



## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF LOOSE PARISH COUNCIL Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at 7.30pm, in the Parish Pavilion, KGVPF**

**Present: Councillors:** Vianne Gibbons (Chairman) (VG); Charlie Hollister (Vice Chairman (CH); Tom Oliver (TO); Tony Oliver (TO); Susan Luckhurst (SL); Jim Andrew (JA); Velma Bennett (VB); Peter Rigby (PR); Lewis Muir (LMu) and Sue Grigg (Ward Councillor).

Also in attendance: Anne Rigby (Communications & Media Clerk) (AR) who took the minutes.

There were four members of the public in attendance.

### **Housekeeping items were noted**

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

Apologies had been received from Ross Russell (PCSO), Liz Lovatt (Community Warden) & Cllr Malcolm Summers. Absent – no apologies - Cllr Bryan Hillman & Cllr Jane Butler.

**2. To receive and agree any decision regarding any item to be taken as confidential (Item 20)**

VG clarified that there was no Item 20 on the agenda but stated that the current staffing situation needed to be discussed in private, at the end of the meeting. **This was agreed.**

**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<sup>st</sup> Jan 13). None.**

**4. To receive any signed dispensation requests for any item on this agenda, and 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 17th July 2017. None.**

**5. To agree and to sign as a correct record the minutes:**

**LPC minutes for the meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019 (Pages 1553-1558)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meetings and were signed by the Chairman

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

- Planning Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November (pages 479-480)
- Environment Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> September (312-315)
- Pavilion and Community Hub Meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> September (298-302)

**6. To receive any reports from the KCC Ward Councillor Paulina Stockell (PS) (ongoing item)**

No reports or communication received.

**7. To receive any reports from the Loose Ward Councillor Sue Grigg (SG) (ongoing item)**

SG explained that she was now a member of Maidstone Borough Council's Strategic Planning & Infrastructure Committee and their first meeting had been really positive. It had been acknowledged that the publication of the Call for Sites map had been published too early. This had caused members of the public concern, regarding the potential impact on the local area.

Following concerns raised at previous parish council meetings, there are thirteen potential sites that both SG and the parish council will be keeping an eye on, because of possible impact. SG stated that when any decisions are made by MBC (which will not be anytime soon), the Loose Neighbourhood Plan would be taken into account.

Following concerns over comments that had been made on Social Media when the call for sites was announced, VG stated that it is preferable that Councillors do **NOT** comment on Social Media sites, but should **ANY** Parish Councillor wish to do so, it is **important to state that it is their personal opinion only, and not that of the LPC.**

JA mentioned that he, Jane Butler and Peter Rigby had an informal meeting with Sean Carter from North Loose Residents Association (NLRA) regarding the call for sites.

**8. To receive information about tree planting by the Boughton Monchelsea Amenity Trust (BMAT) and make any necessary decisions**

Being led by BMAT. Volunteers needed from the community to help plant 500 trees on Saturday 25 January 2020. Agreed to publicise this on Website, at pavilion & on the Community Alert. This information had been really gratefully received and interested parties have been informed.

**9. To receive any reports/information from Community Warden Liz Lovatt (LL), PCSO Ross Russell (RR) and update from e-watch (ongoing item)**

VG read out RR's report for November. There were four items of note since 1 Nov 2019. VG mentioned that crime figures the parish council are given, do not necessarily reflect all stats and do not include Road Traffic Accident's (RTA's).

LL reported that she had undertaken lots of Welfare Visits and would aim to prioritise information for LPC website and Community Alert.

**10. To receive any questions/comments from the public, to include any letters/e-mails received by the Clerk from members of the public (ongoing agenda item)**

Members of Hugh Laing's family had approached the council, regarding a memorial bench in his memory. Having been asked to provide costings these were discussed at the meeting. Following discussion on the cost and the fact that the proposed bespoke roundel bench, was locally sourced, the council agreed that they were happy to support the project, particularly as Hugh had put so much of his time into the local community, both on the parish council and also with McAlpine Trust.

Cost sharing and maintenance (which the family would provide) was discussed and it was mentioned that as a parish council we can reclaim VAT. VG explained that she had a meeting on 18 Dec 2019, where budgets would be looked at, to see what can be facilitated, bearing in mind that any rise in the precept could adversely affect those on fixed incomes, such as the elderly. SL stated she was in support of any plans to improve Village Green.

Other potential cost sharing options discussed included; the Loose Amenities Association and SG (if she receives a similar budget to 2019, in April 2020). Also using the Chequers Pub as a collecting point, for contributions from local individuals, who had known or worked with Hugh Laing, during his 50 plus years in the parish. CH mentioned she will look through existing ENV budgets.

The council unanimously agreed to support the project and were thanked for their support. The family would approach the LAA and other potential sources of revenue and would keep the parish council up-to-date with the project. Ideally they would like to get it sorted for Summer 2020. This would be factored into the ENV plans for 2020. VG suggested that it may also be worth the family contacting KCC Councillor, Paulina Stockell for potential funds.

**11. To receive any updates on SMART (ongoing item) (PR)**

PR mentioned that SG had already covered items for Call for Sites.

In terms of the A229, there are a few major changes scheduled. One will be the Wheatsheaf Junction, with closure of Cranbourne Avenue; possibility of traffic lights at Plains Avenue; improving South Park/Armstrong Road junction, with potential three lanes to include a filter lane. It is hoped that the work will be done in three months, following demolition of the Wheatsheaf pub.

Observation points were discussed, including A229 junction with Anglesey Avenue (third recent accident in same spot); the recent Cripple Street observation was quite successful; query raised by PR with Speedwatch, querying why Lancet Lane observation point had not yet been approved. A new Speedwatch Volunteer had been added to the team.

Queries were raised on potential problems caused by these potential road Improvements, which could potentially include building south side. *CH left meeting – 8.25pm.* PR mentioned that NLRA's Alan Moore did a traffic survey quite recently and that there had been a radical increase to traffic in Boughton Lane, which was being used as a rat-run. Concerns were raised about public safety, especially as Bottlescrew Hill (which leads to/from Boughton Lane) is not an easy road.  
*CH returned to meeting – 8.25pm, JA left meeting 8.25pm*

**12. To receive information on the progress of the new Website for the Loose Parish Council and make any necessary decisions (LMu)**

LMu had done research regarding website accessibility regulations and Wix sites do already allow for compliance with the relevant regulations. VG proposed that a new one-off sub-committee be set up to work on this. Members to be SL, VG, VB, Tom, LMu, AR.

*JA returned to meeting 8.27pm*

VG stated that LM had made a brilliant start, don't want to rush it. With regard to pavilion bookings, everything can be done online and people will get an instant response.

Following advice from the Clerk re: booking the Playing Field. As this is more complicated, it can be provisionally booked online, then taken further, after queries.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** to set up a new Website Working Group. It was also **AGREED** that the first meeting would be Monday 13 Jan 2020, at 7.30pm. **Action: AR.**

**13. To discuss e-mail from Persimmon and make any necessary decisions**

JA – Persimmon had been in touch regarding meeting appropriate people from the parish council to discuss Persimmon's potential development ideas, which would involve delivering some benefits for the local community.

VG stated that the LPC had been criticised by Brian Clark, for not meeting with developers. The council's current policy is that it only meets at the planning stage, at a public meeting, where agendas and minutes can be agreed.

JA mentioned that Developers are being encouraged to work with parish councils and that both Boughton Monchelsea and NLRA have gained benefits from early talks, before planning applications are submitted. VG has conflicting thoughts about how we do this. PR mentioned that the two site maps the Clerk emailed to councillors, are different to what's on MBC's Call for Sites

After further discussion, SL proposed that at this stage we say Thank you to Persimmon, but it is too early to discuss this at present. Then look at reviewing LPC's guidelines.

JA asked for an addendum to SL's proposal to review changing the guidelines at this meeting

It was **AGREED** that the parish council policy would change to meet with developers and/or other interested parties, prior to planning applications being submitted, but this would only be done via a meeting in the public domain, and not behind closed doors.

**14. Promotion of Loose Parish Council & Articles- (ongoing item):**

**a. To receive an updated report re the LPC website**

AR had emailed a report to councillors, but had neglected to change the statistics from November to December, which she had amended and read out. VG stated that statistics were probably not so relevant, as the parish council would be changing its website. No other issues.

**b. To receive information on In and Around Loose and other publications**

The copy for In and Around Loose was currently in preparation

**c. To receive information on the Community Alert Service and to discuss and agree items for the next Alert** Agreed to put in the following - Welfare Visits; Burglaries; Ideas for a new logo & new website; What's On and Merry Christmas.

**15. Risk (ongoing item):**

**a) To receive and discuss any items of concern escalated by committees or concerning and potential risk matters**

VG reported that with regard to PCH committee, queries had been raised with SafePlay, regarding their reports on the equipment at the KGV playing field. (They had been resending out same report each quarter, despite work being done). VG thanked the RFO, Jan Capon for her diligence on investigating this.

Repairs on the Basket Swing had been done.

JA reported that the structural stability of the Walls survey would be done by end of January.

Weekly visual checks on the play equipment are also being carried out.

**b) Notification of correspondence for discussion/action (ongoing item)**

**Survey/Consultations: Fitness in local area**

This was noted.

**c) Finance & Funding- (ongoing item):**

To agree the online payments and any cheques issued on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and for the Chairman/Vice Chairman to sign apex A as agreement of the LPC. (Apex A available to all Councillors) Appendix A was **AGREED** by Council.

VG mentioned that she had an issue when trying to access the banking system. Apparently, there had been an upgrade on security and she had been cut out of the system. She asked that other councillors who have financial access, check that they can still get into the system. **ACTION: All relevant Councillors**

**d) Information Only (ongoing item)**

JA asked if anything was happening following the meeting with KCC about 6 weeks ago re: reduced signage. **Action: KO to chase.**

A date for a belated 'Christmas Dinner' was agreed for Thursday 30 Jan 2020. Either Frederic's (1<sup>st</sup> Choice) or Walnut Tree, East Farleigh (2<sup>nd</sup> Choice). **Action: KO to arrange** (TomO offered to help, if needed).

**Meeting closed for Confidential Session at 9pm – See Item 2**

**Meeting reopened and concluded at 9.10pm**

**Next meeting of the LPC will be on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020 – 7.30pm**