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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF LOOSE PARISH COUNCIL (LPC)

Monday 20 April 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. Sarah Leeson (SL), Cllr. Elaine Lawford (EL), Cllr. Velma Bennett (VB), Cllr. Matthew Cooper (MC), Cllr. Jim Andrew (JA) 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), Eve Poulter (Assistant Clerk) (EP), 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 2 members of the public present.

**1. To receive and record any apologies for absence.**

None.

**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 meeting held on the 16 March 2026 (Pages 2094-2099)  
The minutes for the LPC meeting on 16 March 2026 were **AGREED** and signed by VG.

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

- Planning Committee Meetings: 16 February 2026 (Pages 757-758), 2 March 2026 (Pages 759-760) and 16 March 2026 (Pages 761-762).
- Loose Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting: 3 March 2026 (Pages 45-47).

**6. To receive any reports from KCC Division Councillors (10-minute limit).**

PT advised that a new Highways contractor would be starting soon and asked that any reference numbers for matters reported to KCC be shared with him to follow up. Any equipment left behind after roadworks should be reported on the KCC portal. The short form inquiry on water issues was completed by 50 parish councils and Southeast Water are being pushed for significant improvements in their communication and the provision of more localised water stations, through better liaison with parish councils. The Wheatsheaf pub has been declared surplus by

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KCC. RF clarified that the application for a County Member Grant for a salt bin for Carman's Close could proceed (minimum £250). Action: NB. RF had received an unsatisfactory response from KCC regarding the Church Street flooding and has replied to insist upon action.

### **7. To receive any reports from Loose & Linton Ward Councillors (10-minute limit).**

BC advised that a timeframe for the update on the Local Plan had been released with a target of a new Local Plan by October 2029. There will be a call for sites in May 2026. BC will provide the timeframe for circulation to LPC and receive any questions that arise. Action: NB/Councillors. The public consultation for the new Loose Valley Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan will run for 8 weeks in May and June with a public event at the Loose Pavilion on 2 June 3-6pm. SW has been dealing with housing matters and is supporting residents seeking compensation for water supply issues.

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

No report received. PC Greenfield thanks the Council for Pavilion access. E-watch reports for Loose since the last meeting were 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)

- A resident raised concern that the pedestrian railings on the A229 bend by the bus stop are still only secured with tape and a new school sign is hidden by vegetation. NB advised both matters have been reported to KCC so reference numbers will be given to PT/RF to follow up. Action: NB.
- SGN have advised of forthcoming gas replacement works in and around Norrington St, Pickering St, and Busbridge Road. They intend to hold a public meeting for Pickering Street residents due to access issues. VG suggested the Walnut Tree Lane management group be contacted regarding their gate. Action: NB. The Office will liaise to get appropriate signage and regular information and progress updates for residents. Action: NB.
- Greenway Maintenance update – the volunteer has secured labour through the Community Payback scheme for the proposed maintenance of the Greenway verges. After discussion the Council **AGREED** the purchase of materials from the Environment maintenance budget at a cost of £150.93. Action: NB to advise volunteer and purchase materials.

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

#### **a. Matters arising from the McAlpine Trust meeting held on 18 March 2026**

VG updated on discussions and proposed actions regarding the allotment boundary issue:

- Site visit to take place (SL/VB with P Golding (PG)). Action: VB/SL to arrange.
- Circulation of the annual tree report recommendations. Action: NB.
- Research into options and costs for reinforcement of the bank including specialist advice on the badger issue. Action: PG.

VG clarified that the McAlpine Trust is a charity and if a Councillor joins they will become a charity trustee registered with the charity commission.

#### **b. To review actions taken after concerns about dog mess on King George V playing field**

AB updated on the measures taken following resident concerns. After discussion the Council **AGREED** to the purchase of more durable signage from a local company at a cost of £8.34 per sign (including VAT) to be taken from the PCH maintenance budget. Action: AB.

### **11. 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. An additional query regarding responsibility for maintenance of a

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tree in Sevington Park was discussed. BC will investigate historical land ownership and update the office. Action: BC.

### **12. Finance & Funding.**

#### **a. To ratify payments made on Appx A for 20 April 2026.**

The Council ratified Appendix A for 20 April 2026. Payments were authorised by VG and MW.

#### **b. To agree Earmarked Reserves for the fiscal year 2026/2027**

The Earmarked Reserves as at the end of the fiscal year 2025/26 had been pre-circulated. Due to postponement of the Finance and Administration (F & A) meeting to 22 April 2026, the 2026/27 reserves still need to be discussed. It was **AGREED** to move this item to the next LPC meeting. Action: NB.

#### **c. To receive a full record of accounts**

The accounts document as at 31 March 2026 had been pre-circulated but has yet to be reviewed by the F & A Committee. It was **AGREED** to move this item to the next LPC meeting. Action: NB.

#### **d. To receive an update on the non-domestic rate notification and the precept**

The office has received confirmation from MBC that the rates for the Pavilion will be nil for 2026-2027. The precept (£167,350) has been received from MBC.

#### **e. To review the Community Heartbeat agreement**

The contract was £135 for 2025/26, but the invoice for 2026/27 has not been received. The Office is satisfied with the support given by the company. The Council **AGREED** to continue with the contract provided any increase was considered reasonable. Action: NB.

#### **f. To review annual invoices received and make any necessary decisions.**

NB advised that the annual subscription for the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) had been received and after discussion the Council **AGREED** to continue with their membership of KALC. Action: NB. Details of the price increases on the annual subscriptions for the accounting software package and the CCTV service contract were provided and the Council ratified the payments.

### **13. To review Policies and Procedures.**

#### **a. Working Alone Policy**

The Working Alone policy had been pre-circulated to councillors and was **AGREED**. Action: NB.

#### **b. Press and Media Policy**

The Press and Media policy had been pre-circulated to councillors and was **AGREED**. Action: NB.

#### **c. Policy for Pre-Planning Application Meetings (Developers and Individuals)**

The Policy for Pre-Planning Application Meetings had been pre-circulated to councillors and was **AGREED** after minor amendments by MW. Action: NB.

#### **d. Policy for use of the KGVPF and Brooks Field**

The Policy for use of the KGVPF and Brooks Field had been pre-circulated to councillors and was **AGREED** after one minor amendment by MW. Action: NB. After discussion it was **AGREED** that the policy should be reviewed alongside the KGVPF Byelaws and current signage at the next PCH meeting. Action: AB to add to agenda.

### **14. To review the Annual Parish Meeting 2026 and make any necessary decisions.**

A review by the Clerks team had been pre-circulated and was noted with Councillors offering feedback from their perspective.

**15. Loose Amenities Association (LAA) Duck Race 2026 – to receive an update and make any necessary decisions.**

The MBC Safety Advisory Group paperwork and the event risk assessment for the Duck Race on 25 May had been received from LAA and was noted. As agreement made at the LPC meeting on 19 January (Agenda item 14) to allow use of the field for a donation was called in by EL and JA. The Council **AGREED** to waive the donation in lieu of the assistance provided to LPC on a number of tasks in Brooks Field (riverbank clearance for meadow preparation and tree planting). Action: NB. SC explained that LPC have a stall at the Duck Race with engaging activities to help publicise LPC, Councillor vacancies and the Local Neighbourhood Plan. Councillors were asked to advise SC of their availability for a rota. Action: Councillors/SC.

**16. Loose Fete and Fun Dog Show – to receive an update and make any necessary decisions.**

AB updated on progress with the fete (12-4pm Saturday 13 June 2026) with over 30 stalls booked including a dog agility activity. AB asked Councillors to consider donations to the tombola and raffle and to advise of their availability to assist on the day. Action: Councillors/AB.

**17. 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. The draft emerging plan has been submitted to MBC for opinion on whether formal screening is required. BC offered to chase a response. The working group are updating the document to have it ready for public consultation and a draft will be made available for Councillors to read. The plan will be promoted at the Duck Race (25 May), Fete (13 June) and the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan consultation event (2 June).

**18. Promotion of Loose Parish Council & Articles.**

The article for In and Around Loose has been submitted. SC has been working on alternative publicity materials for the recruitment campaign and proposals were shared and discussed. After discussion it was **AGREED** that some promotional items (e.g. LPC pens) should be purchased for upcoming events, with a budget of £200. Action: SC.

**19. To ratify any Round Robins since the last meeting on 16 March 2026.**

None.

**20. Information Only**

- Councillors were reminded of the leaving celebration in recognition of Tony Oliver's service.
- There is a vacancy for a Caretaker. The documents have been approved and the advertisement will be out on 21 April 2026.

**21. Next meeting of the LPC – 18 May 2026 at 7.30pm. This will be the AGM.**

The meeting ended at 9.07 pm.

Dated.....

Signature .....

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<b>Appendix A - Finance 25/26</b>				
<b>As at 20 April 2026</b>				
<b>Balance as at 31 March 2026</b>				
Current	UTB	Current account	20360513	12,219.81
Savings	UTB	Instant Savings account	20416234	108,469.99
				<b>120,689.80</b>
<b>Direct Debits paid already taken off balances above- INFO ONLY</b>				
<b>All</b>	Monthly	Lloyds Bank- Credit card	Monthly use plus x £3 charge per user	227.73
<b>Admin</b>	Monthly	Clear Business	Broadband at Pavilion	46.79
<b>PCH</b>	Monthly	EDF Energy	Gas Charges for Pavilion	171.56
<b>PCH</b>	Monthly	EDF Energy	Electricity Charges for Pavilion	99.64
<b>PCH</b>	Monthly	Countrystyle Recycling	Waste Collection	34.30
<b>Admin</b>	Monthly	NEST	Staff Pension Payments	525.54
<b>ENV</b>	Monthly	Wynsdale Waste Management	Emptying of bins in Salts Wood	139.44
				<b>1,245.00</b>
<b>Details of Credit Card Gross Payments as debited by DDR- Lloyds Bank-INFO ONLY</b>				
<b>PCH</b>	CC-NB	Amazon - Alta & Co Trading	Pavilion Supplies - Blue roll	16.85
<b>ENV</b>	CC-NB	Nottcutts	Planter volunteer supplies	75.00
<b>Admin</b>	CC-NB	Sainsburys	IT training/switchover day refreshments	8.80
<b>Admin</b>	CC-NB	KALC	Staff Training - Asst Clerk course	60.00
<b>Admin</b>	CC-NB	HP Instant Ink	Printer ink subscription	20.99
<b>Admin</b>	CC-NB	Lebara	Mobile Phone Plan	4.90
<b>Admin</b>	CC-NB	Wix	Website provider annual subscription	388.80
<b>Admin</b>	ALL	Lloyds	Charges	9.00
				<b>584.34</b>
<b>Payments authorised 13 March 2026 and ratified by LPC meeting 16 March 2026</b>				
<b>PCH</b>		Hirers	Hirers Refunds	200.00
<b>PCH</b>		Ward Security (previously Astra)	CCTV annual maintenance	424.80
<b>LPC</b>		Kent Friends of the Trees	Annual subscription	40.00
<b>ENV</b>		Streetlights	Maintenance contract 1 of 2 instalments	67.88
<b>LPC</b>		Isle Landscapers	Regular Maintenance Mar 2026	613.28
<b>Admin</b>		Microshade VSM	IT host services	411.36
<b>Admin</b>		Rialtus Business Solutions	Accounting system annual fee	367.20
<b>Admin</b>		Gpeto AI	Monthly subscription x 3	90.00
<b>Admin</b>		Preventative Health Company	Occupational health appointment	390.00
<b>Admin</b>		Staff	Expenses	92.13
<b>Admin</b>		MI Payroll Services	Payroll Expenses	50.00
<b>Admin</b>		Salaries	Total Salaries and NI Contributions	8,238.10
		Payments out since last statement		DR 10,984.75
		<b>Current Account Unity Trust Bank Plus Any Income</b>		<b>CR 181,573.37</b>
		<b>Current a/c after committed payments</b>		<b>CR 170,588.62</b>
<b>UTB Deposit</b>				<b>CR 108,469.99</b>
<b>Hinkley and Rugby Building Society</b>				<b>CR 6,008.90</b>
<b>Total savings</b>				<b>CR 114,478.89</b>
		<b>Total Bank balances</b>		<b>CR 285,067.51</b>
<b>Payments authorised by VG &amp; MW</b>				