MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF

LOOSE PARISH COUNCIL (LPC)

Monday 15 June 2026 at 7.30pm

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

Councillors present: Cllr. Mick Westwood (Vice Chair) (MW) who chaired the meeting, Cllr. Velma Bennett (VB), Cllr. Matthew Cooper (MC) and Cllr. Jim Andrew (JA).

Also present: Nicky Bourne (Clerk) (NB) who took the minutes, Amanda Baker (Deputy Clerk) (AB), Stacey Champion (Assistant Clerk) (SC), Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) Linton & Loose Ward Cllrs. Simon Wales (SW) and Brian Clark (BC); Kent County Council (KCC) Division Cllrs. Paul Thomas (PT) and Robert Ford (RF).

There were 5 members of the public present.

1. **To receive and record any apologies for absence.**
   Previously received apologies from Cllr. Vianne Gibbons (Chair) (VG), Cllr. Sarah Leeson (SL), Cllr. Elaine Lawford (EL) and Cllr. Sue Hill (SH) were accepted by the Council.

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

3. **To receive any declarations of pecuniary interest on items in the agenda.**
   (In accordance with the NALC Model Code of Conduct for Parish Councils (pursuant to section 27 of the Localism Act 2011). In addition, any declaration of personal or prejudicial interest. *(As agreed by LPC 21 Jan 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).
   None.

5. **To agree and to sign as a correct record the following minutes:**
   - LPC minutes for the Annual meeting held on the 18 May 2026 (Pages 2105-2110)
     The minutes for the Annual meeting on 18 May 2026 were **AGREED** and signed by MW.

   The following approved minutes were noted and adopted by the Parish Council:
   - Planning Committee Meetings: 30 March 2026 (Pages 763-764), 13 April 2026 (Pages 765-766) and 27 April 2026 (Pages 767-768).
   - Loose Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting: 13 April 2026 (Pages 48-50).

The Council agreed to hear the first item from the public under Agenda Item 9 at this point.

6. **To receive any reports from KCC Division Councillors (10-minute limit).**
   PT advised he had met with Emily Rodgers (KCC Highways Improvement Partner) and updated on their discussion topics. He provided an update on the Scotia Gas Network (SGN) works and is willing to liaise with SGN, pass on updates and support residents as necessary. A resident in attendance highlighted an issue which PT will follow up with SGN. PT advised that with the Joint

Transportation Board disbanded, a new forum will consider Linton Crossroads proposals not taken forward in 2023.
RF has joined the Flood Committee and has highlighted the unresolved water issues in Church Street. Residents attended the recent meeting and the issue received local press coverage.

7. To receive any reports from Loose & Linton Ward Councillors (10-minute limit).
BC explained his involvement in establishing a water station at the YMCA and thanked NB for her support. He is pushing to find out what Southeast Water is doing to prevent the infrastructure failing again in future hot weather, but no information has been provided.
BC advised that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding for Linton Crossroads remains with MBC and has not been passed to KCC. There may be an additional round of CIL from a proposed housing development. BC had attended Five Acre Wood School's charity football match. They have obtained funding to support continuation of their train café.
SW has been helping resolve refuse collection issues due to the Busbridge Road closure. His time has been taken up with the Miller Heights closure in the town centre. NB thanked BC for opening the fete and SW for his help setting up and supervising car parking.

8. To receive any reports/information from the Police and from E-watch (10-minute limit).
PC Greenfield reports:

- Offroad petrol and electric bikes seem to be popping up a lot more, with cut throughs being used via Walnut Tree Avenue, where they cannot be chased by cars.
- General reporting of nuisance youths seems to have dropped (positive considering the time of year); however, patrols will continue as always.
- He will be meeting LAA volunteers in Loose valley to discuss issues they are experiencing.
- There have been some nuisance youths in the YMCA. He has worked with the management, receiving footage allowing identification of a few, leading to parents being spoken to.

Since receiving the report, a nuisance bike issue in KGV on 11 June 2026 has been reported to PC Greenfield who has made a Subject Access Request for the CCTV footage. Action: NB.
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)

- Noise nuisance from a rental property affecting Pickering Street and Walnut Tree Lane – a resident attended to update on the issue. Access to the MBC reporting App is still awaited. BC has referred the matter to senior officers and will chase up their responses and the App access. Action: BC. BC suggested residents or MBC could make the booking agent aware. PT offered to raise this under anti-social behaviour at the KCC Scrutiny Committee. Action: PT.
- Gas replacement works continue with good communication between residents and SGN. Signs requested by NB are in place to deter traffic from using the narrow Old Loose Hill/Well St diversion whilst Busbridge Road is closed, and most traffic appears to be staying on the A229 to Linton Crossroads. As advised PT will take up a carer access issue for a resident and SW has been resolving refuse collection issues for Busbridge Road.
- Parking issues in Lancet Lane reported by a resident have been monitored by NB and BC. The situation has improved since the removal of the gas works and the driveway in question is being used. Action: Ongoing monitoring (NB). Resident to report further issues if necessary.
- Sevington Park tree maintenance concern – land ownership has still not been established despite consulting KCC, MBC and the land registry. Action: BC to try another source.
- The manager of the Loose Goose Coffee Shop has asked if the Council would consider allowing the business to use the village green during good weather providing a nicer environment than the hard standing area and in return they would assist with maintenance. After discussion the Council **AGREED** that some conditions be drafted and circulated for a decision by Round Robin for full council agreement. Action: NB.

10. To review the “Enquiries, Concerns and Complaints” Spreadsheet.
A report detailing the enquiries and concerns received since the last meeting was circulated to councillors and was noted. MW updated the Council on communication with MBC and residents regarding the Valley Fields Camp site, which has been agreed but did not appear on the weekly list. MBC have explained it was approved by the Camping and Caravanning Club. The Planning Committee will request such applications feature on the MBC weekly list as they affect residents. BC supports this and asked to be sent MBC’s formal response. Action: Eve Poulter (EP).

11. To receive and discuss any items of concern escalated by Councillors, Committees or the Office and make any necessary decisions:
None.

The Council agreed to take Agenda Item 15 next so Ward Councillors could leave after its conclusion.

12. Reviews – to review the following and make any necessary decisions

a. Assertion 10: Digital & Data Compliance audit
NB explained the Assertion 10 requirements that are new on the 2025/26 external audit. NB had shared the checklist being used and highlighted actions and progress by the Office and MC towards compliance. Some matters will always remain ongoing e.g. Councillors attending regular training to stay up to date. Going forward, relevant training opportunities will be circulated and completion records will be maintained. SC advised that the next Flotek Cyber Security session is on 8 July 10-11.30am online. Action: NB & SC.

b. Information Technology (IT) Policy
A revised IT Policy had been circulated, updated by MC. The previous policy focused predominantly on staff use of IT and this version now applies to Councillors and any other authorised users of IT for Council business. The Council **AGREED** the policy, subject to final LPC personalisation, and inclusion of the policy in the annual review calendar. Action: MC and NB.

c. Risk Register and Financial Risk Register (and to note actions in response to the “minor scope for improvement” identified during the 2024/25 external audit)
In response to the “minor scope for improvement” feedback on the 24/25 external audit, the Finance and Admin (F&A) Committee had discussed and prepared a separate risk document relating specifically to financial and administration risk mitigation. This document had been circulated with the ongoing risk calendar, and both were **AGREED** by the Council. Action: NB.

d. Statement on Internal Control (to be signed by the Chair and Clerk/RFO)
The Statement on Internal Control document had been circulated to Councillors and was reviewed, **AGREED** and signed by MW and NB. Action: NB.

13. Finance and Funding

a. To ratify payments made on Appx A for 15 June 2026.
The Council ratified Appendix A for 15 June 2026. Payments were authorised by VG and SL.

b. To review the accounts summary for the fiscal year end 25/26, and to agree with corresponding bank balances.
Agenda item added in error (25/26 accounts and bank reconciliation were covered last meeting).

14. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2025/2026 Completion:

a. To receive and note the additional information prepared to accompany the AGAR: bank reconciliation; explanation of variances; ear-marked reserves and asset register.
The Council noted the additional documents prepared to accompany the AGAR. NB highlighted changes to the asset register after reinstatement of an item of play area equipment, removed in error on the 24/25 document. As a result, the figure for year-ending 31 March 2025 on Line 9 of

Section 2 of the AGAR has been restated. NB plans to review functionality of the asset register over this financial year. Any proposed changes will be taken to the F&A committee. Action: NB.

b. **To receive and note the year-end report from the Internal Auditor (IA) and to make any necessary decisions**
The IA report was noted. For the Section 137 query, the Council **AGREED** NB to clarify the S137 limit and expenditure, requesting inclusion of this information on the IA report. Action: NB.

c. **To review the Annual Internal Auditor Report (Page 3 of the AGAR) as signed by the IA**
The Annual Internal Auditor Report (Page 3 of the AGAR) signed by the Internal Auditor was circulated to Councillors, noted and **AGREED.**

VB left the meeting at 9.10pm.

d. **To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 (Section 1 - Page 4 of the AGAR). To be signed by the Chair and Clerk in overall agreement.**
All assertions on Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2025/26 were duly **AGREED** and the document signed by MW and NB.

e. **To approve the Annual Return Statement of Accounts (Section 2) and the Accounting Statements 2025/26 (Section 2 – Page 5 of the AGAR) as signed by the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) certifying the 2025/26 accounts. To be signed by the Chair.**
Section 2 of the AGAR had been circulated to Councillors. The figure for year-ending 31 March 2025 on Line 9 (Assets) has been restated for the reasons given in Agenda Item 14a. The Council **AGREED** Section 2 of the AGAR and it was signed by MW and NB.

f. **To note the period for the exercise of public rights for the accounts year-end 31 March 2026 as 17 June 2026 to 28 July 2026**.
The Council noted the period for the exercise of Public Rights for 25/26 (17 June - 28 July 2026).

15. **To agree LPC response to the Loose Valley Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Consultation (CAAMP)**
MW had circulated a document with draft comments on the CAAMP for review. JA presented a plan showing the boundary and extensions proposed by MBC and highlighted two additional areas for consideration (A - to the west side of Well Street and B - east of Pickering Street). The following proposals were **AGREED**:
- To support the proposed extensions set out by MBC in the CAAMP.
- That MBC Officers give consideration to the potential inclusion of areas A and B as set out on JA's map (to be appended).

Extracts from the emerging Neighbourhood Plan (views and identified non-designated heritage assets) will be appended. MW and the Office to finalise the submission. Action: MW/NB.

16. **Loose Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (LNPWG) – to receive information and make any necessary decisions.**
An update on the work of the LNPWG had been circulated by MW. A response about environmental and habitats impact is still awaited from MBC. The proposal for LPC to sign off the draft Neighbourhood Plan at this meeting, ready to proceed to public consultation was not put forward as the only Councillors present were LNPWG members. It was **AGREED** the requested actions in the report would be circulated for full council decision by Round Robin. Action: MW and NB.

17. Promotion of Loose Parish Council & Articles.
The article for In and Around Loose has been submitted and two Community Alerts dispatched since the last meeting, with another under development post-fete. SC pre-circulated a diagram to visually clarify the responsibilities of LPC, MBC and KCC. The Council liked the visual clarity and suggested some amendments to content. Action: All Councillors to review content and advise SC of any further amendments for the final version of the document.

18. To ratify any Round Robins since the last meeting on 18 May 2026.
None.

19. Information Only

- The next Kent Ramblers Association meeting is 18 June 2026 if anyone is interested in attending.
- The RACE (Rural and Community Housing Enabling Service) Rural Housing week will be 6-10 July 2026 with an online seminar on 7 July 2026. Information and a link will be circulated to Councillors. MW will attend. Action: NB.
- The Community Heartbeat Trust maintenance contract for the defibrillator on the village green has come to an end after 8 years. The unit is fully functioning (pads expire in 2 years, battery in 4 years). The office will research options for a replacement defibrillator, including grant schemes.
- NB advised that an emergency repair to the Pavilion front door lock and fire escape mechanism had to be undertaken under delegated powers for risk at a cost of £220.00. A blocked drain at the Pavilion had been resolved by a Southern Water call-out at no cost but will need to be continually monitored. Southern Water confirm the section of drain is the responsibility of LPC.
- Loose Fete and Dog Show (13 June) – NB thanked AB for all her organisation of what the team felt was an excellent fete and dog show this year. NB also thanked SC, the Caretaker, AB's family members, MW and LNPWG members for all their support. Very positive feedback has been received but any further feedback would be welcomed. MW also thanked the team (and additional helpers) on behalf of the council, not only for their energy and efforts on the day, but for all the work behind the scenes in preparation for the event. AB reiterated her thanks.

20. Next meeting of the LPC – 20 July 2026 at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 9.45 pm.

Dated……………………………………….   Signature …………………………………

Appendix A - Finance 26/27

As at 14 June 2026

Balance as at 31 May 2026				
Current	UTB	Current account	20360513	158,909.67
Savings	UTB	Instant Savings account	20416234	108,469.99
				267,379.66
Direct Debits paid already taken off balances above- INFO ONLY				
All	Monthly	Lloyds Bank- Credit card	Monthly use plus x £3 charge per user	337.75
Admin	Monthly	Clear Business	Broadband at Pavilion	46.79
PCH	Monthly	EDF Energy	Gas Charges for Pavilion	87.05
PCH	Monthly	EDF Energy	Electricity Charges for Pavilion	64.56
PCH	Monthly	Countrystyle Recycling	Waste Collection	35.50
PCH	Quarterly	Business Stream	Water charges (-£200 credit for lost supply)	92.14
Admin	Monthly	NEST	Staff Pension Payments	525.54
ENV	Monthly	Wynsdale Waste Management	Emptying of bins in Salts Wood	149.21
				1,338.54
Details of Credit Card Gross Payments as debited by DDR- Lloyds Bank-INFO ONLY				
ENV	CC-NB	Rumwoods	Planter supplies/Roys Wood maintenance	74.16
PCH	CC-NB	Tesco	Pavilion supplies	8.33
ENV	CC-NB	Amazon	Brooks Field meadow seeds	104.97
ENV	CC-NB	Amazon	Greenway vegetation maintenance	113.90
Admin	CC-NB	HP Instant Ink	Printer ink subscription	22.49
Admin	CC-NB	Lebara	Mobile Phone Plan	4.90
Admin	ALL	Lloyds	Charges	9.00
				337.75
Payments authorised 15 June 2026 and ratified by LPC meeting 15 June 2026				
PCH		Hirers	Hirer Deposits Returned	100.00
PCH		A Short Locksmith	Replacement front door mechanism	220.00
PCH		AquaHero plumbing Services	Toilet leak repairs	112.50
LPC		Valley Conservation Socirety	Ragstone wall repairs	380.00
LPC		In & Around Loose	LPC 2-page spread - Summer edition	158.00
LPC		Isle Landscapers	Regular Maintenance May 2026	1,102.15
ENV		Richard Hunt	Plate compactor hire for footpath repairs	43.98
Admin		Microshade VSM	IT host services	411.36
Admin		Martin Thomas & Co	Internal Audit fee	505.00
Admin		Gpeto AI	Monthly subscription	30.00
Admin		Staff	Expenses	35.69
Admin		MI Payroll Services	Payroll Expenses	50.00
Admin		Salaries	Total Salaries and NI Contributions	9,398.38
		Hinkley & Rugby	Transfer to deposit account	5,000.00
		Payments out since last statement	DR	17,547.06
		Current Account Unity Trust Bank Plus Any Income	**CR**	**158,332.50**
	Current a/c after committed payments		**CR**	**140,785.44**
UTB Deposit			**CR**	**108,469.99**
Hinckley and Rugby Building Society			**CR**	**11,008.90**
Total savings			**CR**	**119,478.89**
		Total Bank balances	**CR**	**260,264.33**
Payments authorised by VG & SL				