



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF LOOSE PARISH COUNCIL (LPC)

Monday 19 January 2026 at 7.30pm
in the Loose Parish Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, ME15 9RG.

Councillors present: Cllr. Vianne Gibbons (Chair) (VG), Cllr. Mick Westwood (Vice Chair) (MW), Cllr. Jim Andrew (JA), Cllr. Sarah Leeson (SL), Cllr. Tony Oliver (TO), Cllr. Velma Bennett (VB) and Cllr. Sue Hill (SH).

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 Cllr. Paul Thomas (PT).

There were 3 members of the public present. VG explained the housekeeping rules.

1. To receive and record any apologies for absence.

Previously received apologies from Cllr. Elaine Lawford (EL) and Cllr. Matthew Cooper (MC) were accepted by the Council. Apologies were also received from Eve Poulter (Assistant Clerk) (EP), PC Lee Tallon and KCC Division Cllr. Robert Ford (RF).

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)*).

The RFO had received completed declaration forms from VG, MW, JA, SL, TO and SH for agenda item 11c and these had been approved prior to the meeting.

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).

All Councillors present who are residents of Loose Parish (VG, MW, JA, SL, TO and SH) had submitted signed dispensation requests for agenda item 11c. They were approved by the RFO.

5. To agree and to sign as a correct record the following minutes:

- LPC minutes for the meeting held on the 8 December 2025 (Pages 2076-2081)

The minutes for the LPC meeting on 8 December 2025 were **AGREED** and signed by VG.

The following approved minutes were noted and adopted by the Parish Council:

- Finance & Administration meeting 7 July 2025 (Pages 247-250)
- Planning Committee meetings 24 November 2025 (Pages 743-744) and 8 December 2025 (Pages 745-746).
- Neighbourhood Plan Working Group meeting 21 October 2025 (Pages 31-33) and 25 November 2025 (Pages 34-36).

6. To receive any reports from the Loose & Linton Ward Councillors (10 minute limit).

SW advised that local government re-organisation was progressing and also that postal voters are reminded they will need to renew after 3 years. The issues around the water outage were discussed and BC had attended an all-Council meeting on Friday 16 January to collate specific issues for the areas affected. The water station had been moved from Headcorn to Mote Park but many without transport were unable to access this.

The Loose Conservation Area Plan consultation is postponed but comments can be submitted. A positive meeting took place regarding the Aile Homes development on land at Postley Road, attended by BC, JA, EP, KCC PROW and developers. The extent of footpath improvements by developers is still under discussion from the site towards Cripple Street. JA asked that BC continue to chase for clarification. Vegetation narrowing the footpath from Kirkdale Road to Kirkdale and the valley has been cut back by Loose Amenities Association (LAA) volunteers. The Joint Transport Board (JTB) will take place on 21 January 2026 and should include the junctions update. A KCC consultation seeking views about Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras enforcing box junctions is open until 3 February 2026 and includes the Wheatsheaf and Plains Avenue box junctions. The Landscape Character Assessment consultation closes on 20 January 2026 and has had over 500 submissions. The Loose Neighbourhood Plan Working Group has made many contributions.

SW advised that he will be attending a meeting about Trailblazer funding given to Councillors which covers a section of the cemetery and a corner of Mangravet, but applications have to come from the Community.

7. To receive any reports from KCC Division Councillors (10 minute limit).

PT continued to inform on the water situation. There is a request for a scrutiny committee to complete a short focused enquiry on water supply, quality and infrastructure and he will be collating all issues. PT hopes the draft report on junctions will be available ahead of the JTB meeting and that it will include the detail on the location of the S106 developer contributions.

Straw Mill Hill, Cave Hill and Stockett lane road closures started today (19 January 2026) and may impact Loose Road. Residents have raised concerns about noise issues at the YMCA if the application for conversion of a football pitch to three padel courts goes ahead. JA updated that the Planning Committee had discussed the application and the missing noise report had been requested. The application will then be discussed again at the Planning meeting on 26 January.

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

A new Beat Officer, PC Lee Tallon has joined PC Harry Greenfield and PCSO Greaves. Some early hours graffiti and damage to cars has been reported. PT thanked the resident who had cleaned up the graffiti very promptly.

E-watch reports for Loose since the last meeting were circulated and were noted.

- **Leonard Gould Way** - On Fri 5 December around 18:00. Somebody smashed a window of a residential property. Crime Report No. 46/210563/25
- **Halstow Close** - On Wed 10 December around 02:27. Somebody damaged the ring doorbell of a residential property. Crime Report No. 46/211562/25
- **Loose Green** - Between 00:01 on Mon 1 December and 09:08 on Wed 10 December. Somebody tried to steal a Renault Clio from the road. Crime Report No. 46/211756/25
- **Northleigh Close** - Between 00:01 on Mon 8 December and 23:45 on Thurs 18 December. Somebody damaged a fence at a residential property. Crime Report No. 46/217505/25

- **Loose Road** - On Sun 4 January around 17:00. Somebody tried to damage windows of a residential property. Crime Report No. 46/2158/26
- **Broadoak Avenue** – Between 18:00 on Wed 7 January and 06:00 on Thurs 8 January. Somebody stole a white Ford Fiesta, BJ66***, from outside a residential property. Crime Report No. 46/3848/26
- **Well Street** - On Fri 9 January between 03:00 and 03:30. Somebody broke into an Audi A5 and stole a coat. Crime Report No. 46/4417/26
- **Boughton Lane** - On Wed 7 January between 09:00 and 15:49. Somebody stole an unsecured BMX bike from a school. Crime Report No. 46/3671/26
- **Loose Road** – On Fri 9 January between 01:54 and 02:54. Somebody gained access into a MG parked on a driveway. Item stolen. Crime Report No. 46/6960/26
- **Old Loose Hill** - On Fri 9 January around 02:51. Somebody gained access into an unlocked vehicle parked in the road. Nothing was stolen. Crime Report No. 46/7084/26

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)

A resident asked whether there has been any progress with the yellow lines at the Walnut Tree Avenue / Loose Road junction. The matter seems to have gone dormant at KCC (along with other promised works) so a list and photographs are currently being collated for EL to take back to the new KCC Highways Improvement Partner, requesting an update. Action: NB/EL.

PT asked about the request by a resident for double yellow lines on Pickering Street but NB informed that KCC will not support this. Any existing lines noted to have faded can be reported for repainting on the KCC portal and they will be inspected by KCC Highways.

10. Risk: To receive and discuss any items of concern escalated by Councillors, Committees or the Office and make any necessary decisions:

a. To discuss the recent water outages and make any necessary decisions

This matter was discussed under agenda items 6 and 7.

b. To receive an update on the badger set issue in the Loose allotments

As requested at the last meeting, Natural England had been consulted and the information and advice has been sent to SL, JA, the McAlpine Trust and Loose Gardeners' Society. It includes some alternatives that might be considered from the allotment side, but there are legal implications to any work. The section remains behind the temporary barrier constructed by LPC and the Council **AGREED** the matter should return to the Environment Committee. Action: NB.

c. To receive and update on the maintenance of LPC-owned walls.

SL updated that Valley Conservation Society (VCS) had been given the list of works and they have asked for a meeting with JA, SL and the VCS working party lead, so they can see the extent of the works required. As previously agreed, the Round Robin remains in place to decide the donation.

11. Finance & Funding.

a. To ratify payments made on Appx A for 19 January 2026.

The Appendix A for 19 January 2026 was ratified by the Council. Payments were authorised by VG and MW.

b. To ratify the payment to the payroll company for the pension re-enrolment.

At the previous meeting, it was **AGREED** that EL should be sent the details to investigate and advise on the pension re-enrolment process. Having reviewed these, she advised it was not the simple process expected so, due to the renewal deadline, the payroll company was instructed to go ahead at a cost of £225 for 3 years. The process is complete and Council ratified the payment.

c. To receive and to comment on the proposed budget for 26/27, and to set and agree the precept for the Loose Parish.

The budget calculations had been circulated to Councillors. The Finance and Admin Committee met on 12 January 2026 and recommended the proposed precept be agreed.

After discussion the Council **AGREED** the precept for 26/27 as follows:

- Increase of 4.9% (fiscal year 25/26 was £159,650, next fiscal year 26/27 to be £167,350)
- Increase in band D of 6.4% (fiscal year 25/26 was £52.31 per year, next fiscal year 26/27 will be £55.64, a difference of £3.33 for the whole year or 6p per week).
- The Planning Committee would have a separate budget for 2026/27 to show their spending on the Gpeto subscription. Action: NB.

d. To receive a full record of accounts from the RFO.

The full accounts as at 12 January 2026 were circulated to Councillors and noted.

NB advised that a delayed invoice for the lease for Mangravet Wood (£726 + VAT) has just been received but with errors. It has been returned, but when corrected, will be paid from the Solicitors Fees budget. Action: NB.

12. To receive and agree the McAlpine Trust accounts for 2024-25.

The McAlpine Trust accounts provided by the Treasurer had been pre-circulated to Councillors and were noted. SL noted one error on a date. Action: VG to advise Treasurer at next meeting. VB asked if dates and minutes could be circulated as she is new to the Trust. The next meeting will be 18 March 2026. Action: NB to send VB the last minutes.

13. To agree the draft meetings calendar for 2026-7.

The draft meetings calendar for 2026-7 had been pre-circulated and was noted. The Council **AGREED** the draft document and will formally agree a final version at the May AGM. Action: Office to publish. McAlpine Trust meetings will be included when confirmed.

14. To discuss the Loose Amenities Association Duck Race 2026 and make any necessary decisions.

LAA are seeking LPC's permission to use Brooks Field once again for their annual Duck Race fundraising event. Set up would be on Sunday 24 May 2026, for the event on Bank Holiday Monday 25 May 2026. The format would be similar to previous years and all rubbish cleared from the site afterwards. After discussion the Council **AGREED** use of Brooks Field with the same conditions as last year. The relevant paperwork (the MBC Safety Advisory Group application and event risk assessment) should be submitted ahead of the April LPC meeting (19 April 2026) for agreement by the Council. As previously, LPC request a donation in respect of facility hire and LAA would need to fund any additional grass cutting required. Action: NB to advise LAA.

15. Consultations – to consider the following consultations and make any necessary decisions

a. Community Governance Review (CGR) Stage 2 – deadline 1 February 2026

The second stage of the CGR had been pre-circulated. Following the agreed comments on the Stage 1 consultation, MW proposed, and the Council **AGREED** that a response was only needed to question 3 (relating to the proposed ward boundaries). Richmond Way Green sits in the proposed Ward 5, outside the Loose Parish boundary so the comment should reiterate that, as LPC hold the lease and maintains this area of land, LPC feel it should be brought within their boundary. Action: NB. BC advised that he would also assist lobbying for this at MBC as it appears to be an error in the drawing of the boundary.

b. Loose Valley Conservation Area Plan (update from Tovil PC and VCS)

The agreed LPC responses written by MW with the Loose Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (LNPWG) have already been submitted. SL advised that VCS have approached LPC to review their

comments on the plan. BC has reviewed these and many relate to historical accuracy. MW proposed and it was **AGREED** that the VCS document would be taken back to the LNPWG and any comments or suggestions be brought to the next LPC meeting. Action: MW/EP.

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 and was summarised by MW.

- Community Engagement has included meeting residents on two mornings at the Loose Goose and after meetings of local scouts. Comments are logged in the Group's community engagement records to help inform the plan content and as supporting evidence for it.
- Feedback from community engagement in Loose shows that residents value a sense of local community, access to space, countryside and walks in the beautiful valley. The most frequently mentioned negative aspects relate to the condition of roads and volume of traffic, followed by concerns about development and water supplies.
- The Group continues to engage with local groups as key stakeholders in the plan. A meeting is being arranged with LAA to understand their priorities and discuss plan content ideas.
- Neighbourhood Plan Content - team members continue to work with LPC's consultant on draft policies and supporting documentation. Significant effort is currently being put into completion of a Loose Character Appraisal and Design Codes document which identifies character areas within the parish. The document will support the emerging neighbourhood plan's policies relating to design, character and heritage. The three principal character areas currently identified in the Appraisal are: Loose Valley Conservation Area; Loose Road and neighbouring streets; Linton Road and neighbouring streets.
- Finance The 2025-26 budget for the Neighbourhood Plan project is £20,000. In addition, there are earmarked reserves totalling £2,279.73. Expenditure to date (excluding VAT) is:
- Consultancy support: £5,567.50 Other: £ 447.91 Total: £6,015.41.

17. To receive an update on the 2026 Loose Fete & Dog Show preparations and make any necessary decisions.

AB shared an update on progress with the planning of the Loose Fete and Fun Dog Show to take place on Saturday 13 June 12-4pm. The theme is the football world cup. The Council **AGREED** to keep stall fees at £25 for commercial individuals and businesses and £15 for community organisations and charities. Action: AB. AB reminded Councillors that support was welcomed with securing raffle and tombola prizes. Action: Councillors and staff. It was **AGREED** that the Mayor should be invited to officially open the fete. Action: AB.

18. To agree the format of the 2026 Annual Parish Meeting.

After discussion the Council **AGREED** the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) on 23 March 2026 will follow the same format as 2025. There will be a Neighbourhood Plan display and local organisations will be invited, but the use of tables would be minimised to allow space for residents to circulate. There are plans to improve the display of the work of the Parish by using a screen. Action: Office to proceed with the organisation.

19. To review the "Enquiries, Concerns and Complaints" Spreadsheet. (NB)

A report detailing the enquiries and concerns received since the last meeting was circulated to councillors and was noted. Road closures continue to dominate concerns. BC advised there is a strategic review of emergency road closures planned so information can be more accurate and informative and take into account local knowledge when planning and signing diversion routes.

20. Promotion of Loose Parish Council & Articles.

The website and social media data had been pre-circulated. Numbers show much increased positive engagement figures (after publicising the successful footpath clearing working party) and Community Alert subscribers are steadily increasing. The more regular Community Alerts have been well-received by residents. NB thanked SC for her work updating the website. The news and useful links pages have been reviewed to increase clarity. All Committees will have a standing agenda item to review their sections of the website and any feedback will be given to SC. Action: SC. The next "In & Around Loose" has a deadline of 11 February 2026. Any contributions to the Office by 9 February 2026.

21. To ratify any Round Robins since the last meeting on 08 December 2025.

The following **ROUND ROBIN** was ratified:

For Item 10a at the Environment Committee meeting held on 24 November 2025, a **ROUND ROBIN** was sent on 16 December 2025: To consider a quote for installation of two Royal British Legion statues and planters at Copper Tree Court. Quote was **AGREED** (SL, JA, NL & EL) at a cost of £636.00 + VAT). The installation was completed on 19 January 2026.

22. Information Only

- Councillor Recruitment Campaign – SC clarified the first session will be at the Swan on 29 January 2026 at 7.30pm. Further sessions are being arranged for the YMCA, Loose Goose and Boughton Parade. SC will circulate dates and VG asked Councillors to sign up to support the campaign. Campaign materials will be circulated for information and any comments to be given to SC. MW and NB thanked SC for all her efforts.
- Gill Turner Tucker Solicitors have been taken over by Brachers Solicitors. NB has completed an administration request for our files to transfer.
- The Office made an application to MBC for a Strategic Play Area Improvement grant and LPC has been awarded £5000 which will be used to replace the damaged see saw and complete some wetpour repairs.
- A new bus stop at the top of Old Loose Hill had been installed to replace the one demolished by a vehicle last August.

23. Next meeting of the LPC – 16 February 2026 at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 9.16 pm.

Dated.....

Signature

Appendix A Finance

Appendix A - Finance 25/26				
As at 16 January 2026				
Balance as at 31 December 2025				
Current	UTB	Current account	20360513	56,010.90
Savings	UTB	Instant Savings account	20416234	107,913.42
				163,924.32
Direct Debits paid already taken off balances above- INFO ONLY				
All	Monthly	Lloyds Bank- Credit card	Monthly use plus x £3 charge per user	304.22
Admin	Monthly	Clear Business	Broadband at Pavilion	43.19
PCH	Monthly	EDF Energy	Gas Charges for Pavilion	166.16
PCH	Monthly	EDF Energy	Electricity Charges for Pavilion	118.39
PCH	Monthly	Countrystyle Recycling	Waste Collection	34.30
PCH	Quarterly	WGS Waste Management	Sanitary bins annual charge	312.00
Admin	Monthly	NEST	Staff Pension Payments	672.80
ENV	Monthly	Wynsdale Waste Management	Emptying of bins in Salts Wood	139.44
				1,790.50
Details of Credit Card Gross Payments as debited by DDR- Lloyds Bank-INFO ONLY				
PCH	CC-NB	Amazon - Chivrose Ltd	Pavilion/Car Pk Maintenance - padlock	10.99
PCH	CC-NB	Amazon	Pavilion/Car Pk Maintenance - urn	99.00
PCH	CC-NB	Earth Anchors	Play Area Maintenance - seat anchors	108.60
PCH	CC-NB	Home Bargains	Pavilion Supplies	7.69
Admin	CC-DD	Screwfix	Expenses PPE	39.99
Admin	CC-NB	Post Office Ltd	Stamps	6.96
Admin	CC-NB	HP Instant Ink	Printer ink subscription	20.99
Admin	CC-NB	Lebara	Mobile Phone Plan	1.00
Admin	ALL	Lloyds	Charges	9.00
				304.22
Payments authorised 16 January 2026 and ratified by LPC meeting 19 January 2026				
PCH		Hirers	Hirers Refunds	250.00
PCH		Electrical & Security Services	Surge protection installation	406.08
PCH		Claire Waldron	Pavilion Cleaning	150.00
ENV		Hoods Tree Services	Annual Tree Survey	720.00
LPC		Alison Eardley	Neighbourhood Plan Consultancy	6,681.00
LPC		Microshade VSM	IT host services	434.50
Admin		Gpeto AI Ltd	Planning tool subscription	25.00
Admin		Forvis Mazars LLP	External Audit Year end 2025	504.00
Admin		In & Around Kent	Winter Edition 2025	158.00
Admin		Staff	Expenses	105.10
Admin		MI Payroll Services	Payroll Expenses	275.00
Admin		Salaries	Total Salaries and NI Contributions	9,140.16
		Payments out since last statement		DR 18,848.84
		Current Account Unity Trust Bank Plus Any Income		CR 57,410.50
		Current a/c after committed payments		CR 38,561.66
UTB Deposit				CR 107,913.42
Hinkley and Rugby Building Society				CR 6,000.00
Total savings				CR 113,913.42
Total Bank balances				CR 152,475.08
Payments authorised by VG & MW				