



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

**Monday 17 March 2025 at 7.30pm
in the Loose Parish Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, ME15 9RG.**

Councillors taking part: Charlie Hollister (Vice-Chairman) (CH), Jim Andrew (JA), Mick Westwood (MW), Neil Lettington (NL), Sarah Leeson (SL), Sue Hill (SCH), Velma Bennett (VB) and Tony Oliver (TO).

Also present:

Brian Clark (BC - Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) Loose & Linton Ward Councillor), Simon Wales (SW - MBC Loose & Linton Ward Councillor), Amanda Baker (AB - Assistant Clerk), and Nicky Bourne (NB - Clerk) who took the minutes.

There were 3 members of the public present.

1. To receive and record any apologies for absence.

Previously received apologies from Vianne Gibbons (Chairman) (VG) and KCC Division Cllr Simon Webb (SW) were accepted by the Council.

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

The Council **AGREED** to take agenda items 20 and 21 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 following minutes:

- LPC minutes for the meeting held on 17 February 2025 (Pages 2015-2022).
The minutes for the LPC meeting on 17 February 2025 were **AGREED** after a minor amendment and were signed by the Vice-Chairman.

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

- Pavilion & Community Hub Committee Meeting: 11 November 2024 (Pages 394-398)
- Environment Committee Meeting: 25 November 2024 (Pages 449-453)
- Planning Committee Meetings: 3 February 2025 (Pages 700-701) and 17 February 2025 (Pages 702-703).
- Loose Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting: 4 February 2025 (Pages 11-12).

6. To receive any reports from the Loose & Linton Ward Councillors. (BC & SW)

SW updated on local government reform. A notice of intent is being supplied to the government by 25 March. Maidstone will be grouped with Tonbridge and Malling, Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks which is considered logical as coterminous with NHS and Police provision.

BC advised that there is a new development proposal for the land at Postley Road which the LPC Planning Committee are following. BC has also made the Planning Committee aware that alongside the development, a section of Richmond Way green is not within the lease currently being transferred to LPC. He suggested that with devolution there may be an opportunity for the Parish to obtain the freehold. The Planning Committee have asked for this item to be put on the next LPC agenda. Action: NB.

BC advised that he is continuing to work with a variety of stakeholders on a proposal for alternative access for Five Acre Wood School to reduce congestion in Boughton Lane.

MW asked the Ward Councillors what impact the withdrawal of the MBC Design and Sustainability document means for the parish council. Action: BC will advise.

7. To receive any reports from KCC Division Councillors

Cllr Simon Webb's report had been pre-circulated. In Loose he has continued to challenge Kent Highways over the water flow in Church Street which has been a hazard for residents and walkers in the idyllic village. He held a meeting with KCC Director of Highways and the Highways Senior Officer on 5 March and has fed back to residents, but is awaiting a full written response from KCC. Once received he will then will meet with residents again.

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

None received. They will not be attending the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) as there is no Community Warden funded for Loose.

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

PC Greenfield has been alerted to the increase in fishing on the Loose stream and asked to patrol the area when possible. He will be attending the APM and promoting My Community Voice. He reiterates that members of the public are encouraged to report all incidents of concern as this builds patterns and evidence that police can use. Reports from the public recently led to the successful seizure of one of the nuisance bikes. This has been included in the latest Community Alert. BC updated that Kent Police have seized a total of 10 bikes since summer 2024 and continue to prioritise antisocial vehicle use.

E-Watch

- Melrose Close, Loose: Between 00:01 Tuesday 28 January and 23:59 on Saturday 8 January. Somebody damaged football goals at a sports centre. Crime Report No. 46/26797/25. Posted 18 February 2025.
- Loose Road, Loose: Between 16:30 Tuesday 11 February and 07:10 on Wednesday 12 February. Somebody gained entry to a vehicle parked in the road. Nothing stolen. Crime Report No. 46/24573/25. Posted 18 February 2025.
- Walnut Tree Lane, Loose: On Saturday 15 February around 14:58. Somebody in a vehicle damaged football pitches. Crime Report No. 46/26806/25, Posted 18 February 2025.
- Saxon Way, Loose: Between 19:00 on Wednesday 19 February and 08:00 on Thursday 20 February. Somebody stole both number plates from a Peugeot Partner parked in the road. Crime Report No. 46/29862/25. Posted 25 February 2025.

- Walnut Tree Lane, Loose: On Friday 21 February between 13:15 and 13:30. People on three x motorbikes and 2 x electric bikes, have badly damaged a football pitch by riding over it. Crime Report No. 46/31749/25. Posted 28 February 2025
- Sheppey Road, Loose: On Sunday 2 March around 02:30. Somebody damaged a ring door bell and security light and tried to gain access to a vehicle. Crime Report No. 46/39077/25. Posted 11 March 2025.
- Kirkdale Road, Loose: On Saturday 8 March around 02:32. Somebody tried to steal a generator from business premises. Crime Report No. 46/39292/25. Posted 11 March 2025.

10. 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)

Resident concerns over illegal fishing in the Loose stream were discussed further. Kent Rural Task Force have been consulted and they advised that signage should be installed and community education about fishing laws could be promoted. After discussion the Council **AGREED** that examples of, and locations for signage should be explored and circulated for decision by **ROUND ROBIN**. Action: NB. The Council **AGREED** that community education information should be prepared and then shared with schools and youth organisations e.g. Scouts, seeking their support on the matter. Action: NB.

11. To receive an update on the lease for Richmond Way Green and make any necessary decisions.

SL advised that BC had obtained the estimated value of the land from MBC and this was accepted by the solicitor. The lease has been submitted to the land registry but registration may take several months.

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

KO had updated on progress with the financial checks and any outstanding issues. Action: NB to follow up with TO, VB and CH. The Council also discussed the implications of councillor changes going forward and **AGREED** that clarification should be sought from the solicitor. Action: NB.

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

The risk assessment for the village sign on the triangle was an outstanding risk item at the Environment meeting but has now been completed by Loose Amenities Association (LAA).

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

A report detailing the enquiries and concerns received since the last meeting had been pre-circulated to councillors and was noted.

15. Promotion of Loose Parish Council & Articles.

Social media data had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting and was noted.

A Community Alert has been produced, circulated to subscribers and will shortly be put on the website. Action: NB.

Some website modifications raised by councillors are complete. The Council **AGREED** JA's suggestion for clearer information on the structure of the council including staff. Action: NB.

16. Finance & Funding. (KO)

a. To ratify payments made on Appx A for 17 March 2025.

The Appendix A was ratified by the Council. Payments were authorised by VG & CH.

b. Update on the non-domestic rate notification

The office has received confirmation from MBC that the rates for the Pavilion will be nil for 2025-2026.

17. Loose Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (LNPWG) – to receive information and make any necessary decisions.

MW had pre-circulated an update on the work of the LNPWG. They have met the consultant for an inception meeting and provided a tour of the parish afterwards. Community engagement opportunities will include the APM, an evening launch event in the pavilion (11 June) and a marquee at the Loose fete (14 June). Recruitment of residents to the working group is ongoing. Recent interest from the Community Alert will be followed up. Action: JB. The Council **AGREED** that the consultant and working party members should have access to a specific shared area. Action: NB to consult Microshade.

18. To ratify any Round Robins since the last meeting on 17 February 2025.

None.

19. To review Policies and Procedures.

- a. Policy for the Press and Public on attending and reporting meetings
The Policy was reviewed and amendments suggested by MW were discussed. The Council **AGREED** that JB should incorporate the changes and the policy would be reviewed at the next meeting. Action: JB.

The meeting was closed at 8.13pm. Item 21 was taken before Item 20.

20. To review the tenders for the groundworks contract and make any necessary decisions.

The 3 tenders received by the office had been pre-circulated and were discussed in the closed session. After discussion the Committee **AGREED** a groundworks contractor at a cost of £11875.02. Action: NB.

21. To discuss Councillor changes for Loose Parish Council and make any necessary decisions.

The Clerk advised that Councillor Michael Hogg and Councillor Susan Hogg resigned on 24 February 2025 and Councillor Andrew Richards resigned on 10 March 2025.

At the closed session the Council **AGREED** that Matthew Cooper will be co-opted to the Loose Parish Council. Action: NB to arrange paperwork.

The meeting was re-opened at 8.27pm.

The Council **AGREED** that for future co-options the office should table a specific agenda item and request brief information from the candidate regarding their interest in joining. This should be pre-circulated ahead of the meeting. Action: NB.

22. Information Only

Councillor training – SL informed the Council that there is a KALC “Nuts and Bolts of Parish Councils – for Councillors” course on 28 April. NB advised that the office is working on an induction pack for new Councillors. Action: NB.

APM: NB reminded the Council that the APM starts at 7pm on Monday 24 March 2025 and to advise the office if they do not have an identity badge.

23. Next meeting of the LPC – 14 April 2025 at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 8.46pm.

Dated.....

Signature