



**MINUTES OF THE  
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
Monday 10 March 2025 at 7.30pm  
in the Loose Parish Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, ME15 9RG.**

**In attendance:** Councillors: Charlie Hollister (Chairman - CH), Jim Andrew (JA), Velma Bennett (VB) and Sarah Leeson (SL).

**Also in attendance:** Nicky Bourne (Clerk - NB) who took the minutes.

There were no members of the public in attendance.

House-keeping and meeting rules were covered by the Chairman before the meeting began.

**AGENDA**

- 1. To receive any apologies for absence**  
Apologies previously given by Sue Hill (SH) and Andrew Richards (AR) were accepted.
- 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 an agreement by LPC on 17 July 17.*)  
None.
- 5. To sign as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2024 (Pages 449-453)**  
The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2024 (Pages 449-453) were duly **AGREED** as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.
- 6. To receive any questions/comments from the public (3mins)**  
(To include communications received by the Clerks' Office or other committees)

Church Street water flow - NB updated on the issue following the publication of the utilities survey, confirming there is no underground space to add any new pipes. Cllr Simon Webb, NB and residents met on site on 27 January 2025 after which Cllr Webb met with Kent County Council (KCC) Director of Highways and the Highways Senior Officer on 5 March 2025. A full written response is awaited.

Greenway maintenance – A resident is concerned that the weed killing programme followed by the former North Loose Residents Association maintenance is not being followed and the surface will become damaged as a result. The path is not LPC land and the maintenance has reverted to KCC Public Rights of Way (PROW). After discussion, the Committee **AGREED** that PROW should be consulted on the matter.  
Action: NB.

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

**a. Roy's Wood update (JA/AR)**

AR, JA and NB completed the remedial works on the trees in Roy's Wood on Sunday 9 March. The bases of all trees were cleared and mulch put down. The dead common oak was removed and replaced by an oak from Loose allotments donated by a resident. It will be monitored regularly. If it does not thrive, the resident has another available to transplant. The leftover KCC meadow turf was laid on the silt strip in Brooks Field by our contractor. The scarlett oak is proving difficult to source and may be delayed until next planting season. Action: NB.

**b. Meadow**

The works to the meadow are well underway with the two new sections dug out and spoil moved down to the old shed area and up into the wild section to the east of Roy's Wood. The seeds have arrived and will be sown imminently. Loose Amenities Association (LAA) have agreed to assist with fencing the areas off for the duck race event.

**c. Pondworks and stream**

The next phase of works to create three islands in the stream will take place at the start of April, for which a skip has been booked. The silted area will be seeded. This is funded from the 2024/5 budget.

**d. Badger issue update**

The specialists were consulted regarding the alternative option discussed at the LPC meeting on 17 February (fencing off access to the path completely). Their suggestion is that Heras fencing would be most suitable as there is no need for stakes into the ground, so out of the scope of the Badger Protection Act. After discussion, the Committee **AGREED** the matter should be discussed at the McAlpine Trust next meeting. Action: CH.

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

**a. Update on the war memorial cleaning and repairs**

The cleaning of the memorial started on 10 March 2025. Following cleaning, the specialist contractor will check the dimensions of the piece of Portland stone required for repair and provide an updated costing which will be circulated for agreement by **ROUND ROBIN** (as agreed previously). The grant conditions and procedures will be checked ready to make the claim upon completion. Action: NB.

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

**a. Matters arising from the quarterly KGVPF walkabout completed 4 February 2025**

The record of the last quarterly KGVPF walkabout had been pre-circulated. All matters are in hand.

**10. Other LPC areas: The Village Green, The Triangle, Richmond Way Green – to discuss items below and make any necessary decisions**

**a. Risk assessment for the village sign in the triangle**

There has been a change of roles at LAA and the risk assessment for the village sign on LPC land at the triangle is yet to be received so is being chased up. Action: NB.

**b. Litter bins on the village green (JA)**

JA and a litter picker volunteer had again raised concern about litter on the village green. NB explained that Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) have been asked several times, but would not empty a third bin and moving one of the existing two would be costly. The area is regularly monitored and litter picked by several volunteers.

**c. Oak tree on KB22 footpath adjacent to Richmond Way Green**

The office has started looking into a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) application for this significant tree that is on the KB22 and the border of Richmond Way Green. Action: NB.

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**11. Ground works contract – update on the groundworks contract tenders and to make any necessary decisions**

Following a site visit with NB, JA reviewed and updated the groundworks specification to include the works required on Richmond Way Green. The updated document was put out to tender. The deadline for submissions is 12 March 2025 and the decision will be made at the 17 March LPC meeting. Action: NB to add agenda item and pre-circulate documents.

**12. Volunteers – to discuss items below and make any necessary decisions**

**a. Update on volunteering matters**

The website volunteering portal is under construction but not ready to launch yet. Once ready, the plan is to publicise it via social media and promote through schools. Action: NB.

**b. Revised volunteer risk assessment**

The volunteer agreement was revised to align with the MBC version and had been pre-circulated. The litter picker and planter volunteer databases are being checked and all volunteers are being contacted to find out if they are still actively volunteering and if they require anything. Further equipment might be required if more litter pickers are recruited and the office will contact MBC in the first instance. Action: NB.

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

**a. Update on the Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) meeting and projects**

NB, CH, Greg McNicoll and Michelle Norris met online on 3 January 2025 to review the HIP and explain LPC's historical projects, outstanding matters and aspirations. Greg McNicoll revised the plan to focus on realistic, smaller achievable projects, which can be progressed and completed, then new projects added. He has since updated that:

- Walnut Tree Avenue exit – double yellow lines have been approved to stop parking on the hatchings, but they will not be progressed further north on the Loose Road.
- Lancet Lane extension of double yellow lines towards Loose Road – has not been approved.
- Double yellow lines at the Farrow's / Sainsburys entrance have been approved.
- Proposals are being drafted for the enhancement of the 30/40mph terminal near the viaduct. CH raised that a number of signs need cleaning in this zone. Action: NB to report.
- Outstanding street furniture issues are being followed up (e.g. street lighting that was never replaced after collisions on the bend by the village green). SL updated that the lamppost in Cripple Street will be repaired on 11 March with a road closure.
- The Royal British Legion statues have been purchased. Cllr Brian Clark has secured the highways licence and installation free of charge. However, at the installation meeting on site, those present felt an additional obstruction, such as a planter was needed to ensure cars could no longer park. After discussion it was **AGREED** that quotes and options should be sought for circulation for **ROUND ROBIN** agreement. Action: NB.

**b. Update from the Highways Working Group.**

The Highways Working Group has focused on two main areas:

- **Junction issues on the A229** - the group met with the major projects team at KCC Highways and discussed the Wheatsheaf junction "do minimum" decision and the closure of Cranborne Avenue. They asked questions about unused developer money and potential to use it on the Loose Road corridor. KCC updated that the closed Cranborne Avenue junction would be tidied up with fixed street furniture very soon. They responded to some of the group's ideas including considering a Sheffield roundabout model for the junction, and measures to improve safety for drivers using the Plains Avenue junction onto or off the Loose Road. They advised that the current northbound traffic flows remain under investigation as the Armstrong Road changes have caused different issues (increasing congestion further back through Loose and incorrect use of the second lane by A274 traffic).

At Boughton Lane the congestion from the single entry and exit point to the schools' campus was discussed and a conversation started about the feasibility of an additional access point from the

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Sutton Road side. KCC agreed a pedestrian barrier would be installed outside the chemist and the stop lines and box junction would be re-painted at the Cripple Street/Boughton Lane junction.

- **School travel and issues** – the group has had meetings in all five schools in the parish with the staff member responsible for travel plans to discuss their specific site issues. Greg McNicoll has advised that he is happy to support schools to update their travel plans. JA asked for clarification about the zebra crossing outside Loose Primary School. NB updated that it would be installed in the Easter holidays.

The next Joint Transportation Board will be on 18 March 2025 and Sean Carter will be speaking on behalf of the working group. Action: NB/SC.

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

**a. Tree works from the annual safety survey**

Quotes for all works from the tree safety inspection had been pre-circulated. Works to the young trees in Roy's Wood and reducing the epicormic removal on the lime tree in KGV would be done by the parish team at no cost. After discussion the Committee **AGREED** to go ahead with all the works identified with the existing contractor. The Committee also **AGREED** that next year they would seek additional quotes for comparative purposes. Action: NB.

**b. Brooks Field pre and post duck race risk assessments**

The pre- and post-duck race risk assessments are planned to take place on Friday 23 May and Tuesday 27 May respectively. Action: NB/AB.

VB left the meeting at 9.00pm.

**15. Finance**

**a. To receive an update from the RFO**

The Clerk had pre-circulated the finance report and budget information which was noted.

**b. To review the lighting agreement for the power supply to the LPC street lights**

The lighting agreement for the power supply to the LPC street lights (one in Walnut Tree Avenue and two in McAlpine Crescent) was reviewed. The annual cost increase is due to a rise in the price per unit and a discount no longer being awarded. The committee **AGREED** to continue with the current lighting agreement. Action: Finance Officer (KO).

**16. To review new 2025-26 Management Plan and make any necessary decisions**

The 2024-25 Management Plan had been updated for year-end and the 2025-26 Management Plan drafted. Both had been pre-circulated. Achievements and ongoing matters were noted. Items within the north Loose have been included. The Committee **AGREED** that the TPO application for the tree adjacent to Richmond Way should be added. Action: NB.

**17. To ratify any ROUND ROBIN decisions since 25 November 2025**

The following **ROUND ROBIN** was ratified:

For Item 12 at the LPC meeting held on 17 February 2024, a **ROUND ROBIN** was sent on 23 February 2025:

To agree quotes and a contractor for next phase of meadow works by using a Round Robin to the ENV committee. A quote of £3824 + VAT was **AGREED** (CH, JA, VB, AR & SL).

**18. Website and media – to discuss and make any decisions as relevant**

The Committee **AGREED** that community information should go out to update on the meadow works. The volunteering opportunities will be publicised. Action: NB.

**19. Other Items (information only)**

Loose Valley pumping stations update from Southern Water - work is continuing but Southern Water are coming to the final stages of the project. Full completion and handover is looking likely for the end of June 2025.

As agreed at the LPC meeting on 17 February 2025 LAA have provided a recruitment poster which will be displayed on LPC boards. Their social media posts regarding volunteering have also been shared.

**20. Date of next meeting – 2 June 2025 (TBC at LPC AGM 19 May 2025)**

The meeting closed at 9.42pm.

Signed .....

Dated.....

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