



**LOOSE PARISH COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES
Meeting held on Monday 13 September 2021
at 7.30pm in Loose Parish Pavilion**

In attendance: Councillors: Charlie Hollister (Chairman) (CH), Susan Luckhurst (SL), Peter Rigby (PR), Velma Bennett (VB), Andrew Richards (AR). Also in attendance: Bridget Kenny (BK), Kim Owen (Clerk) (KO) and Nicky Bourne (Deputy Clerk) (NB) who took the minutes.

There were 2 members of the public in attendance.

AGENDA

- 1. To receive any apologies for absence**
Apologies were received from Councillor Jim Andrew.
- 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 14 June 2021**
The minutes of the meeting on 14 June 2021 (Pages 350-355) were duly **AGREED** as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.
- 6. Questions/comments from the public or Community groups (3mins)**
None

The committee **AGREED** to move item 12 to item 7 as members of the public were present with an interest in the highways item.

- 7. Correspondence & phone calls received by the office**
 - a. To receive information regarding the missing bollard on Brooks Path**
The missing bollard was reported to KCC Public Rights of Way in June and a new bollard has recently been installed. A photograph of the completed work was shared.

b. To receive information on a resident's concern regarding overgrown trees on the Brooks Field / Kirkdale boundary

A resident had emailed to report that the trees in the section of vegetation between Kirkdale and Brooks Field have grown up into the telephone lines. The Deputy Clerk had visited the site to take photographs and contacted LAA as it was thought they were the landowners. LAA do not believe the land is theirs but would be happy to assist pruning. A photograph of the issue and location was shared. It was **AGREED** that the Clerks' Office should attempt to find out who the land belongs to, and then, if it is LPC land, it was **AGREED** that an approach should be made to John Hood for a quote to rectify the problem. It was **AGREED** that the Clerks' Office should update the resident with the agreed actions. Clerks' Office to action.

c. To receive information regarding an enquiry about having a barbecue in Brooks Field

A resident had enquired on the Loose Community Facebook, and then through the LPC Facebook page, whether barbecues were permitted in Brooks field. The Deputy Clerk had responded that they were not permitted for reasons of safety, other visitors, wildlife and the natural habitat and that LPC must support Kent Fire & Rescue Service's campaign to prevent fires in the countryside. The resident was thanked for checking with LPC. Subsequent communication with SL raised the point that this information is not visible on any signage at the entrance or onsite. A photograph of the current sign was shared and after discussion it was **AGREED** that a new sign should be purchased, featuring a new logo and a link to the rules on website. Action Deputy Clerk.

d. To receive information regarding enquiries about overgrown footpaths and pavements.

The office has received an increase in enquiries from residents reporting overgrown footpaths. The Deputy Clerk explained that the Clerks' Office always respond by providing the KCC Highways and Public Rights of Way links to report an issue, encouraging residents to report themselves. If the resident is unable to access the internet, then the Clerks' Office will submit the issue. KCC do take action but are particularly inundated with the current weather accelerating growth.

8. Village Green-The Triangle

a. To receive an update on the installation of the new planters, to discuss their upkeep and make any necessary decisions

The 3 new planters were installed shortly after the last meeting, on 23 June by Bob Hall, CH, KO and NB. They are currently monitored by the Deputy Clerk and topped up and dead-headed when necessary. The Deputy Clerk suggested that LPC might be able to recruit some willing volunteers to do the dead-heading and tidying, via the popular coffee mornings, by putting information on the tables. It was **AGREED** that this could be tried. Deputy Clerk to action. After a discussion about the preparations for winter it was **AGREED** that CH and SL would obtain bulbs and ask Jane Butler if she wished to be involved in the planting. CH to action.

b. To discuss the village green following the SGN works and make any necessary decisions

SGN had to carry out emergency repairs to the pipework under the green for 3 weeks in August. They had to move two planters temporarily to fence off the area but these have been replaced. They have installed a new man hole cover that is now not covered by the planters and re-seeded the areas where the turf was removed. The area has been monitored and is starting to grow, but not around the 4 man-hole covers. Photographs taken that morning were shown. After discussion it was **AGREED** that the Clerks' Office should contact SGN for comment, explaining that the green has village green status and that LPC had recently invested in improvements, all of which were now overshadowed by the poor state of the grass following the works. Clerks' Office to action. Alongside this, as agreed at the last meeting, prior to the SGN works, Isles had been contacted to quote to tidy up the edges of the green and the information had been circulated to the committee. The Clerks' Office were also asked to approach Bob Hall who had said he was willing to do the work. It was **AGREED** that CH

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would ask Bob Hall to complete the work. Going forward, it was **AGREED** that when the full maintenance specification was next reviewed, the village green edges should be included. Clerks' Office and RFO to action.

- c. **To receive an update on the Jubilee Oak plaque and make any necessary decisions**
At the last meeting it was agreed that prices for a plaque be sought and agreed by Round Robin. However, shortly after the meeting SL raised whether the wording on the plaque about the Jubilee Oak Tree (formerly on a bench) could be inscribed on the opposite side of the bench, in the same style as the family's memorial inscription. The Deputy Clerk approached the family who said they would prefer to keep the bench solely in memory of their father, but have offered to design, install and pay for a platform or post in keeping with the bench on which to mount a plaque of LPC's choosing. It was **AGREED** to accept the offer and for the Clerks' Office to seek examples of plaques with a decision to be made by ROUND ROBIN as **AGREED** at the last meeting.
- d. **To discuss the maintenance of the circular bench and make any necessary decisions**
The cleaning company have advised that they would be able to include the circular bench on their cleaning schedule. It would be done once a fortnight at the same time as the defibrillator telephone kiosk, at an additional cost of £5 per month. The proposal was **AGREED**. Clerks' Office to advise the cleaning company.
- e. **To receive an update on the wall at the Triangle**
The Deputy Clerk has sought advice and quotes from several different building companies. Two have responded that they will quote but will not be able to do so immediately. The Clerks' Office is having difficulty finding contractors to take on a relatively small job. It was **AGREED** they should continue searching. Clerks' Office to action. CH to pass on contractor details for a builder who has done previous work. Action CH.

9. Brooks Field – Pond - Roy's Wood

- a. **To receive information from observations during the Environment walkabout and make any necessary decisions**
The ENV walkabout raised the following issues, some of which have been discussed with Loose Amenities Association (LAA):

Roy's Wood tree maintenance: JA had sent in his concern about the damaged young trees in Roy's Wood and that staking them should be a priority. It was **AGREED** that the Caretaker should contact JA to meet up and be shown where the issues are. It is believed JA has stakes and clips. Action: Deputy Clerk to inform Caretaker and JA.

Brooks Field/Roy's Wood damaged fence by overgrown vegetation: Photos were shared of the vegetation pushing and breaking the fence in Roy's Wood. This is believed to be in LAA land, but LAA say their land starts at the end of Kirkdale, beyond the cottages. They would be happy to assist cutting it back. Isles have quoted to cut it back and re-attach rails. It was **AGREED** that as LAA have limited resources and so much else to do, the quote from Isles should be accepted so they can proceed. As with Item 7b, it was **AGREED** that the ownership of this section of land should be researched and confirmed. Clerks' Office to action.

Cement and wood pile currently by the new shed: LAA confirmed they will be removing this.

Pond and Stream: LAA will plan a working party to remove the weed in the pond and stream, but anticipate that it will be a particularly large job since it was not done last year, so will require several skips. Key members of the LAA are on holiday but they have a working party on 19 September and will plan a date for the pond work and liaise with the office regarding skips.

Ivy on the rag stone walls down Old Loose Hill – a photo was shared of the ivy on the wall that needs to be removed. It was **AGREED** that Bob Hall could be asked to do this in addition to the village green tidy up. Action CH. If Bob Hall was not interested, then the Deputy Clerk would approach the Caretaker.

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

Phase one of the meadow was very successful. Phase two was discussed and it was **AGREED** that it should go ahead late October. Phase one was dug out by a volunteer and the Clerks' Office were asked to investigate whether this would be a possibility again. If not, Clerks' Office to approach Isles for a quote. It was **AGREED** that CH should source the seed again, and red, white and blue was suggested to tie in with the Queen's Jubilee. Once the digger options have been confirmed, a date in late October would be proposed. Action Clerks' Office.

10. Cemetery

a. To receive an update on the ragstone wall repair work

The repairs to the ragstone walls in Kirkdale and the cemetery have been completed and inspected by Cllr Jim Andrew.

b. To receive an update on the repair of the war memorial

The Deputy Clerk has been in regular communication with the Church Warden but the decision on the faculty is still awaited. The Church Warden is continuing to chase. CH reminded the committee that Remembrance Sunday was approaching and it was **AGREED** that the paths should be inspected and if necessary, cleaned in preparation so they are not a slip hazard. Clerks' Office to action.

c. To receive an update on the cemetery and KGVPF gates

Avery Engineering advised the earliest the work could start would be early August. The Deputy Clerk has chased now we are in September and they have programmed the work to be done on 29 September 2021.

11. KGVPF

a. To receive information on the replacement bins from MBC and make any necessary decisions

NB and KO met with a member of MBC refuse team regarding the installation of the four new double bins. The 4 sites proposed were shown on a map. The Committee **AGREED** the locations. **ACTION** Deputy Clerk to advise MBC.

b. To receive an update on the BT man-hole cover issue

KO has continued to chase BT as they are still yet to respond. KO to action with another formal complaint.

c. To receive information on the trip hazard by the far end kissing gate in KGV and make any necessary decisions

Isles were consulted regarding the exposed rocks at the kissing gate at the far entrance from Walnut Tree Lane, which were felt to be a trip hazard. Isles suggested putting in a 100mm board between the 2 posts and back filling with hoggin. It was **AGREED** that Isles' suggestion and quote should be accepted so work can proceed. Action Clerks' Office to advise Isles.

d. To receive information on the perimeter hedge and make any necessary decisions

Following the last meeting, and also the ENV walkabout, Isles were consulted regarding the fence within the hedge alongside Walnut Tree Ave footway and on the gaps in this hedge nearest to the Walnut Tree pub. It was previously agreed that a decision would be made by Round Robin but the situation is more complicated, requiring further discussion. Photographs of the current state of the hedge were shared. Isles suggest the strong section where the fence is deeply embedded should remain as is. The lower section where it has become exposed

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should be removed for health and safety reasons (particularly by the play area). It was **AGREED** that the Caretaker should be consulted first to see if this was something he could easily remove. Action Clerks' Office to discuss with Caretaker and show the section of concern.

Isles also said that the gaps and extra unofficial entrances would be expensive to fix with hedge. It is unlikely to grow well due to shade and established trees dominating and removing all nutrients for themselves, so any new hedge would require much care, protection and watering. A double fence protecting both sides of the hedge would be needed otherwise it could be easily pushed down and the hedge trampled. Isles felt that the "gaps" should remain as they are. The biggest risk is a bike exiting onto the footpath without looking so a post (or further gate) could be installed to make this more difficult and prevent motorbikes accessing the park. It was **AGREED** that quotes should be sought to put in a post or similar. Action Clerks' Office.

12. Highways - To receive an update and make any necessary decisions including

a. **To receive an update on the traffic survey on the A229, Well Street and Busbridge Road, to review the results and make any necessary decisions**

Data from the traffic survey has been received and it confirms that the survey took place for one week from 26 July 2021, and not 19 July as requested. The Office has made an enquiry as to why it was not installed on the date requested but await a response.

The Clerk had circulated a link to the full data and printed the dashboards for each site. The data was discussed but it was felt that a comparison was needed, and also further information such as norms for different sizes of roads. Initial interpretation of the data suggests speed is not the issue it was perceived to be on the A229. Residents present also shared their thoughts regarding the impact of any speed reduction on the A229, likely to make live satellite navigations systems direct delivery vehicles down Well Street due to its section of national speed limit.

It was **AGREED** that the meeting between the LPC Chairman, Ward Councillor and KCC Division Councillor should take place before any decisions could be made. If the outcome of their meeting was to convene a meeting with KCC Highways, then it was suggested and **AGREED** that the data should be shared with KCC Highways for pre-reading and analysis.

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

The RFO had pre-circulated the Management Plan and hard copies were available. It was **AGREED** that councillors would take the document away to scrutinise and note any changes. These should be brought to the next meeting to be discussed when the Management Plan is next revised and updated. All Environment Committee Councillors to action.

14. To discuss the Queen's Jubilee Tree Planting initiative and make any necessary decisions (SL)

As agreed at the last meeting the office looked into sources of tree. The Woodland Trust has a scheme to provide free trees but the minimum is 30. Single trees can be purchased from them with prices starting at £8.95. New information had arrived in the office that day and was passed to SL. It was **AGREED** that this needed to be given thought and the item to go on the next LPC agenda for 20 September. Deputy Clerk to action.

15. To receive an update on the camera in Walnut Tree Avenue

As agreed at the last meeting the Clerk made an application for a camera in Walnut Tree Avenue but was informed by PCSO James Powell that the training to install cameras would take 2 years. MBC are seeking contractors to install cameras but have not come forward with any at the present time. It was **AGREED** that another application should be made. Clerk to action.

16. To receive an update on the defibrillator

Community Heartbeat Trust have provided a loan defibrillator which is now active. Enquiries to Kent Police have not led to finding the LPC defibrillator so the Deputy Clerk is following their complaints procedure. Action ongoing by Deputy Clerk.

17. Risk/General Maintenance

a. **Monitoring of the stability of LPC owned ragstone walls**

The Deputy Clerk has advised CH and JA that this annual check is due and date to be agreed between them. Action CH and JA. Clerks' Office to provide admin support.

b. **Cemetery headstone check**

The Deputy Clerk has advised CH and JA that this annual check is due and date to be agreed between them. Action CH and JA. Clerks' Office to provide admin support.

18. Finance

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

The finance report was received and noted by the committee.

19. Monitoring and Ratification of any ROUND ROBIN decisions

None

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

For information - the Clerks' Office advised that the use of Facebook for publishing information continues to increase. There have been several useful incidences where information has been picked up from the local community Facebook groups and we have been able to respond and action quickly. The Clerks' Office will continue to publish information notices and respond accordingly regarding LPC areas such as Brooks Field. Action ongoing by Clerks Office.

21. Other Items (discussion only)

The Chairman reminded the meeting that the Vice-Chairman had not yet formally been elected as she was unable to attend the last meeting. As it had been omitted from the agenda of this meeting, it should be put on the agenda of the next meeting. Action Deputy Clerk.

Bridget Kenney advised the committee that this would be her last meeting as she was moving. The committee thanked her for her time and interest and also for her contribution to litter picking.

22. Date of Next Meeting – 8 November 2021

Meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed

Dated.....