

CRANFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk Pat Bird
Rosedale
Twywell
NN14 3AL

cranfordparish@gmail.com
07522 582251

<https://cranfordparishcouncil.uk>



Minutes of the Meeting of Cranford Parish Council held at the Cranford Memorial Hall, Cranford on Thursday 28th March 2024

Present: Cllr Alison Gorton (chairman), Cllr Trudy Martin, Cllr Paul Wilcox, Pat Bird (clerk)
Cllr Mark Rowley (NNC Ward Councillor), 2 residents

23/095 Apologies were received from Cllr Stephen Pickard, Cllr Stewart Holford, Cllr Ian Jones.
Each reason for absence was approved.

Apologies were not received from Cllr Fergus Gallagher and his reason for absence was not approved. Therefore, Cllr Fergus Gallagher is to be disqualified as a member of Cranford Parish Council with effect from 29th March 2024, having not attended a meeting or sent his apologies since 28th September 2023 and the clerk is to inform NNC of Cllr Gallagher's disqualification.

It was **RESOLVED** that a What's App group be set up for the clerk to use to send reminders of meetings to the members, as the Google calendar wasn't proving to be effective.

23/096 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the council meeting held on 25th January 2024 be approved as a correct record. The minutes were subsequently signed by Cllr Gorton, as chairman.

23/097 The following matters arising from the minutes were noted.

23/070 b) Planning application [NK/2023/0661](#) at 3 Duck End, for a single storey side extension and detached double garage with stone facing to front of dwelling and fence to front boundary, has still not yet been decided.

23/082 b) A meeting is to be arranged with the residents at Top House to discuss planting of trees along Cranford Road on the left hand side approaching Cranford, as the members feel that this is an ideal place for trees and may help reduce the speed of traffic, however trees planted there previously have been damaged.

23/084 a) The clerk, as requested by the council, congratulated Rachel Davis on her New Year Honours award

23/084 f) The repainted village sign is back, courtesy of the WI, and it looks very vibrant.

23/085 a) [NK/2023/0748](#) Planning application for 8 High Street, Cranford not yet decided

23/085 c) [NK/2023/0796](#) Planning application for Wood Lodge, Duck End, Cranford approved without any mention of the parish council's request for a condition to maintain the building as an agricultural building.

23/086 A meeting has been arranged with the developers of Kettering Energy Park for Monday 15th April 2024

23/098 No declarations of interest in relation to any items on the agenda were received from the members attending the meeting

Public participation

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- 23/099 The following issue was raised:
Speed of vehicles entering the village on Cranford Road.
Following discussion, a number of actions were agreed
1. Move the speed indicator device from Thrapston Road to Cranford Road and collect vehicle speed data to share with residents and the Safer Roads team
 2. Raise the concern with the Safer Roads team and ask what course of action would be best. If it was felt that a community speed watch would be of benefit, seek volunteers via Cranford Community News
 3. Email the school, and ask if parents could be reminded of the need to reduce their speed when driving into Cranford along Cranford Road
 4. Plant some trees along Cranford Road on the left hand side as you approach Cranford
 5. Monitor developments regarding the development of junction 10A on the A14 to establish the impact of this on the traffic along Cranford Road
 6. The installation of speed bumps would not be pursued, as although these have been installed on the unadopted roads at Hanwood Park, it was felt that Highways would not support these through Cranford.

- 23/100 Cllr Mark Rowley provided some useful information relating to speed monitoring, the planning application for vehicular access at 2 Top Dysons, and planning in general. Cllr Rowley stated that the new Chief Executive will be visiting the wards with lead members to discuss issues such as potholes, etc with the Ward Councillors and the parish council

Planning Matters

- 23/101 [NK/2024/0035](#)
2 Top Dysons, Cranford, NN14 4AG
Creation of vehicular access
The [council's comment](#), made under the council's Scheme of Delegation to the Clerk
The applicant's [first comment](#) and [supporting statement](#) were considered by the council.
The clerk had contacted Highways to establish the extent of publicly maintained highway in the vicinity and then contacted NNC to check Highways response to this application.
The members felt that Highways would probably raise some concerns due to the proximity of the proposed vehicular access to both Top Dysons and the junction of Grafton Road and St Andrews Lane.
The chairman thanked the applicant for their comments and supporting statement and concluded that the location of the proposed application was the issue, and that the council would await the response to this application from Highways. The members agreed to explore potential electric vehicle charging points in Cranford.
- 23/102 a) [NK/2024/0098](#)
6 Church Lane, Cranford, NN14 4AE, Single storey rear extension and erection of boundary wall to front. Full Application
Following consideration of this planning application, it was **RESOLVED** that no objections be raised to the rear extension itself, but concerns be raised regarding the erection of the boundary wall to the front, as no height details were provided
- b) [NK/2024/0145](#)
8D High Street, Cranford, Installation of roller shutter garage doors to the front of existing car port.
Full Application

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Following consideration of this planning application, it was **RESOLVED** that no objections be raised

Village Matters

- 23/103 Cllr Martin reported that the speed bumps in Hanwood Park are temporary. Cllr Rowley added that the roads in the Hanwood Park site are unadopted and the speed bumps have been installed by the developers to slow down site vehicles. Concern was expressed regarding the frequent road closures of Cranford Road from Barton Road and that the clerk should raise this with Hanwood Park.
- 23/104 The following updates on village matters were noted
- Potholes – The situation is not improving, the potholes are reported via Fix My Street, temporarily fixed, then reported again when further potholes appear.
 - Blocked drains – An issue was reported with a blocked drain in Church Lane resulting in damage to the historic wall. This was forwarded to the Ward Councillors and guidance was provided to the resident.
 - Extra dog poo/litter bins – the clerk reported that NNC has advised that it has in the region of 3000 waste receptacles installed which meet its operational requirements, and it encourages people to be responsible for their own waste, be it dog fouling or litter, which may mean using the bins provided or taking it home and using their own. If the council feels there is an overwhelming need for an extra bin, it would be required to complete an application form for NNC to consider.
 - Telephone kiosk on High Street – the clerk reported that a resident had offered to repair the broken glass. The clerk will order the glass and liaise with the resident
 - Replacement notice board on Grafton Road – The clerk reported that this had been delivered. George Potter has kindly removed the old noticeboard and repainted the posts and has agreed to install the new notice board
 - The clerk, on behalf of the council, has applied for a free portrait of His Majesty The King, as part of a scheme to celebrate the new reign.

Finance Matters

- 23/105 It was **RESOLVED** that:
- the Cash Book as of 31st March 2024 showing the balance of £18,715.47 be noted;
 - the Budget Monitoring report as of 31st March 2024 be noted;
 - the Bank Reconciliation as of 31st March 2024 be noted; and that
 - the Schedule of Payments presented, listed below, be approved

Schedule of Payments			
<u>Payments made</u>			
Payee	Description	Amount inc VAT	Legislation
PM Bird (Clerk) / HMRC	March Salary	£341.99	LGA 1972, s. 112
Harry Stebbing Workshop	Noticeboard	£1929.60	LGA 1972, s. 111
<u>Payments to be made</u>			
Payee	Description	Amount inc VAT	Legislation
PM Bird (Clerk)	Reimbursement	£61.88	LGA 1972, s. 111

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PM Bird (Clerk) / HMRC	April Salary	£341.99	LGA 1972, s. 112
Tony Kemble	Cranford Maintenance Programme	£375.00	Highways Act 1980 s.43

- 23/106 Following consideration of the report from the clerk concerning the purchase of the replacement noticeboard which was made by the clerk under the scheme of delegation, it was **RESOLVED** that this report be noted.
- 23/107 Following a review of the council's scheme of delegation to the clerk in terms of planning delegation, it was **RESOLVED** that all members should respond by the deadline given and send their comments to the clerk and all members for their consideration.
- 23/108 Following consideration of the Access to Information policy, it was **RESOLVED** that this policy be adopted
- 23/109 The council reviewed its Risk Assessment and noted a new mitigation against the operational risk of resignation of the clerk. The clerk explained that they had designed the council's website and that it had not used standard templates, so a new clerk may have issues in maintaining the website. The mitigation for this is to adopt a website design used by other councils and the report for item 23/112 on the agenda proposes a way forward for the council's website.
- 23/110 The council reviewed its Asset Register, and the addition of the new noticeboard was noted

The clerk left the meeting at this point, to enable an open discussion by members for the following item and Cllr Paul Wilcox took the minute for this item

- 23/111 Members discussed the clerk's current pay scale, after bench marking comparative local parish council clerks pay scales, also noting the clerks attainment of the CILCA qualification. Following the guidance issued by the SLCC for parish councils in the LC1 category, a proposal was unanimously agreed, and it was **RESOLVED** that the clerk's pay scale be regraded to spinal column point 17 with effect from 1st April 2024

The clerk returned to the meeting to resume the taking of minutes and the chair informed them of the council's decision regarding the clerk's salary, which the clerk gratefully accepted.

- 23/112 Following consideration of the report outlining options for the future of the council's website, noting the support of the Cabinet Office's Parish Council Domains Helper Service, and to mitigate the risk of the council's ability to meet its statutory requirements in terms of its website, it was **RESOLVED** that the recommendations be approved, i.e.
- the council procures a new website from a supplier used by other parish councils for their websites
 - the council moves to a .gov.uk domain for its website and email, with a .gov.uk email for the clerk only, at this time
 - <https://cranfordparishcouncil.gov.uk> is the council's preferred domain name for its new website, and

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- d) based on the size of the council and the limited services it provides, that Parish Online be selected to provide the approved recommendations above

- 23/113 The awarding of grants to local organisations was considered and it was **RESOLVED** that a simple grant awarding policy be adopted at the council's annual meeting in May and that local organisations be encouraged to apply for a grant to support a specific project. The rewarding of council volunteers was considered, and it was **RESOLVED** that the clerk contacts The Old Forge and The Red Lion to discuss the concept of voluntary vouchers.
- 23/114 The proposal by the clerk to move the parish council meetings to Monday evenings was agreed and the dates for the council meetings for 2024/2025 were set to Monday 20th May 2024, Monday 15th July 2024, Monday 16th September 2024, Monday 18th November 2024, Monday 20th January 2025 and Monday 17th March 2025, subject to availability of Cranford Memorial Hall.
- 23/115 The date of the annual parish meeting was set to Monday 13th May 2025 at 7pm. It was **RESOLVED** that tea and cake would be made available and that the meeting be interactive with the topics to be agreed by members via email

Project Matters

- 23/116 The following project updates were received
- a) Cranford Maintenance Programme - Cllr Alison Gorton reported that the clearing of the overgrown vegetation on the elevated footpath has been a huge success with compliments from many residents, and the elusive street light has been located. Work is due to start on clearing overgrown vegetation on Jubilee Walk, taking into consideration the rules surrounding nesting birds
 - b) Planters - This project has been delayed but is due to start in April.
 - c) Speed Monitoring - The clerk reported that Steve Barber has reduced the height of the speed indicator device on Thrapston Road to make it more accessible for the continual changing of batteries. He will also reduce the height of the speed device on Rectory Hill. Data from the devices will be downloaded and shared with residents. The speed indicator device on Thrapston Road will be moved to Cranford Road and the data collected used as evidence by the council in order to work with the Safer Roads team to explore options to reduce the speeding of vehicles entering Cranford along Cranford Road
 - d) Footpath to Hanwood Park - Cllr Gorton reported that there were no further updates
 - e) Electric charging points – a new project to identify potential sites in Cranford for electric charging points

Updates on tree planting, removal of the map sign and repairing the bench on the elevated path were deferred as the relevant members were absent

Other Matters

- 23/117 There were no further updates from the chairman, clerk or members.
- 23/118 It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of the council is to be on Monday 20th May 2024 at 7pm in the Memorial Hall, Cranford, and that this is to be the council's annual meeting with the election of chair, review of the council's governance arrangements and the approval of the annual governance and accountability return.

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23/119 The chairman closed the meeting at 8:40pm

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