.33**
Hinckley and Rugby Building Society				**CR**	**106,008.90**
Total savings				**CR**	**215,006.23**
		Total Bank balances		**CR**	**241,134.54**

Payments authorised by VG & MW

Appendix A - Finance 26/27

As at 21 Sept 2026

Balance as at 31 Aug 2026					
Current	UTB	Current account	20360513		24,818.17
Savings	UTB	Instant Savings account	20416234		108,997.33
					133,815.50
Direct Debits paid already taken off balances above- INFO ONLY					
All	Monthly	Lloyds Bank- Credit card	Monthly use plus x £3 charge per user		223.38
Admin	Monthly	Clear Business	Broadband at Pavilion		46.79
PCH	Monthly	EDF Energy	Gas Charges for Pavilion		35.74
PCH	Monthly	EDF Energy	Electricity Charges for Pavilion		52.01
PCH	Monthly	Countrystyle Recycling	Waste Collection		53.24
Admin	Monthly	NEST	Staff Pension Payments		526.88
Admin	Monthly	Flotek Ltd	IT host services		437.32
Admin	Monthly	Gpeto AI	Planning tool		48.00
ENV	Monthly	Wynsdale Waste Management	Emptying of bins in Salts Wood		149.21
					1,572.57
Details of Credit Card Gross Payments as debited by DDR 17/8/26 - Lloyds Bank-INFO ONLY					
PCH	CC-NB	Smartwater Testing	Pavilion - annual legionella testing		54.00
PCH	CC-NB	The Range	Pavilion - top up bark chips		15.00
PCH	CC-NB	Amazon	Pavilion - hedge shears & secateurs		22.56
Admin	CC-NB	Wix.com	Website calendar subscription		39.93
Admin	CC-NB	KALC	Councillor Training Course		60.00
Admin	CC-NB	HP Instant Ink	Printer ink subscription		20.99
Admin	CC-NB	Lebara	Mobile Phone Plan		4.90
Admin	ALL	Lloyds	Charges		6.00
					223.38
Payment made 07 September authorised and ratified by LPC meeting 21 September 2026					
NP		KM Group	Public notice		779.64
Payments made 21 September authorised and ratified by LPC meeting 21 September 2026					
PCH		Hirers	Hirer Deposits Returned		200.00
PCH		Fire Control Services	Fire Appliance inspection		75.60
PCH		Arton Plumbing	Boiler Inspection		200.00
PCH		Eurocell	Drainpipe parts		15.76
PCH/Fete		Express Toilet Hire	Portaloos		180.00
LPC		Isle Landscapers	Regular Maintenance Aug 2026		2,437.24
LPC		In & Around Loose	LPC 2 page spread - Autumn issue		158.00
Admin		Clerks & Council	Annual subscription		15.50
Admin		Staff	Expenses		51.47
Admin		MI Payroll Services	Payroll Expenses		50.00
Admin		Salaries	Total Salaries and NI Contributions		9,194.38
		Payments out since last statemt		DR	12,577.95
		Current Account Unity Trust Bank Plus Any Income		**CR**	**27,603.36**
	Current a/c after committed payments			**CR**	**15,025.41**
UTB Deposit				**CR**	**108,997.33**
Hinckley and Rugby Building Society				**CR**	**106,008.90**
Total savings				**CR**	**215,006.23**
		Total Bank balances		**CR**	**230,031.64**

Payments authorised by VG & MW