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MINUTES OF THE LOOSE PARISH COUNCIL

Monday 16 October 2023 at 7.30pm
in the Parish Pavilion, KGVPF

Councillors taking part: Vianne Gibbons (Chairman) (VG), Charlie Hollister (Vice Chairman) (CH), Peter Rigby (PR), Jim Andrew (JA), Andrew Richards (AR), Susan Luckhurst (SL), Tony Oliver (TO) and Elaine Lawford (EL).

Also present: John Brighton Loose Amenities (LAA) (JB), Ian Greenfield (LAA) (IG), Nicky Bourne (Deputy Clerk) (NB) and Kim Owen (Clerk) (KO) who took the minutes.

1. To receive and record any apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Sue Griggs (MBC Ward Councillor) (SG) (Away) and Velma Bennett (VB) (No Reason given).

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)*

AR has already declared a pecuniary interest on item 9 in the agenda. All documentation has been received and approved.

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))

No new dispensations.

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

LPC minutes for meeting held on the 18 September 2023 (Pages 1879-1888)

The Council **AGREED** the minutes of the meeting on 18 September 2023 and they were signed by the Chairman

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

- Planning Committee Meeting 4 September 2023 (Pages 637-638)

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

No report received. However, Maidstone Borough Council have sent a paper copy of The Maidstone Local Plan Review including:

- Sustainability Appraisal – Main Modifications
- Habitats Regulations Assessments – Main Modifications
- Appendix 3 – Saved policies from MBC Local Plan 2017
- Main Modifications to Regulation 19

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

The Clerk read out the report from SW

I am aware that some parish councils have been concerned that I have issued no reports for quite some time. This has been quite deliberate, as there is very little to report on, apart from the significant on-going budget battles. KCC is fighting hard to make cuts to stay within budgets for this year and take even more stringent moves to reduce an expected £86m deficit for 24/25.

I would also like to point out that I will not be seeking re-selection for 2025, I believe it is right to advise you of this at this point. I have already advised The Leader of KCC and my Association Chairman of my decision. When I have better news then the reports will be reestablished.

SW explained how KCC are working to reduce the deficit going forward and answered questions from the Council on such areas as the cost of people arriving on illegal boats from France. The KCC does not have a budget for this. However, they are responsible for any under 18-year-olds who arrive in the county. 70% of the KCC budget is for Education.

SW also explained why he is not standing for 2025 elections.

8. To receive an update on the Shed in Brooks Field and request to install an electric supply. (KO)

- a. The Clerk advised that she has spoken to Terry Davis and discussed the heads of terms. He advised that the Heads of Terms still looks OK apart from the fact that the shed has now been built and so the obligation to build it should be removed. There will also need to be a right of way to reach the shed from Kirkdale, with or without vehicles. He attached a plan to send to our solicitors to use as the lease plan showing the location of the shed. He reminded that the planning permission consent had a condition that the old shed be removed within one month of completion of the new shed. The Clerk has advised him that the shed will be demolished starting Wednesday and all being well the fence between Tylers and Brooks Field will be completed Friday.
- b. Terry Davis confirmed that he is happy for swift boxes to be placed on the shed. The Council **AGREED** that they would like two boxes and will agree the type and style by Round Robin.
- c. John Brighton and Ian Greenfield from LAA attended the meeting to discuss putting an electric supply in the shed.
Loose Amenities are exploring the benefits and costs of installing an electrical supply in the new shed in Brooks Field. The benefits to the Association would be improved safety within the shed (it is quite dark in the corners), and a supply for any future events needing electricity. LAA is seeking permission to continue our exploration this option.
After discussion the Council **AGREED** that LAA can investigate the installation of an electrical supply by a qualified contractor by digging a trench into Brooks field for the cables. Once LAA have more information they will come back to the Council for further discussions on the matter including easement of the cables and certificates for the installation. There will be no outside sockets.

9. To receive an update on the Public Meeting on the 20mph Zone Consultation and make any necessary decisions.

The Clerk advised that the Minutes from the Public meeting will be fully completed and sent out shortly. SW advised that the Chairman chaired the meeting well. An email was received from Terry Davis (LAA) stating that: I think the meeting went well and ended up in a good place. We will consider and vote upon putting up the £3,000 to start with, since most of the committee were present at the meeting this will be passed of course. We can then set up a committee if the



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application is approved and move forwards. At this point we will need some help as to time scale and where the money needs to be sent but we can deal with that as and when.

After discussion the Council AGREED that:

- They stand by their original decision that following the consultation no funding for this project will come from precept.
- The office can help with any information needed for the 20mph Zone Committee but this will not include any admin tasks.

10. To discuss the Boundary between Loose and Boughton Monchelsea Parish Councils and make any necessary decisions. (JA)

JA advised that the boundary had been agreed for the Hubbard's lane end but not for the Filmer's Farm end of the Parish. As the Parish Boundary changes were agreed by MBC in September 2023 it is likely the new Boundary will be in place for May 24. The Council asked the office to contact Ryan O'Connell to find out where the exact boundary will be, going forward and then advise Councillors. Office to action.

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

No update has been received from Southern Water. The Office will chase.

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

Nothing to report.

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

No report received from PC and no new posts on e-watch.

Councillors advised that they would like to see crash data for the area. Office to Action.

14. To review the Loose Conservation Area Appraisal and make any necessary decisions. (JA)

The information from MBC regarding the Loose Conservation Area Appraisal was circulated to Councillors on 28 September 2023. JA advised that in the Neighbourhood plan it states "7.37 Loose already benefits from both the Conservation Area and an Article 4 direction that removes certain permitted development rights for the betterment of the built environment. However, the extent of power is not considered wide enough. Loose Parish Council will seek an extension of the Article D direction area. An associated project will be to create a Loose Valley Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan, currently absent from the local planning framework".

After discussion the Council **AGREED** to review the situation in June 2024 and advise Maidstone Borough Council accordingly. Office to Action.

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

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

a. Update on the bike issue at Kirkdale

With regards to the issue of bikes (both e-bikes and manual bikes) using Kirkdale I have contacted LAA as they own part of the land. They will discuss the matter at their meeting on 17 October 2023 and come back to me.

b. NLRA Meeting to discuss Parish Boundary changes and organise a working group

Sean Carter from North Loose Residents Association (NLRA) has contacted the office to sort out some meeting dates to start working on the Parish Boundary changes that are to take place in May 2023 when 1996 houses will be moved into Loose Parish. He is concerned about the time factor.

After discussion it was **AGREED** that some Councillors and Staff would attend a meeting on 25 October 2023 at 2pm. Clerk to check that date and time is suitable for NLRA.

c. NLRA Volunteer Dinner 4-5 persons

Sean Carter has contacted the office and advised that there is a volunteer dinner being held on 4 November 2023 at the Loose Pavilion and wondered if it would be a good idea for one or two Councillors as well as the Clerks to attend to meet some of the volunteers who work with NLRA. The Council **AGREED** that PR and VG would attend as well as the Clerks. Clerk to advised Sean Carter.

d. Planning issue

A resident has raised concern about trees being cut down and a fence erected in the conservation area.

The Council **AGREED** that the office should contact enforcement at MBC to advise them of the resident's concern. Clerk to Action.

e. New Play equipment

NB advised that the contractor has put the wrong piece of play equipment in the Toddler area. The Council did not want this specific piece as they felt it could lead to anti-social behaviour as it has a tunnel. The Contractor has apologised and has offered to:

- a. To make the bespoke piece of equipment and replace the wrong item. This will take about six weeks to make.
- b. Let the Council keep the wrong item free of charge and allow a twelve-month grace period where if any anti-social behaviour takes place the bespoke item will be installed accordingly.

After discussion the Council **AGREED** to keep the wrong item but would like a twenty-four-month grace. NB to discuss their request with the contractor. Deputy Clerk to Action.

f. Knitting Remembrance Poppies

Catherine Kenny is a member of a craft group, Loose Stitches, and last year they created a knitted Nativity scene which was displayed in All Saints Church at Christmas. Recently they have been knitting poppies for Remembrance Sunday and would like to ask permission to display the poppy wreaths on the gates of the closed cemetery.

The Council **AGREED** that it was a good idea and are happy with the request subject to the Church's agreement. Deputy Clerk to Action.

16. Finance & Funding.

a. To ratify payments made on Appx A for 16 October 2023.

The Council ratified the payments. Authorisation was completed by VG & CH.

b. To receive full record of accounts to date.

Full set of accounts have been circulated to Councillors and noted.

c. To Reconcile bank balances with Bank Statements.

The Bank Balances were reconciled with the bank statements for the Council and signed by TO and CH.

d. Salaries as recommended by the HR Committee to be ratified by full Council.

On 2 October 2023, following appraisal of staff the HR Board have agreed salary rises for staff with effect from April 2024. The Council ratified the increases.

e. To review Salts Wood waste collection.

Currently we are paying £116.20 plus VAT per month for the collection of waste from the bins in Salts Wood. It was difficult to find a contractor. The Council **AGREED** to continue with the current contractor.

17. To receive an update on the Community Resilience Plan. (EL)

NB & EL are working on the template and will hopefully be putting a digital copy on the front page of the website shortly.

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

Since the last meeting on 18 Sept 2023 the Office has dealt with the following:

- Enquiry for work - Children fitness or party activities
- Repeated enquiry about first aid provision
- Pumping Station issue where water was pumped into the stream
- Call from KCC re closure of Old Loose Hill the following Monday and Tuesday
- Enquiry re land for hire for dog training or dog walking
- Road Rage on the A229 between the Wheatsheaf and Armstrong Road
- Noisy manhole cover keeping residents awake at night
- Various written comments received for the Public Meeting on 9 October 2023
- Gardeners Society advised allotments are available to rent
- Resident of Linton wanted to discuss our website
- Resident wanted to know when the old shed in Brooks Field is being demolished
- Residents concern about trees being cut down behind his property in the Conservation area
- Wall at high Banks and Old Loose Hill has been damaged
- LAA seeking permission to put electric supply in the new shed

19. To review Policies and Procedures. (KO)

a. CCTV Policy and Tick Sheet

The Council reviewed the Policy and **AGREED** to amend the Council's address on the document. Clerk to Action.

b. Task Based Risk Assessment Policy

The Council reviewed the policy and it was **AGREED** that a risk template would be added to the document. Clerk to Action.

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

The social media data has been circulated to Councillors and noted.

The In and Around Loose deadline for the Christmas edition is 18 October 2023. The office will include:

- Merry Christmas to all our residents
- A thank you for our residents who help the Council including Bob the Cap.
- 20mph Zone Consultation
- MBC Community Governance Review

21. Risk

To receive and discuss any items of concern escalated by committees or concerning any potential risk matters
None.

22. To discuss the Climate and Ecology Bill and make any necessary decisions.

The email form Zero Hour seeking the Council's support for the Climate and Ecology Bill (second reading on 24 November 2023) was circulated to Councillors. After discussion the Council **AGREED** that after the motion is passed they will issue a press release that it has been done and also publicly support the Bill as well as writing to Helen Grant to request that she publicly support the bill.

23. To ratify any ROUND ROBINS used since 18 September 2023. (KO)

- 25 September 2023 – To agree quotes to demolish shed on Brooks Field and put up a fence at Tylers. (Contractor agreed by VG, CH, PR, TO, SL, & EL)
- 19 April 2023 – HR Board – To agree documentation for the new post of Assistant Clerk. Round Robin cancelled as agreement done at HR Board Meeting on 2 October 2023.

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

The Council **AGREED** to move this agenda item to the next meeting.

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

The HR board TOR was agreed on 2 October 2023 and all TORS are now complete for the current year.

26. Notification of correspondence for discussion/action

None.

27. Information Only.

None.

28. Next meeting of LPC – 20 November 2023

The Meeting ended at 21.14

Dated.....

Signature