



LOOSE PARISH COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Meeting held on Monday 8 March 2021
at 7.30pm

In attendance: Councillors: Charlie Hollister (Chairman) (CH), Jim Andrew (JA), Peter Rigby (PR), Velma Bennett (VB), Bridget Kenny (BK), and Nicky Bourne (Deputy Clerk) (NB) who took the minutes.

There was one member of the public in attendance.

AGENDA

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Susan Luckhurst.

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

(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.

5. To sign as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2021

The minutes of the meeting on 11 January 2021 (Pages 340-343) were **AGREED** as a true and accurate record. The minutes will be signed by the Chairman and passed to the Clerk accordingly.

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

None

7. Correspondence & phone calls received by the office

A resident had enquired whether the LPC might get involved or support a community project on the lines of Britain in Bloom/Maidstone in Bloom. The resident had put their idea on the local social media group and had some positive interest. After discussion it was felt that such a project had potential to increase community volunteering and spirit, and could link across NLRA and the Parish. LPC has recently invested in the meadow project and is awaiting the arrival of 3

large planters for the village green. It was **AGREED** that the Deputy Clerk should respond to the resident positively, explaining the above and that we would welcome further helpers with the planters and would be interested to hear any other ideas they may have that they could drive. **ACTION NB.**

8. Village Green-The Triangle

a. To discuss the reconfigurations of the Village Green including:

i) The new planters

These have been ordered by the Clerk and should be delivered imminently.

ii) To receive an update on the circular bench

CH reported that the family arranging the installation of the bench hope for it to have started by the end of March.

iii) Removal of concrete on the green

This cannot proceed until the circular bench is in place. This has been costed by MBC at £115 to remove the concrete ends and landscape the eroded area to make good.

b. Update on the new bins from MBC

John Edwards (JE) at MBC has confirmed they have started a programme of bin replacement and installation and these should be in place by 22 March.

c. To receive an update on the Triangle and make any necessary decisions

It was **AGREED** that CH could put in some additional plants in the front of the bed. **ACTION CH.** JA reported that the wall is damaged and needing attention. It was **AGREED** to get a quote for repair, possibility encasing in concrete. **ACTION NB.**

9. Brooks Field – Pond - Roy's Wood

a. Update on the meadow in Brooks Field

There is some unknown green growth but nobody present had recently viewed the meadow. It was **AGREED** that photos should be taken and circulated. **ACTION NB**

b. To discuss an extension of the meadow area and make any necessary decisions

It was **AGREED** that any decision on an extension needed to wait until the success of the first section was known. This would be reviewed at a meeting after the summer.

c. Update on the damaged fence by the Chequers

The Caretaker has secured the fence with screws and replaced missing slats so it should now last. It will be reviewed on the Environment walkabout in August.

d. Update on pond clearing

The spring pond clearing has not taken place due to Covid restrictions and it is now too late for it to happen. The next opportunity will be in the autumn.

10. Cemetery

a. To receive information on the cleaning and/or repair of the war memorial and make any necessary decisions

The Deputy Clerk (NB) is continuing to try to move this on but the process is very slow. At the walkabout to view the gates, the level of deterioration on the memorial's damaged areas over the winter was a concern. NB has communicated with All Saints Church who were happy to give permission for repairs as LPC were not modifying the existing footprint, but enquiries to the Canterbury Diocese revealed LPC do need a faculty as the memorial is on consecrated ground. That application has to be made by the PCC so NB passed this information back to the Church Administrator. She has asked the Churchwardens to get in touch directly so we can work with them so they

can submit the application. NB is still waiting to hear from them. No further progress can be made applying for a grant with the War Memorial Trust until we have evidence of permission (the faculty). NB to continue and update the committee as necessary.

- b. **To receive an update on the hand tests on the stones in the closed cemetery**
CH reported that this has been completed, with one minor update needing to be recorded. Paperwork will be passed to the Clerk to update. **ACTION KO**
- c. **To receive an update on the removal of the fir tree in the closed cemetery**
The Clerk has submitted the planning application which was circulated in last week's planning list from MBC.
- d. **To receive an update on the cemetery and KGVPF gates and make any necessary decisions**
The Deputy Clerk had circulated photographs of the damage. The cemetery gates will close and lock, but the down bolt cannot be put in place and vice versa. After discussion it was **AGREED** both gates need attention and 3 quotes should be sought. JA offered to meet with contractors. **ACTION NB.**

11. KGVPF

- a. **To update on BT man-hole cover issue**
The Clerk has chased up BT several times. After a live chat BT said they would visit on 25/2/21 but no update has been received. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk should continue to chase and update at the next meeting. **ACTION KO.**
- b. **To update on the trip hazard issue at the far right entrance**
This was reviewed on the quarterly KGVPF walkabout with JC. It was considered a low risk as the Caretaker had already removed some stones. It will be reviewed regularly and if any rocks protrude again the Caretaker will deal with them.
- c. **To update on the replacement of the picnic bench**
The bench arrived flat pack on 2 March and is currently stored in garage. MBC quoted £62 to remove the old bench and £50 to install the new one (and £367 to extend the concrete if required). It was **AGREED** that the Caretaker could build the bench and then MBC should remove/install. **ACTION Caretaker/NB.**

12. To update on the salt bins at McAlpine Crescent and Carmans Close and make any necessary decisions

KCC (Claire Chewter) inspected the broken McAlpine Crescent salt bin and informed LPC that it is listed as a KCC bin. She has reported it as damaged and a replacement will go in by next winter. She advised the Carmans Close residents to make their own application and state their preferred location which they have done. Installation is unlikely before next winter.

13. To receive an update on the Ragstone Wall and make any necessary decisions

This is in hand but the weather has been unsuitable for the contractor to carry out the work.

14. To discuss the management plan and make any necessary decisions

- a. **Cost of replacement bench at the top of Old Loose Hill**
The Deputy Clerk had circulated some bench examples as an accurate quote would depend upon type chosen. It was **AGREED** that the committee would wait until the circular bench was installed so a new bench would be in keeping with it. The current bench is functional and will be re-painted by the Caretaker when he paints all the benches.

- b. **Cost of removing the old bench at the top of Old Loose Hill**
MBC have quoted £50 to remove the old bench and fixings below the ground and £185 to fix new concrete pads to take a new bench. The bench to be supplied by LPC. As **AGREED** in Item 14a this will be delayed until the circular bench is in place.
- c. **Cost of replacement waste bin by the Council's bus shelter**
The Deputy Clerk reported that John Edwards has advised that MBC are removing both their bin on the bus stop post, and the LPC concrete bin, and will be replacing them with one larger bin.
- d. **The cost of extending the meadow**
As discussed in Item 9b any decision on the meadow extension will be made once the success of the first phase is known.

15. To have an update on the Highways improvement including

- a. **The Lorry Watch in Well Street**
The office has been copied into regular reports with monitoring forms from the resident organising the Lorry Watch in Well Street. There is regular dialogue between this resident and the KCC Freight Officer. There has been no further progress on the physical Lorry Watch itself (with residents collecting data on the streets) and the equipment has not been collected or volunteers briefed (due to lockdown restrictions). Currently all evidence comes from video cameras on houses and residents' photographs and it is proving there is a steady flow of oversized vehicles. The Freight Officer has taken some action corresponding with various contractors.
- b. **The stopping order in Well Street**
There is no change and all correspondence received so far does not support a stopping order in Well Street.
- c. **Traffic Survey on A229, Well Street and Busbridge Road**
SL/CH/KO/NB met with a speed survey company on 16 Feb 2021 for a walkabout to discuss potential sites on the A229 and also Well Street and Busbridge Road. The quote is still awaited. The survey will not take place until traffic returns to more normal levels (out of lockdown and not in school holidays) to get a realistic count.

16. To discuss additional bins in the Parish

- a. **Bus stop by the Walnut Tree Public House**
JA had reported that there have been large quantities of litter in the triangle having to be cleared by the litter picking team. MBC had been approached regarding the possibility of a bin in that area but they did not feel there was a need for one. When the pub is open there is a bin by the pub door and their staff pick up rubbish in their grounds and car park. After discussion it was felt that most litter probably came from people using the bus. There is space for a bin on the concrete area by the bus stop but because MBC do not feel there is a need, they have no plan to put one there. It was **AGREED** that a site meeting should be requested with John Edwards to review the issue but that LPC did not want to fund a bin or pay maintenance. **ACTION NB.**
- b. **Salts Wood entrance in Hubbards Lane**
A resident had enquired whether a bin could be put in at the junction of the footpath from Salts Ave where it comes out at Hubbards Lane. This is also now part of the Salts Wood project. Having attended a presentation on Salts Wood, NB contacted BMAT to find out if they had plans to install bins, as they were creating picnic areas and would probably be in consultation with MBC. They said they were hoping to get some sponsorship from local groups eg the schools, and asked whether LPC would consider sponsoring a bin. It was **AGREED** that the resident should be contacted and informed of the Salts Wood project and that it might be timely to approach them, but also to

make them aware of the local litter picking group “Love Loose, Hate Litter” who were very effective in other areas of the parish. With regard to sponsoring a bin, it was **AGREED** that BMPC/BMAT would need to write to the Clerk with their proposals and it would be taken to a future meeting. **ACTION NB.**

The committee also **AGREED** a proposal from CH that any residents requesting additional bins should be directed to make their request to MBC, for them to make the decision.

17. To receive any update on the camera in Walnut Tree Avenue

The pub has been closed and CH has had no further information but it was **AGREED** she would get an update and the item will be revisited at the next meeting. **ACTION CH/NB.**

18. To review the contract with Streetlights and make any necessary decisions

The “Streetlights” contract is due to expire on the 31st March 21 (renewable annually). The cost is £97.50 per annum, which covers any maintenance for the street lights LPC owns (one in Walnut Tree Avenue and 2 in McAlpine Crescent). It was **AGREED** this should be renewed. **ACTION JC.**

EON supply the electricity to the streetlights that LPC owns. LPC pay £38 quarterly, under a ‘street lighting unmetered supply’ agreement, and it is very unlikely that it would be possible to get it for any less. The RFO suggested one option could be to try to get KCC to take them over, being as they now have the new LED lights fitted. It was **AGREED** that this should be pursued. **ACTION JC.**

19. Risk/General Maintenance

a. **To receive an update on the list of trees in the Parish and make any necessary decisions**

The Clerk has produced a list which she has shared with JA. They intend to do a walkabout to photograph some of the trees and identify them using an app once they are in leaf. It was **AGREED** they should go ahead and report back to the next meeting. **ACTION KO/JA**

b. **To arrange the walkabout to Brooks Field**

There is a walkabout calendared for Brooks Field in February so it is now overdue. This is different to the pre and post duck race walkabout and the annual August walkabout. After discussion, it was **AGREED** that the February walkabout was not necessary so should be removed from the calendar. **ACTION NB.**

20. Finance

To review the RFO report and to agree any further actions (ongoing)(JC)

The RFO had pre-circulated a report which was noted.

21. Monitoring and Ratification of any ROUND ROBIN decisions

There have been no Round Robin decisions related to the Environment Committee since the last meeting.

22. To discuss and agree any additions or changes to the Website and Publications

There have been no recent news notices related to the Environment Committee but it was **AGREED** that once the planters have arrived, the bench is underway and the meadow is growing, some of this information should be shared through the website and social media. **ACTION AR/KO**

23. Other Items (discussion only)

a. **To receive an update on the cover stones at Herts Crescent**

The Deputy Clerk had previously met with a surveyor to inspect the issue of the missing cover stones and wall damage. Golding Homes have since contacted the office to say the job has now been allocated and an engineer would be in contact prior to the job starting.

24. Date of Next Meeting – TBA

The next meeting date will be circulated once the calendar of meetings has been collated.

Meeting closed at 8.55pm

Minutes agreed by the Chairman to the Committee

Signed.....

Date.....