



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
LOOSE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Monday 17 June 2024 at 7.30pm
in the Loose Parish Pavilion, King George V Playing Field**

Councillors taking part: Vianne Gibbons (Chairman) (VG) Charlie Hollister (Vice Chairman) (CH), Andrew Richards (AR), Mick Westwood (MJW), Tony Oliver (TO), Sarah Leeson (SL), Sue Hill (SCH), Neil Lettington (NL), Susan Hogg (SH) Michael Hogg (MH) and Mark Woodward (MW)

Also present: Nicky Bourne (Deputy Clerk) (NB), Janet Burnett (Assistant Clerk) (JB), Amanda Baker (Assistant Clerk) (AB), Simon Wales (SW) (Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) Ward Councillor) and Kim Owen (Clerk) (KO) who took the minutes.

There were 2 members of the public present. The Chairman explained the housekeeping rules and welcomed the two new Councillors to the Meeting.

1. To receive and record any apologies for absence.

Apologies have been received from Jim Andrew (JA) (Away), Velma Bennett (VB) (Work commitments) and Brian Clark (Maidstone Borough Council Ward Councillor) (BC) (Attending Hayle Park Management Committee Meeting).

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 minutes:

LPC minutes for the meeting held on the 13 May 2024 (Pages 1949-1957)

The minutes of the meeting were AGREED with the following amendments:

- Agenda Item 4 SH was absent to a Personal Issue.
- Agenda Item 4 MH was absent due to attending Tovil Parish Council Meeting.
- Agenda Item 4 MW was absent due to a previous arrangement.
- Agenda Item 14b amended to:

SL explained that the transfer document for Richmond Green has been drafted by Michael Smith and she has added the company number of North Loose Ltd. The document was agreed and the Chairman signed the transfer document on behalf of the Council. SL signed the document on behalf of North Loose Ltd.

The Chairman signed the minutes.

The following approved Minutes to be noted and adopted by the Parish Council

- Environment Committee Meeting 11 March 2024(Pages 423-429)



6. To receive any reports from the Loose Ward Councillors.

SW advised that since the Elections on 2 May 2024 BC and himself have been busy dealing with issues in the Parish including:

- Parking issues at Walnut Tree Avenue
- Speed restrictions on the Linton Road
- Parking at the Primary School at pick up and drop off times
- Signage on the A229 for weight limits at Cripple Street
- Yellow lines at the exit from the Farrows onto the A229
- Greensands Planning Application

After discussion the Council **AGREED** that discussions on the Highways Improvement Plan will take place at the next Environment Committee Meeting. NB to Action

SW also discussed the Cornwallis Academy Licencing application. The Licence has been granted for two events. The other issue with the Academy is noise from the use of the 3G pitch. The Clerk advised that she had update on this issue. At the last meeting the Council asked the Office to contact Cornwallis Academy to see if they could arrange a meeting with the Academy, MBC and residents to mediate with all parties to find a solution to the issue with the 3G pitch. The Clerk advised that the Academy have responded to the letter and advised that the school will continue to work with residents individually and MBC directly and therefore at this stage will not require a large group meeting. The Council **AGREED** for the Clerk to go back to the residents and advise them of the Academy's response. KO to Action.

Another issue is the water running down Church Street. Highways have said that it is not their problem but the road now has algae on it causing a slip hazard. NB advised that several residents want the Council to hold a meeting to see what can be done. The Council **AGREED** that the Environment Committee should organise a meeting for residents and interested parties to see if there is a way forward. NB and CH to action.

7. To receive any reports from KCC Division Councillor Simon Webb. (SW)

No report received.

8. To receive any reports/information from the Community Warden Team.

The Clerk read out the report from Sandra Edmonds, Team Leader, Community Warden Team (Written before the Fete on 15 June 2024).

The Warden Team for Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling has now completed its first stage of Consultation and the team which consists of 3.5 wardens to cover Maidstone and 1.5 wardens to cover Tonbridge and Malling. The second phase re area allocation will take place soon and be completed by the end of 2024. Currently the strategic leads are looking at GAP Data and speaking to key partners to identify areas where support will be most effective. As soon as she knows she will update the Council, but until then if there are any concerns you have that you would like our assistance with please do not hesitate to contact the team. We continue to visit the vulnerable and elderly residents in Loose and the surrounding areas, with referrals coming from Adult Social Care, GP surgeries, residents and their families.

The team is looking forward to attending the Loose Summer Fete where they will be running a Community Safety and Information stall. Thank you to Loose Parish Council for supporting the Warden Team with resources for your local community.

9. To receive any reports/information from the Police and from E-watch.

PC Harry Greenfield did attend the Fete on Saturday and discussed issues at the King George V Playing Field re motorbikes. He was not available for the meeting this evening.

E-Watch



There were no new notifications on E-Watch since the last meeting. The Clerk will check if notifications are still being added and that the Loose sections of e-watch includes all areas of the new parish.

10. To receive any questions/comments from the public.

(To include any letters/e-mails received by the Clerk from members of the public)

Two residents raised concerns about what is going on along Forstal Lane & Forstal Park and wondered if the Council could help with enforcement. The issues are:

- One site has increased the number of caravans on the land. It also does appear that the electric supply is being taken directly from source and not through a metre.
- A Company on one of the sites has an Operator's Licence for 10 lorries but the lorries are 24-hours, 7 days a week. There appears to be no speed restrictions. There is now a tarmacked area as well.
- A third site has an increase in sheds, portacabins and building works.
- A stable block has been cladded as if it is a home.

The Council **AGREED** to add the item to the next planning meeting and contact enforcement on behalf of the residents.

11. To receive updates on the Boundary Changes and make any necessary decisions.

- a. To review and agreed the document for the transfer of Lease on Richmond Way for the Land Registry. The document was circulated to all Councillors and **AGREED**.
- b. To discuss North Loose Ltd hiring the Pavilion for meetings.
SL asked the Council, as North Loose Ltd (NLL) is providing a service to the residents of Loose Parish via the maintenance of Mangravet Wood, which falls within the Loose Parish, could NLL use the Pavilion for meetings for no charge.
The Council **AGREED** that the hire of the Pavilion would be free for North Loose Ltd going forward.
SH asked how long the lease is for. SL will confirm to the Council.
- c. Litter issue at Mangravet
MW raised an issue about the amount litter at the back of New Line Learning including cigarette butts dropped by the staff at the gate of the Academy. SL advised that Paul Kinnill recently met up with Chris Lack and Susan Luckhurst regarding the additional litter pickers from the NLRA areas for Love Loose Hate Litter. He was informed that Susan is withdrawing from her role as she is moving away and that Chris is still interested in picking litter but wants to step down from any organisational responsibilities. As he understands it Love Loose Hate Litter was formed 6 years ago and Susan was the lead on litter issues, albeit on a voluntary basis.
After discussion the Council **AGREED** to:
 - Move the item to the Environment Committee to find a way forward for a litter picking team
 - Write to New line Learning Academy and Five Acre Wood school regarding the litter issue.
 - For MW to get some photos of the litter issue in the area.
NB & MW to Action.
- d. Boundary with Boughton Monchelsea
Paperwork has been circulated to Councillors about the boundary changes between Loose and Boughton Monchelsea Parishes.
After discussion the Council **AGREED** that the agenda item would be moved to the Planning Committee meeting on Monday 1 July 2024. JB to Action.
- e. Payment of Sign changes for North Loose
At the Environment Committee Meeting on 20 May 2024 the Committee asked for clarification on who will be paying for conversion of the notice Boards in North Loose from North Loose Residents Association to Loose Parish Council.
The Council **AGREED** for the costs to come out of LPC budget.



f. Mangravet option lease

Lease has not yet been received from Mike Smith for agreement. SL will chase.

12. To receive an update on the Shed in Brooks Field. (KO)

a. To review and agree the Heads of Lease document.

The Heads of Lease document was circulated to Councillors for consideration. The Clerk advised that she had been contacted by the Council's Solicitors to advise that the Council will be subject to anti-money laundering procedures where every member of the Council needs to be identified and undergo some form of AML assessment.

After discussion the Council **AGREED**:

- The lease with the following amendments:
 - The address needs changing to current office address
 - That the map on the lease should have the shed in red
- They are not happy with having an AML assessment and feel that the funds received from the shed will only be a peppercorn rent so the assessment is not necessary
- That the Council is a separate entity to the Councillors and not on an individual basis.
- That the clerk will ask the following questions:
 - Where the information would be stored on the assessment?
 - Why is the assessment needed for a peppercorn rent of £1.00?
 - What is the legal reasoning for this process?
- That the Clerk to contact Clive Powell to see what KALC's position is on this matter.

Clerk to Action.

13. To receive updates on the LPC Fete and make any necessary decisions. (NB)

The fete was cancelled due to the weather and the safety of the public. VG thanked everyone who helped on the day. NB advised that refunds will need to be offered to all of the 52 stall holders. Providing the Council can get the Police Cadets, the first aid cover etc she proposes that the Fete is rescheduled for 7 September 2024.

After discussion the Council **AGREED** to reschedule the fete and dog show date to 7 September 2024.

NB & AB will contact all stall holders to see if they would like to reschedule or have a refund.

Office to Action.

14. To review the Enquiry, Concern and Complaints Spreadsheet. (KO)

The Office have dealt with the following since the last meeting:

- A discount on the discount card not working
- Cracked branch on the Walnut Tree in the triangle – removed
- An enquiry about the supplier of the chairs in the Pavilion
- Wooden bollard on Brooks Path knocked down – now replaced by KCC
- Large pothole in Church Street opposite the Cemetery gates – programmed for repair 17/18 June
- Investigated reported sighting of Japanese Knotweed in the Closed Cemetery and neighbour's garden
- Reported drain outside Vale House on Old Loose Hill as blocked again
- Blocked footpath alongside pumping station / Hildenshaw – now cleared
- Litter issues reported by MW at the back of New Line Learning
- Overgrown trees in Maidstone Cemetery growing into a resident's property – advised MW who reported back to resident
- Discount card not received – has now been delivered
- Planter maintenance enquiries (NLRA planters)
- Bollard down on Old Loose Hill – reported



- Broken support around the roses in the Closed Cemetery – reported to groundworks contractor
- Trip hazard from bin base on Village Green – caretaker to deal with
- Motorbikes on King George V – supplying CCTV images to Kent Police
- Various overgrown footpaths – reported
- The ongoing issue of the continuous water flow down Church Street
- The ongoing issue of cars parked on the hatchings at the entrance to Walnut Tree Avenue
- The badger sett issue in the allotments / Brooks field – NB met the expert and will feedback to McAlpine Trust
- Numerous requests for support from the Community Fund dealt with.

15. Promotion of Loose Parish Council & Articles. (KO)

The Social Media Data has been circulated to Councillors and noted. NL asked that the Discount Card list of discounts be added to the website. Office to Action.

16. To receive and discuss any items of concern escalated by Councillors, Committees or the Office.

NL advised that the Bollard at the top of Old Loose Hill has been damaged again. NB to Action.

17. To appoint Committees and members to Committees.

This includes substitutes, co-opted members and representatives to outside bodies. To also consider numbers of members on each committee.

The Clerk advised that the two new Councillors need to join two Committees going forward but have not yet had a chance to attend any Committee meetings so this agenda item will be moved to next month's meeting.

18. To review all Terms of Reference (TOR) in of committees being delegated to carry out LPC business.

- a. The Pavilion and Community Hub Committee's TOR was agreed by the Committee on 3 June 2024. The Council ratified the TOR.
- b. The HR Board's TOR was agreed by the Board on 10 June 2024. The Council ratified the TOR.

19. Finance & Funding:

- a. To ratify payments made on Appx A for 17 June 2024
The payments were ratified by the Council. Authorisation was completed by VG & CH
- b. To receive copies of accounts summary for the fiscal year end 23/24, and to agree corresponding bank balances.
The accounts summary was agreed at the F & A Committee meeting on 8 April 2024. The bank accounts were agreed at the F A Committee Meeting on 8 April 2024 (Unity Trust Bank) and the LPC Meeting on 15 April 2024 (Barclays Bank Accounts). The full accounts for year ending 31 March 2024 were presented to the Council on 15 April 2024 and noted.
- c. To review the risk register to comply with assertion 5 of the AGAR.
The risk register was reviewed by the Finance and Admin Committee on 8 April 2024 and agreed. The register has been circulated to Councillors. After discussion about the layout of the document SL and AR will forward some examples of a risk register for the Office to look at and then submit any changes made to the Finance and Admin Committee. The current risk register was **AGREED**.
- d. To receive information on the RFO actions re confirmation of the exercise of Public Rights for the 23-24 accounts.
The notice regarding the confirmation of the exercise of Public Rights for 23-24 has been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting and noted.
- e. To receive and agree to a copy of the 'statement of internal control' (SIC)- to be signed by the Chairman and Clerk /RFO
The document was circulated to Councillors and MJW suggested the following amendments:
 - Section 3, Paragraph 1: I'm not sure that the Council's chairman is responsible for ensuring that all council decisions are lawful. As the paragraph references the 'smooth running of meetings', I wonder whether it would be more accurate to say that 'the



Chairman is responsible for ensuring that council decisions are made lawfully' (i.e. the Chair is responsible for the lawfulness of how the decisions are made rather than for the lawfulness of the decision's substance). Later in the section there's reference to the Clerk being the one responsible for actual compliance with laws and regulations.

- Section 3, Income: the apostrophe should be before the 's' in Council's.
- Section 4, Review of Effectiveness: bullets 2 and 5 do not flow properly from the leading sentence 'The review of ... informed by the work of'. I think this can be remedied by deleting 'the work of' from the leading sentence and inserting it at the beginning of each of bullets 1-4 and inserting 'who' between 'Council' and 'has' in bullet 2. Bullet 5 can remain unchanged. In bullet 4, change 'issue' to 'issues'.

The amended document was **AGREED** by the Council.

- f. To review Annual Internal Auditor (IA) report (page 3 of the AGAR) as signed by the IA. Section 3 of the AGAR was circulated to Councillors and **AGREED**.
- g. To receive information of the Annual Governance Statement (section 1) as read out and agreed to each assertion/item individually. To be signed by the Chairman and Clerk in overall agreement. Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement for 23/24 was duly **AGREED** and Signed by the Chairman.
- h. To receive details of the end of fiscal year accounting statement (section 2) and for the document to be signed by the Chairman (RFO has already signed in agreement with the figures) Section 2 of the Annual Governance Statement for 23/24 was duly **AGREED** and signed by the Chairman.
- i. To review the full report from the IA if received, and to make any decisions as felt relevant. The full report of IA has been circulated to Councillors. The document was **AGREED**. There will be an audit on the auditor at the next Finance and Admin Committee Meeting.

20. To ratify any Round Robins since the last meeting on 13 May 2024.

None.

21. Information Only

- NL asked if the phone box had been repainted. NB advised that the box had been repainted but some areas needed to be redone to due to it being touched before the paint had dried.
- The Clerk reminded that all election paperwork (DPIs and Expense Forms) should have been completed and returned to MBC by the end of May 24.
- The Clerk also reminded Councillors that they should only use their LPC email address for Parish Council Business.

The Meeting ended at 9.30pm

Dated.....

Signature