



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

**Monday 14 April 2025 at 7.30pm
in the Loose Parish Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, ME15 9RG.**

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

Also present:

Cllr Simon Webb (SWebb – Kent County Council (KCC) Division Councillor), Amanda Baker (AB - Assistant Clerk), Janet Burnett (JB - Assistant Clerk) and Nicky Bourne (NB - Clerk) who took the minutes.

There were 2 members of the public present.

1. To receive and record any apologies for absence.

Previously received apologies from Sarah Leeson (SL), Cllr Simon Wales (SW) and Cllr Brian Clark (BC)(Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) Loose & Linton Ward Councillors) were accepted by the Council.

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)*).
VG, CH, JA and TO declared an interest (but not pecuniary) in agenda item 14b being trustees on the McAlpine Trust Board.

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 March 2025 (Pages 2023-2028).
The minutes for the LPC meeting on 17 March 2025 were **AGREED** and signed by the Chairman.

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

- Planning Committee Meetings: 3 March 2025 (Pages 704-705) and 17 March 2025 (Pages 706-708).

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

Cllr Brian Clark (BC) provided report in his absence:

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It has been relatively quiet given the election cycle (which for the most part pushes out decision making committees to beyond the election). BC has co-written a formal letter to Kent Highways for full disclosure on the current funding position of the Maidstone Integrated Transport Package which includes the A229 and A274 corridors. The response should include detail of any developer or government funding which is at risk of timing out (the proposal to send this was agreed across parties at Joint Transport Board).

Slightly out of area but still on the A229 full detail has been requested on how the speed camera at Southborough School cannot be replaced. The reason given is that new cameras "do not fit". To this point been a detailed response on why has not been received, hence the request.

There has not yet been a formal planning application submission for the land behind Richmond Way (though expected in May).

The site notice was installed at Lancet Lane for the Children's home planning application (and time for comments extended by 21 days from that point).

Maidstone's Supplementary Planning Document for Homes of Multiple Occupancy is currently out to consultation to 27th April (once adopted it will give the council stronger powers to consider the impact of HMOs in the community and also strengthen amenities required for residents). BC recommends a position from Loose Parish Council is given. JB advised that the Planning Committee has made a submission.

BC has had independent conversations with LPC's Highways Improvement partner Greg McNicoll regarding the decision not to permit the installation of double yellow lines on a section of Loose Road. He would like the Highways Working Group to pursue this matter and will help fight.

7. To receive any reports from KCC Division Councillors.

Cllr Simon Webb attended to update on the situation regarding the Church Street surface water. He gave a summary of all actions so far, having met with the residents on site, received and submitted their detailed reports on the history of works in the area to KCC Highways, and attended a meeting with Haroona Chughtai (KCC Director of Highways & Transport) and Alex Brauning (KCC Highways Senior Officer). Three weeks after the meeting KCC provided a written report which continues to challenge all points made by residents. Detailed responses have been prepared and passed back through SWebb to KCC. Due to the forthcoming election, progress has now stalled, but SWebb will follow the matter up if elected, or will pass all information on to his successor.

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

None received. The Council **AGREED** to remove this as a standing agenda item as Loose no longer has an allocated Community Warden. Action NB.

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

PC Greenfield has provided information on a campaign to get residents to register doorbell cameras and asked for this to be promoted. It has been displayed on the Parish noticeboards. E-Watch – Nothing reported for Loose since the last meeting.

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)

None.

11. To receive an update on the Shed in Brooks Field.

NB reported that all Councillors have now completed the anti-money laundering (AML) checks. The solicitor had advised that any new Councillor joining LPC whilst this transaction is open, would be required to go through the AML checks, but not after the lease had been agreed and the matter is closed.

The solicitor and the representative from Loose Amenities Association (LAA) have been working to produce an accurate plan for the lease, as it was discovered that the plan on the previous version of the draft lease incorrectly used the position of the old shed. Other amendments have been proposed, including to the suggested ground rent. The Council **AGREED** that VG would review the communications and liaise on the matter on their behalf, with the aim of having a final version of the lease pre-circulated, ready to be reviewed and agreed by the full council at the next meeting on 19 May 2025. Action: NB to share all communications with VG and update the solicitor.

12. To co-opt a Councillor.

As the member of public to be co-opted was unable to make the meeting, the co-option will go on the agenda for the May meeting. Action: NB.

13. To review the “Enquiries, Concerns 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.

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

- a. **From Highways Working Group (HWG) – to share proposals for discussion by the Council**
VG summarised discussions at the HWG meeting on 7 April 2025 and the Council **AGREED** that LPC should, on behalf of their residents, pursue full disclosure regarding the developer funding allocated for the A229 corridor. Action: NB to advise the HWG.
- b. **From the McAlpine Trust meeting of 19 March 2025 – boundary collapse issue**
Those present at the above meeting clarified that the Loose Gardeners’ Society have cordoned off the pathway on the south boundary to prohibit public access. Their insurance company has been consulted and is satisfied with the temporary measures taken. The Council **AGREED** the LPC insurers should be consulted regarding the situation. Action: NB.
- c. **From Planning Committee – to discuss the strip of land adjacent to Richmond Way green**
As BC was not present, no further information was available, so this matter will be put on the next Planning Committee meeting agenda on 28 April 2025. Action: JB.

15. Promotion of Loose Parish Council & Articles.

Social media data had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting and was noted. The new volunteering opportunities page is now live on the website. The next “In & Around Loose” article is in production and items for inclusion were discussed, Action: NB & AB.
The creation of the section for the website on the structure of LPC is ongoing. Action: NB.

16. Finance & Funding.

- a. **To ratify payments made on Appx A for 14 April 2025**
The Appendix A was ratified by the Council. Payments were authorised by VG & CH.

b. To agree Earmarked Reserve for fiscal year 2025/2026

The Earmarked Reserve document for the fiscal year 2025/26 had been pre-circulated and was noted. It was reviewed at the Finance and Administration (F & A) meeting on 7 April 2025. Some of the budget has been moved to earmarked reserves to cover invoices coming in April & May that relate to last year e.g. meadow work and play equipment repairs.

c. To receive full record of accounts from RFO

The accounts document, reviewed at the F & A meeting on 7 April 2025 had been pre-circulated and was noted.

d. To review the Community Heartbeat agreement

The contract is currently £135.00 per year, with no increase on 2024-25 cost. The Office is satisfied with the support given by the company. The Council **AGREED** to continue with the contract. Action: KO.

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 pre-circulated. New members had joined the group since the Annual Parish Meeting. MW advised of the two promotional events: a presentation evening in the Pavilion on 11 June and a marquee at the Loose fete on 14 June.

The following expenditure on publicity was approved by the LPC: Printing £110 + VAT for 4000 A5 leaflets; Delivery £200 + VAT; Banner/flag: Up to £200 + VAT. Action: JB.

JB explained that bringing approval to the LPC meeting has slowed down progress and the Council **AGREED** that provided spending was within the financial regulations, purchases could be made and spending ratified at the following LPC meeting. Action: JB.

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

None.

19. To review Policies and Procedures.

a. Working Alone Policy

The Policy was reviewed and agreed without amendment.

b. Press and Media Policy

The Policy was reviewed and agreed without amendment.

c. Use of the KGVPF and Brooks Field Policy

The Policy was reviewed and agreed without amendment.

d. Policy for the Press and Public on attending and reporting meetings

JB had pre-circulated the policy after amending it as requested at last meeting. The Policy was reviewed and agreed.

Action: JB.

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

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on 24 March 2025 and 46 residents attended. The Council reviewed the evening and feedback received. Numbers attending and having the opportunity for the Chairman to give thanks was positive. Potential improvements were discussed. These included time restrictions for speakers, raising the profile of the parish works and achievements over the year with more detail in speeches or displays, and providing a comments/suggestions box for anyone not wishing to publicly raise a matter. Action: NB

21. Information Only

Councillor training – there is a Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) “Nuts and Bolts of Parish Councils – for Councillors” course on 28 April 2025. Councillors to contact the office if they wish to attend this or any other training.

22. Next meeting of the LPC (AGM) – 19 May 2025 at 7.30pm.

The meeting ended at 8.29pm

Dated.....

Signature

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