



**MINUTES OF THE
LOOSE PARISH COUNCIL
Monday 19 February 2024 at 7.30pm
in the Parish Pavilion, KGVPF**

Councillors taking part: Vianne Gibbons (Chairman) (VG) Charlie Hollister (Vice Chairman) (CH), Peter Rigby (PR), Elaine Lawford (EL), Velma Bennett (VB), Jim Andrew (JA), Andrew Richard (AR), Tony Oliver (TO), Mick Westwood (MJW) and Sarah Leeson (SL).

Also present: PC Harry Greenfield, Kim Owen (Clerk and RFO) (KO), Janet Burnett (Assistant Clerk) (JB), Amanda Baker (Assistant Clerk) (AB) and Nicky Bourne (Deputy Clerk) (NB), who took the minutes.

There were 7 members of the Public present. The Chairman explained the housekeeping rules.

1. To receive and record any apologies for absence.

The following apologies were received from Mark Woodward (MW) (visiting relatives) and Susan Grigg (Maidstone Borough Council Ward Councillor) (SG) (Compulsory MBC Training).

2. To receive and agree any decision regarding any item to be taken as confidential.

The Council **AGREED** to take agenda item 25 in closed session.

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 meeting held on the 15 January 2024 (Pages 1914-1921)

The minutes of the meeting of 15 January 2024 were **AGREED** with an amendment to agenda item 8. The word 'decisions' was added after planning applications and signed by the Chairman.

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

- Finance and Admin Committee Meeting 10 July 2023 (Pages 230-233)

The Council **AGREED** to take item 14 next, followed by item 15.

6. To receive any reports from the Loose Ward Councillor Susan Grigg. (SG)

No report received but SG had advised the Clerk that following a MBC Council meeting a question was raised about defibrillators in phone boxes to ask if they were lit up at night. EL agreed to check the Loose telephone kiosk and report back to the Office. Action: EL

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

No report received.



8. To discuss the changes to the Parish Boundary and make any necessary decisions. (KO)

- a. **Discount Card** – The North Loose Residents' Association (NLRA) have redesigned the discount card and a copy had been circulated to Councillors. The Council **AGREED** the design. Action: KO to advise NLRA. The Deputy Clerk has obtained four additional discounts from the existing Loose Parish area which have been passed to NLRA for inclusion.
- b. **Planning changes** – In previous years the Council agreed that they would not have any discussions with developers regarding planning applications until the application has been submitted to MBC. However, going forward, it has been discussed that this might change. The Council **AGREED** to move this item to the March LPC meeting. Action: Clerk
- c. **Ancient Woodland Trust** – The Clerk advised that she has had discussions with Sean Carter (SC) of NLRA about what is needed to protect the ancient woodland if North Loose Ltd. stops trading. This requires an amendment to the Articles of Association, which our solicitors are unable to help with. SC is speaking to a contact who may be able to help with the process. He will come back once he has an answer on a way forward. Action: Clerk & SC
- d. **NRLA Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies** – SC has contacted MBC regarding any CIL money that NLRA have not used and they have confirmed that once the NRLA has officially merged with LPC they will transfer the remainder of funds to LPC. As Loose has a Neighbourhood Plan it will receive 25% of the receipts from CIL-liable developments in their parish.

9. Debrief from meeting with MBC regarding status of LPC and NLRA Neighbourhood Plans and proposed way forward given boundary changes and LPC-NP upcoming review (Oct 2024). (JA)

Notes from the meeting with Tom Gilbert (Principal Planner – MBC) attended by JA, MJW and SC on 24 January had been circulated to Councillors. JA repeated the three options for the future of the two Neighbourhood Plans (NPs):

- **Option 1 - Do nothing**
While the two NPs remain in place their effectiveness will decrease over time. Having two plans may, in places, be contradictory and thus a great weakness.
- **Option 2 – Continue with two plans and undertake the 5-year review of the plans.**
This recommended review should be done early this year as the LPC plan will be 5 years old in October. The NLRA plan is already over 5 years old. The main areas of review would be to align with the soon to be made MBC Local Plan (MBC hopeful before May) and changes in objectives that have come to light locally over the last 5 years. This action would negate the loss of effectiveness identified in Option 1.
- **Option 3 - Redefine the two NP areas as one to encompass the new parish area excluding the area in the NLRA area which would be lost to Tovil.**
This would be the best option in the long run for the new parish. It would require a new NP area to be submitted to MBC for approval as a first step. A NP Working Group would need to be convened. Finance would be required to engage a consultant unless sufficient skills arise from the amalgamation. Grants (Locality) may be available and CIL money can be used. Tom Gilbert and his team have proffered support on the course of action taken and requested the parish keep him informed.

After discussion the Council **AGREED** to Option 3 with a steering group to be set up, headed by MJW. JA and PR will be on the group, and outside expertise may be recruited. The group will need to set up a meeting and produce their Terms of Reference. Action: MJW & JA.



10. To receive an update on the shed in Brooks Field, the proposed electrical supply for the shed and the Duck Race 2024. (KO)

- a. **Shed on Brooks Field** – The Council’s solicitor has confirmed that the cost of the Heads of Lease will be £950.00 plus VAT. After discussion the Council **AGREED** to proceed. Action: KO
- b. **Electricity in shed** – John Brighton advised that there is an executive meeting of Loose Amenities Association (LAA) tomorrow evening (20 February 2024) where the electricity supply will be discussed.
- c. **Duck race** – The office has contacted LAA and advised that the Council is happy for Brooks Field to be used for the duck race and have requested that the risk assessment documentation is sent to the Council by 12 April 2024 so that it can be reviewed at the April LPC meeting. A donation for the use of the field has also been requested.

11. Update on Southern Water Lower Loose Valley Pumping Station. (NB)

The Office have been unable to obtain an update from Southern Water, so will keep chasing.
Action: NB

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

NB summarised the progress so far with the organisation of the 2024 Loose Fete and Fun Dog Show. New Assistant Clerk AB will be working with NB. The funfair, bar, police cadets, programme printing and advertising boards are all confirmed. The previous dog show organiser is unavailable to help this year, but the Office is confident this can be arranged in-house. Previous stallholders have been contacted and bookings have started coming in. More detail will be provided at the Pavilion and Community Hub (PCH) meeting. Any help from Councillors with any preparations (sourcing raffle prizes, hosting an advertising board and roles on the day) would be gratefully received. After discussion the Council **AGREED** the quote that had been circulated for the PA system. Action: NB & AB

13. To receive any reports/information from Community Warden Team.

KO advised that they have now received grants totaling £3000 from KALC and MBC to help residents who need financial assistance. The Office is in the process of notifying residents that some funding is available, should they need any financial help. They will be working with the Community Warden team, Greensand Social Prescribers, Age UK (Maidstone) and School Family Liaison Officers to ensure that the funds go to residents who need help. Action: Clerks Office.

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

The Chairman welcomed PC Harry Greenfield, the new Beat Officer for Loose. PC Greenfield explained that he also looks after the Farleighs, Hunton, Sutton Valence and Linton. He will be our point of contact and hopes to improve communication and action on local items. He explained that crime in the Loose area is quiet compared to other local areas, with the most recent issues being straying animals and speeding. He will shortly be completing speed gun training and hopes to undertake speed monitoring at least once a month. AR asked whether there are still Schools Liaison Officers and PC Greenfield explained that under the new model, they are within the Child-Centred Policing team who deal with secondary schools. The Beat Officers deal with primary schools. JA asked if PC Greenfield can be contacted directly and he advised that although the Clerks have his phone number, it is not widely published and the preferred method of contact is through email so the trail of communication is recorded for clarity.



E-Watch

- On Friday 16 February around 11:16 in Linton Road. Somebody stole fuel from a petrol station. Crime Report No. 46/26230/24 - Posted 18/02/2024
- Between 21:30 on Thursday 1 February and 08:30 on Friday 2 February in Church Street. Somebody stole ladders from a Renault Trafic van parked in the road. Crime Report No. 46/18763/24 – Posted 04/02/2024
- Between 18:15 on Friday 26 January and 00:01 on Saturday 27 January in Linton Road. Somebody broke into a residential property and stole various items including jewellery. Crime Report No. 46/14745/24 – Posted 28/01/2024
- Between 21:30 on Wednesday 24 January and 08:10 on Friday 26 January in High Banks. Somebody stole the back LED lights from a Land Rover Discovery parked in the road. Crime Report No. 46/14212/24 – Posted 28/01/2024
- On Friday 19 January between 22:30 and 23:30 in Old Loose Hill. Somebody stole a mobile phone. Crime Report No. 46/11099/24 – Posted 22/01/2024

15. 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. **Cornwallis noise issue** – Three local residents attended the meeting to make the Council aware of noise issues with the newly installed 3G all-weather pitch and the impact on the lives of those living in close proximity. They are concerned that there are major breaches of the planning regulations in terms of misinformation in the planning document (noise levels and distance data), and noise reduction measures that have not been implemented. The noise is relentless, as the pitch is in use seven days a week, and includes inappropriate language. Residents have been actively engaging with the school and MBC regarding the matter but resolutions are not forthcoming. Meetings have been attended with members of the school senior management team, the most recent of which has hopefully secured a slight reduction in hours so activity is finished by 9pm rather than 10pm. The residents described frustrating interactions with MBC related to communications being ignored, inadequate noise assessments, and unsympathetic advice on how to live with the noise. The residents have recorded the pitch noise, and their trail of communications. A recording was played to the Council.

VG apologised that this situation is disrupting lives to the point that the residents felt the need to come back to the Parish Council for support. AR suggested the Football Association (FA) could be contacted as they are stamping down on abusive language. JA recalled the MBC meeting he attended to speak against the application in the planning stage, when concerns were raised at the time regarding noise and light pollution. PR referred to a DEFRA noise pollution survey which might provide further evidence of changes since the pitch opened. Other suggestions included making a complaint to Sport England and one to the Cornwallis Academy Council.

After discussion the Council **AGREED** that LPC should make a complaint to MBC regarding the treatment of the residents. In addition, as a statutory consultee, LPC has concerns that planning conditions are being contravened and wish to be provided with evidence that this is not the case. The residents were asked to provide their evidence trail (noise logs and past communications) to the Clerks' Office so they can be forwarded to Cllr Sue Grigg to take the matter forward on the residents' behalf. Action: Clerks' Office and residents.



- b. **Memorial Bench in Brooks Field** – A family have contacted the office to see if it is possible for a Memorial Bench to be placed in Brooks Field for a member of their family. He was not a resident but a regular to the area and in particular to the Chequers Public House. KO advised that the family would be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the bench going forward. If agreed, a recycled bench similar to King’s Coronation bench would be recommended as it is low maintenance and hard wearing. The Council **AGREED** to refer to the matter to the Environment committee. Action: NB

- c. **New Code of Conduct from KALC** – A new code of conduct has been prepared for Councillors and any comments on the content must be submitted by 22 February 2024. A copy of the LPC current Code of Conduct is on the shared area. As any changes to the LPC Code of Conduct will need a new DPI form from all Councillors, the Clerk suggested any changes, based on the new KALC Code of Conduct, be delayed until May, to be timed with the submission of all new paperwork to MBC.

MKR raised a point he had noted on the new KALC Code of Conduct, regarding a lack of clarity in the wording related to social media (2.2). Action: KO to feedback to KALC.

- d. **Walnut Tree Lane Pothole** – A pothole has appeared in Walnut Tree Lane, in the short section between Loose Road and the entrance to King George V recreation ground entrance. Land registry documents had been circulated to the committee and the section is not owned or adopted. KCC will not fix it as it is not a KCC road. A resident has been in touch asking who should repair the pothole. The Council **AGREED** to refer to the matter to the Environment committee. Action: NB

- e. **Pickering Street issue with traffic** – A resident attended the meeting to share concerns about traffic speed and parking issues on Pickering Street. The resident asked if the Parish Council could install speed humps. At the entrance to Pickering Street from the Loose Road, parked cars block vehicles from accessing the road. The resident asked the Parish Council if the double yellow lines could be extended. There have been issues with refuse bins being left on the double yellow lines. The resident also raised concerns about parking on the Loose Road outside the school, and access from Boughton Lane to Pickering Street. The Chairman explained that the Parish Council has limited power but it can, and will discuss these matters with KCC Highways who are responsible for the roads. The Chairman explained that the Environment Committee has been dealing with these issues for many years. The Deputy Clerk explained that there are future plans to collaborate with the Beat Officer and Loose Primary School. The Council **AGREED** to put the matter on the Environment committee agenda. Action: NB

- f. **Elections May 2024** – MBC have sent out the timetable for the May elections and the link for the documentation that needs to be completed. If any Councillors need assistance with the nomination forms there is a meeting on Monday 11 March 2024 at 6.30pm in the Pavilion before the Environment Meeting. Councillors who wish for a printed copy of the documentation should advise the Office. They can be delivered so they can be filled in and brought to the meeting. Action: Councillors and Clerks’ Office.

16. To discuss the Pavilion and Community Hub (PCH) Committee membership and make any necessary decisions. (NB)

The Deputy Clerk had already made Councillors aware that due to a resignation there are now only three members of the PCH Committee. In order to reduce the risk of a meeting being inquorate, additional Committee members are being sought. Councillors were asked to consider the



committees they attend and if anyone wished to view the PCH, the next meeting is 26 February 2024. Action: Councillors to advise Office.

17. Finance & Funding.

a. **To ratify payments made on Appx A for 19 February 2024.**

MKR asked a question regarding expenses on the Appendix A and after clarification, the Council ratified the payments. They were authorised by VG & CH.

b. **Update on Parish Services Scheme Grant for 2024-2025**

The office has received confirmation from MBC that the Parish Services Scheme Grant is to be increased from £5024 to £6029 subject to MBC agreement at its meeting on 21 February 2024. The Clerk has contacted MBC to see if LPC are entitled to any extra payment due to the merge with NLRA.

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

Since the last meeting the office has dealt with the following issues:

- Potholes on High Banks – reported to KCC Highways
- Query about responsibility for repairs on an unadopted road (Kirkdale) – resident referred to KCC reporting tool
- Request for a memorial bench in Brooks Field – put on LPC agenda
- Request for information on activities in the Pavilion - provided
- Boughton Monchelsea village hall car park being used for an emergency water station, when the issue was in Loose – SE Water contacted
- Overturned empty grit bin on Pickering Street – reported to KCC Highways
- Fence panel missing on the A229 near the viaduct revealing a long drop down – reported to KCC Highways, resident now replaced
- Concern about a property boundary wall in danger of collapse over the pavement on Old Loose Hill – researched and been the same for some time but reported to KCC to assess and correspond with resident
- Three lights not working, so a section of footpath from Warnford Gardens is not illuminated at night – reported and KCC/MBC trying to identify ownership as not either of them
- Resident new to the area asking about planning regulations for works in the conservation area – information provided
- Defibrillator on the Green not being registered on “The Circuit” – explanation given
- Concern that the bin on the green by the Post Office has still not been replaced and a sandbag has been left – chased MBC regarding bins, moved sandbag
- Ongoing discussions regarding a befriending scheme for the lonely (linking with Greensand Social Prescribers, All Saints, Age UK and Community Wardens)
- Ongoing discussions with a resident and LAA regarding the KCC Making Space for Nature initiative
- Continued monitoring of the drain at the Well Street and High Banks junction – work recently completed
- Continued chasing Southern Water regarding the noisy manhole outside 574 Loose Road. TO advised that residents had been sent a notification of overnight works on this matter.

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

The Clerk advised that the data for social media is not ready for January and will be presented with February data at the March LPC meeting. Action: KO



20. To receive and discuss any items of concern escalated by Councillors, Committees or the Office.
None.

21. To ratify any ROUND ROBINS used since 15 January 2024. (KO)
None.

22. To review Policies and Procedures. (KO)

- a. Retention and Disposal Policy
- b. Retention Document Appendix List

The above policies had been pre-circulated to Councillors. MKR had sent comments which the Clerk will go through. The Retention Document Appendix List will require some changes which the Clerks' Office will be making shortly. Action: KO & NB

23. To receive an update on the Annual Parish Meeting and make any necessary decisions.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be on Monday 25 March at 7pm. Simon Webb and Sue Grigg have been invited and the invitations for organisations have gone out. New staff will need badges made. Action: Clerks' Office

24. To discuss the D Day 80 – 6 June 2024 and make any necessary decisions. (VB)

JB has summarised the D-Day resources document for VB, who ran through the list the ideas. The 2024 Fete on 15 June will have a D-Day theme and there will be a D-Day Community Coffee Morning on 12 June. After discussion the Council **AGREED** to register and purchase a commemorative red D-Day lantern to be used at the coffee morning and fete.

Session Closed 9.25pm

25. To discuss new Councillors for Loose Parish Council and make any necessary decisions

At the closed session the Council **AGREED** that Sue Hill will join the Loose Parish Council with immediate effect. Action: KO

Session Re-opened 9.35pm

26. Information Only.

- a. EL advised that she has registered for the Carbon Literacy Training. She also attended the Kent Resilience Winter/Snow Volunteer briefing.
- b. **Viaduct update** – KCC advised that the barriers have been removed for safety reasons as they were not secure and work will shortly be starting to repair the wall.
- c. **New staff** - KO introduced the two new Assistant Clerks AB and JB.
- d. The office have received a thank you from Susan Luckhurst for the flowers sent following her resignation from the Council.
- e. **Councillor list** - The Clerk advised that she has put an updated contact list of Councillors on the shared area and asked that each Councillor check their contact details and advise the office of any errors. Action: Councillors

27. Next meeting of LPC – 18 March 2024

The Meeting ended at 9.40am.

Dated.....

Signature