



**LOOSE PARISH COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Meeting held on Monday 30 May 2022
at 7.30pm in Loose Parish Pavilion, KGVPF.**

In attendance: Councillors: Charlie Hollister (Chairman) (CH), Jim Andrew (JA), Susan Luckhurst (SL), Andrew Richards (AKR), Velma Bennett (VB) and Peter Rigby (PR). Also in attendance: Nicky Bourne (Deputy Clerk-NB) who took the minutes.

There were no members of the public in attendance.

AGENDA

1. To Elect a Chairman to the Committee for the forthcoming year

A nomination was put forward by SL and seconded by JA that Cllr Charlie Hollister should continue as Chairman for the forthcoming year. This was unanimously **AGREED** by the Committee and accepted by CH.

2. To Elect a Vice-Chairman to the Committee for the forthcoming year

A nomination was put forward by SL and seconded by CH that Cllr Velma Bennett should continue as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year. This was unanimously **AGREED** by the Committee and accepted by VB.

3. To discuss and agree any additions or changes to the Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference had been pre-circulated to the Committee. After discussion they were **AGREED** without amendment.

4. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Elaine Lawford (EL).

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

None.

6. 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.

7. To receive any signed dispensation requests for any item on this agenda

(For 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 17)

None.

8. To sign as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2022 (Pages 370-375)

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2022 (Pages 370-375) were duly **AGREED** as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

9. Questions/comments from the public or Community groups (3mins)

None

10. Correspondence & phone calls received by the office

Debris from pond clearance – A resident who currently clears the debris from the grill on the Loose stream at Church Street, has confirmed that he is willing to continue taking the debris to Brooks Field, where it can naturally decompose. The offer by LPC to purchase a composter was made, but is not required.

Cornwallis Academy Loose Village Scavenger Hunt – A history teacher from Cornwallis Academy has designed a jubilee scavenger hunt around the Loose village. He has consulted Love Loose Hate Litter and the office for advice and input. It includes finding information on the history and environment of Loose, whilst raising an awareness of the local outdoor spaces and encouraging respect for the area. The link is on the school website and has been sent out to the families in their e-bulletin. After discussion, the Committee **AGREED** it could be promoted via LPC social media. Action Clerk's Office.

All Saints Church Jubilee Picnic – The church requested permission to use Brooks field for a jubilee picnic on Sunday 5 June. Due to the timing, this was agreed by LPC on 16 May. The risk assessment has been received. They will use the church toilet facilities and remove all rubbish to the church bins. They are aware the field will remain open to the public and that it is a "No dogs" zone.

Overgrown footpaths – A resident reported KM64 (from Heath Road northbound) as completely impassable with brambles and stinging nettles and KM54 (Linton Rd to Old Loose Hill) as overgrown. NB has completed site visits and added LPC concerns to the report on the KCC website. KM54 has since been partly cut, possibly by a volunteer. NB has also reported KM63 (High Banks towards Coxheath) and KM62 (Well Street to Old Loose Hill) and has thanked the resident for the information.

Trees on Old Loose Hill – An enquiry has been made by a resident of Rosemount Close, seeking to have the trees on the verge of Old Loose Hill (near High Banks) reduced in height by 30%. The Deputy Clerk has replied, explaining the need to determine whose land they are on, and an enquiry has been made to KCC. Subsequent action will depend on the outcome of the enquiry.

Pumping Station in Loose Valley – JA had been approached by a resident concerned about Southern Water's intentions for the pumping station in the valley. The office was aware, via residents and Loose Amenities Association, that the pump had recently failed and a convoy of large tankers had been required to pump out the contents throughout a weekend. The area is inaccessible to such large vehicles and the tank is very old. The resident had been told that Southern Water wished to build a new pumping station that would be accessed from Busbridge Road. It was noted that Southern Water used to provide LPC with regular updates, but this has not happened for some time. After discussion, the Committee **AGREED** that Southern Water should be contacted to clarify the situation. Action: Clerk's Office. It was also **AGREED** that JA would update the resident and request that future matters are reported directly to the office, so they can be immediately recorded and monitored on our system.

11. The Village Green & The Triangle – to discuss items below and make any necessary decisions

a. Defibrillator annual maintenance agreement

The renewal document for the defibrillator annual maintenance agreement had been received from Community Heartbeat Trust and pre-circulated with comparison quotes. The recent support received following the disappearance of the LPC unit was acknowledged and the Committee **AGREED** to continue with Community Heartbeat Trust. Action: Finance Officer.

b. **Jubilee plaque**

The Deputy Clerk had contacted the creator of the Roy's Wood and Jubilee plaques and he is still working and could do a small commission. To proceed and give a price, he would need to know more about the size and design. After discussion about cost, space and the timeframe, SL withdrew her proposal for the plaque, as the Platinum Jubilee has already been more visibly commemorated on the new pavilion planters.

c. **Planter update**

The 3 planters on the village green and the 2 new ones at the Pavilion, have been planted with a Platinum Jubilee theme by CH and SL. The Committee **AGREED** SL's suggestion that the Communications and Media Clerk should prepare some publicity, including photos from the Jubilee Coffee morning. Action: Communications and Media Clerk.

12. Brooks Field – Pond - Roy's Wood – to discuss items below and make any necessary decisions

a. **Common oak in Roy's Wood (JA)**

JA reported that the small Common oak in Roy's wood has died. Ten of the eleven other trees are looking healthy and the different species are now more distinguishable. Some of the stakes require remedial work. After discussion, the Committee **AGREED** to the purchase of a more established replacement, rather than a small sapling. Action: Deputy Clerk to research and a decision to be made by **Round Robin**. The Committee **AGREED** that JA would do a site survey to make a list of the repairs and materials needed, then the Caretaker would be asked to assist with the work. Action: JA. JA also advised that the grass around the outside of the trees had been cut, but not in-between, as per the groundworks specification. It was acknowledged this may already be programmed, but it was **AGREED** that Isles should be contacted and asked to trim between the trees, until they are well established. Action: Deputy Clerk.

b. **Village green status for Brooks field update**

The Deputy Clerk has started the application for village green status for Brooks field, and will complete it as soon as possible. Action: Deputy Clerk

13. Cemetery - to discuss items below and make any necessary decisions

a. **Cemetery headstone check update**

After issues getting in contact with Mid Kent Memorials, the Deputy Clerk has now sent them details and photographs of the location of the gravestone. Their inspector will be visiting when in the area and will provide advice regarding stabilisation. It was **AGREED** that a decision on any necessary work would be made by **Round Robin**. Action: Deputy Clerk.

b. **Repairs to the war memorial**

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the two companies who quoted back in December 2020 have agreed to revisit the memorial and provide an up-to-date quote. The church has been asked for any update on the faculty decision. Action: Deputy Clerk to chase.

c. **Repairs to cemetery walls update**

Hurstway have been contacted with a quote acceptance but we await the programming of the works. JA requested that he is informed when they will be on site, so he can meet them. Action: Deputy Clerk.

14. KGVPF - to discuss items below and make any necessary decisions

a. **Matters arising from the quarterly KGVPF walkabout completed 19 April 2022**

The Risk Report from the last quarterly inspection of KGV had been pre-circulated and actions noted.

15. Highways – to discuss items below and make any necessary decisions

a. Highways Improvement Plan progress update

The HIP had been updated following decisions made at the Environment Meeting on 14 March 2022 and sent to KCC Highways for comment. A copy of the revised HIP with these comments on had been pre-circulated. The Committee reviewed each of the ideas on the plan, in light of the comments.

1a Enforcing the existing weight limit on all Loose Village roads

The Office has been unable to get a direct response from Kent Police regarding enforcement and whether it will be possible to implement, and if so, how. The Office continues to seek a contact, with the help of KCC Highways and the PCSO. The PCSO has passed on that it is extremely unlikely that there would be any provision of Officers to enforce. The actions currently being undertaken, are in line with those being done in other villages in similar situations, but they are equally frustrated and having limited success, due to the lack of cooperation by contractors and individual drivers. AKR relayed a conversation with a contractor when a vehicle recently got stuck in Well Street. He claimed all his drivers have been informed, but some still choose to ignore the signage.

The resident leading the Lorrywatch data collection, has confirmed this is ongoing. Vehicle details are passed to KCC Freight, and there is evidence that they do make contact with contractors. The Office has been in contact with the Lorrywatch team at KCC Freight and has obtained 8 signs that could be put up at the entry points to the weight restriction. After discussion, it was **AGREED** these should go up where there was an opportunity to turn a vehicle round. Action Deputy Clerk. CH and AKR offered to assist.

1c 20mph speed limit throughout the Loose Village roads

The Deputy Clerk was asked to find any further information regarding the matter reported by Sue Grigg, that in a meeting in February, MBC pledged support towards “Twenty’s Plenty” campaigns, in communities where there is public engagement. When trying to find out what this “support” entails, it appears to have stalled. Since then, the Joint Transportation Board have published a new document, with the correct process to be followed for requests for 20mph schemes. This had been pre-circulated. It has been confirmed that there is no financial support available from either MBC or KCC.

CH and NB met with KCC Highways (Jennie Watson and her colleague) and did a site visit around the village, discussing the required regularity of signage and the cost. The map produced by KCC with the sites of required signs, the details of costings and the new KCC document regarding 20mph zones had been pre-circulated.

1b One-way system down Well Street and 1d Street Lighting and speed ramps.

It was **AGREED** that as these would be unsupported by KCC, they should remain on the document but moved to Priority 1c and 1d. Action Deputy Clerk.

Other Priorities

2. A229 extension to the 30mph section to include the viaduct, and the addition of a further pedestrian refuge.

3. Loose Primary School improved signage and 20mph zone in school hours.

4. Parking causing obstructions at the top of Old Loose Hill by the Village Green.

5. Inconsiderate parking at Lancet Lane and Copper Tree Court.

Due to a re-structure within KCC Highways, Jennie Watson has not had an opportunity to give any time to the remaining 4 priorities on the HIP. She changes role from 1 June 2022 but will be around for a changeover period. CH proposed, and the Committee **AGREED** that Jennie Watson should be contacted directly, to ask for confirmation that Priority 2

would still be funded by the JTB. The contact details of her successor should also be requested. Action: Deputy Clerk.

b. **Preparations for actions relating to specific proposals in the Highway Improvement Plan Actions for 1c 20mph speed limit throughout the Loose Village roads –**

Preparations for a public consultation on the 20mph scheme were discussed. It was **AGREED** it would be helpful to find evidence of the impact of similar schemes, so this could be included in the information to residents. Action: Deputy Clerk to seek case studies.

For the consultation itself, it was **AGREED** that:

- The map should be included in the documentation.
- Statements need to be drafted explaining the proposal, cost, funding means, and clear information given regarding signage and street lighting. Action CH and NB.
- The draft consultation documents then need to be agreed by the ENV Committee (by **Round Robin**), then the full Parish Council before going out to residents.
- Options should be available for completion and return (online, hard copy, delivery addresses or collection points).
- The consultation must be delivered to every Parish household. This would be paid for, not dependent on volunteers. Action: Office to source delivery means.

The Deputy Clerk has obtained confirmation from Cllr Simon Webb of the donation of a £2000 member grant. We have received the application form and guidance to complete when ready. It was **AGREED** some of this could fund the consultation. Action: Clerk's Office to apply, when instructed.

c. **Parking on the cobble stones at Copper Tree Court**

The Deputy Clerk has consulted with the PCSO regarding inconsiderate parking. Whilst he has no powers to enforce, he is able to put a sticker on vehicles, which he will do if any are parked inappropriately, when he is patrolling. The Committee discussed other measures including planters or bollards. Planters were rejected due to the ongoing maintenance. The Committee **AGREED** that KCC Highways should be consulted again regarding bollards, as other measures they suggested were not working. Action: Deputy Clerk.

16. Risk/General Maintenance - to discuss items below and make any necessary decisions

a. **Review of the quotes for timber posts in KGV hedge gaps**

Isles had quoted for posts to be put in where there are gaps in the KGV hedges. This is for safety reasons, to prevent a fast bike exiting into the path of a pedestrian. Comparisons were shared and the committee **AGREED** that Isles should go ahead. Action: Deputy Clerk.

b. **Matters arising from the groundworks tender walkabouts (JA)**

JA raised 2 items that had been queried during the walkabouts with the contractors:

- Item 3b Brooks Field Meadow - should be cut in Sept/October, not late June
- Item 7 Sidings - should include the edges of the youth playground area.

The committee **AGREED** that the errors should be amended, and Isles made aware and sent a new document. Action: Deputy Clerk.

c. **Tree survey update**

The Deputy Clerk informed the Committee that the Parish tree survey was booked for 27 May (last Friday) so the report will follow soon. Any recommendations will be discussed at the next meeting.

d. **Decision on a camera in Walnut Tree Avenue**

As requested at the last meeting, the Deputy Clerk had consulted the PCSO regarding ASB in the Walnut Tree car park. He agreed that with the pub parking enforcement, along with PCSO presence when in the area, there was now little need for the Clerk to apply for a surveillance camera. The attachment would remain in place, if ever needed.

17. Review of the 2022-23 management plan and make any necessary decisions

The 2022-23 Management Plan had been pre-circulated. The updates were noted.

18. Finance

a. To receive an update from the RFO

The finance report had been pre-circulated by the RFO.
After discussion the Committee **AGREED** to order the new noticeboard for outside the school as enough is in the earmarked funds. Action: Deputy Clerk.
Phase 3 of the meadow was discussed but SL queried whether Phase 2 was successful. It was **AGREED** a site visit was necessary and discussion would continue next meeting.
Action: Deputy Clerk and any committee members.
AKR queried the earmarked categories with a balance of £0.00 and suggested they might be removed. It was **AGREED** the RFO should be consulted and should action if appropriate.

19. Monitoring and Ratification of any ROUND ROBIN decisions

None

20. To discuss and agree any additions or changes to the website and media

The Committee **AGREED** that the Cornwallis Academy Scavenger hunt could be publicised on the facebook page.

21. Other Items (information only)

PR drew attention to a potential trip hazard at the foot of one of the new allotment gateposts and queried if the work was finished. JA offered to discuss with the installer.

AKR reported that one of the Southern Water staff attending the pumping station, had mentioned that the pond ought to be dredged of silt. CH and JA explained previous attempts at doing so, the cost, the difficulties and the lack of long-term impact it had.

LAA have confirmed that there will not be a duck race this year, so no risk assessment is required.

The following have been reported to KCC Public Rights of Way or Highways, but remain open awaiting their actions:

- A resident on Linton Road reported fence damage by works to clear the path. KCC Highways have copied us into an email following up on this.
- Large branches of storm debris from the tree at Salts Avenue remain under the tree
- The weight restriction sign under the viaduct is completely green and requires cleaning
- The drain at the bottom of Well St / High Banks is flooding across the road again
- A number of overgrown footpaths have been logged by the office and residents
- The gully / trip hazard on the allotment footpath has been reported, requesting a site visit.

The following have been actioned and resolved so are now closed:

- A sewage leak in Salts Wood
- 3 dead badgers (on separate occasions) along the Loose Road and Linton Road
- The allotment footpath has been swept. The drain is being monitored as not blocked but contains debris.
- SE Water emergency information and updates were posted on the LPC facebook, when the supply was recently cut off, affecting parts of the Parish and North Loose
- Fly tipping by the bus shelter was reported by SL and has now been removed.

22. Date of Next meeting – 25 July 2022

The meeting closed at 9.20pm

Signed Dated.....