

## DRAFT MINUTES

# CRANFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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### Minutes of the annual meeting of Cranford Parish Council held at Cranford Village Hall on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025

**Present:** Cllr Stephen Pickard (chairman), Cllr Alison Gorton (vice-chairman), Cllr Paul Wilcox, Cllr Emma Bullock, Pat Bird (clerk), one resident (for the purpose of co-option)

25/001 It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Stephen Pickard be duly elected chairman for the forthcoming year

25/002 It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Alison Gorton be duly elected vice-chairman for the forthcoming year

25/003 No apologies for absence were necessary as all members were present

25/004 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the council meeting held 24th March 2025 be approved as a correct record

25/005 Matters arising:

24/073 – Awaiting an update from planning enforcement regarding the use of the barn in Duck End by Northamptonshire Mobile Mechanic

24/087 – Cranford St John map has been ordered and will be collected next week

24/094 – Response from Robert Wright, Staveley Yard received and shared

24/097 – Planning application NK/2025/0016 34a High Street for a two Storey side extension has been withdrawn

24/106 – The bench for St John’s Church has been purchased and is in use. Awaiting bank details to transfer the council’s contribution of £400.

25/006 Declarations of prejudicial interest were received from Cllr Wilcox and Cllr Gorton in relation to matter 25/009 a). Each councillor stated that they have no financial interest in the planning application, but as neighbours to the proposed application, they had a prejudicial interest.

As the council only had 4 members, in order to be able to transact the matter 25/009, it was **RESOLVED** that the council delegates to the clerk, the power to grant dispensations.

The clerk granted a dispensation to both Cllr Wilcox and Cllr Gorton, allowing them to participate in any discussion of the matter and participate in any vote taken on the matter for this meeting.

25/007 Stewart Holford, a former member, declared an interest in being co-opted to the council. It was **RESOLVED** that Stewart Holford be duly co-opted to the council.

25/008 No members of the public attended the meeting, so there was no public participation. However, the clerk reported that three matters had been received from members of the

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public, i.e.

1) Painting of railings outside St John's Church

Council's response – The council will not undertake this as part of its maintenance programme as it will detract from the vegetation maintenance, and other regular tasks which need doing this time of year. Suggested seeking people to undertake this through Cranford Community News.

2) Whether Cranford should look to develop a neighbourhood plan

Council's response – In the Kettering Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan, Cranford St Andrew and Cranford St John are protected by planning policies specific to them. Cranford is also a designated conservation area which again sets out what development is permitted. The biggest challenge facing Cranford is not development within Cranford, it's development outside Cranford which affects Cranford.

3) Whether the council could look into noise barriers protecting the residents of Cranford from the noise impact of the A14. A resident contacted National Highways and was told that the area near Junction 11 of the A14 is not classified as a Noise Important Area.

Council's response – Will raise this issue with the NNC ward member in the first instance.

25/009 a) Following consideration of planning application [NK/2025/0167](#), it was **RESOLVED** that the council sends its objections to this planning application, on the grounds that:

i) Cranford needs to be protected from the impact of the A14, especially when Cranford High Street is used as an alternative route

ii) the new proposed development is not for an energy park

iii) the planning application does not accord with the Local Plan policies

iv) issues with the developer's consultation process

v) NNC are stating that the masterplan has not been agreed, whereas the developers are stating that it has been agreed

It was **RESOLVED** that the council submits a separate response to the EIA for planning application NK/2025/0167 and that this be delegated to Cllr Stephen Pickard, the council's lead for the Kettering Energy Park, and the clerk

b) [NK/2025/0124](#)

To convert single garage to office / garden room at 10 High Street Cranford  
Amendment form and plans

It was **RESOLVED** that the council submits a comment that this application should be considered in conjunction with planning application [NK/2021/0302](#) with regards to access

25/010 It was acknowledged that with three vacancies on the council, there was a risk of being inquorate therefore unable to transact the business of the council. As one person had been co-opted to the council, the risk of this was slightly reduced. It was acknowledged that a few projects have been identified, and that extra members would be useful to help deliver these projects. It was **RESOLVED** that members try to encourage others to join the council.

25/011 Brendon Lovell-Moore has been elected as the NNC member for the Geddington and Stanion ward, which covers the parish of Cranford. It was **RESOLVED** that Brendon is to be invited to the next council meeting. It was **RESOLVED** that the council's thanks to Mark Rowley, Elliot Prentice and Lloyd Bunday, the former NNC members for the parish of Cranford, be acknowledged.

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- 25/012 Cllr Pickard reported that he and the clerk met with Carl Jones, Kier, to discuss the idea of woodland tree planting. Both were encouraged by a positive meeting, and the next steps will be to discuss the ideas with the landowner and then have a further meeting with Carl and other representatives from Kier.
- 25/013 Cllr Gorton reported that Jubilee Bridge has been repainted, the Millenium Bridge has been cleaned, and the wood is to be treated. Cllr Gorton added that whilst working on the Jubilee Bridge, a couple of issues were identified, i.e. the condition of the underside of the bridge, and a gap in the wooden barrier at the Jubilee Walk side of the bridge. Keeping the planters watered over the dry spell has been done. As no suggestions of where to prioritise the Cranford Maintenance Programme were received at the Annual Parish Meeting, it was **RESOLVED** that suggestions are sought via Cranford Community News.
- 25/014 It was **RESOLVED** that the clerk's recommendations for the bench on The Green, and for the bench at St Andrew's Church, be approved, i.e. the council replaces the bench on the Green with the 1.8m teak bench and the council purchases a 1.5m bench for St Andrew's Church using the money from Mark Rowley's Member Empowerment Fund.

### Representative appointments

- 25/015 It was **RESOLVED** that the clerk be appointed as the council's Police Liaison Representative (PLR) for the forthcoming year
- 25/016 It was **RESOLVED** that membership of the following outside bodies be approved:
- a) Northamptonshire County Association for Local Councils (NCALC)
  - b) Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)

### Finance Matters

- 25/017 The support from Cllr Rowley through the Member Empowerment Fund for the purchase of a bench at St Andrews Church was acknowledged and appreciated.
- 25/018 It was **RESOLVED** that the chairman and vice-chairman be approved as the bank signatories / authorisers.
- 25/019 The clerk requested that the following virements be made
- a) £300 underspend from 2024/2025 Budget for Devolution to 2025/2026 Earmarked Reserves for Devolution
  - b) £350 underspend from 2024/2025 Budget for Election Costs to 2025/2026 Earmarked Reserves for Election Costs
  - c) £1000 from Earmarked Reserves Footpath Maintenance to Budget 2025/2026 Reserves
  - d) £1000 from 2024/2025 underspend to Budget 2025/2026 Reserves
- c) and d) were approved by the council when setting the precept  
It was **RESOLVED** that these virements be approved
- 25/020 It was **RESOLVED** that the May Finance Report be noted, i.e.
- a) Cash Book as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 showing balance of £25,441.10
  - b) Bank Reconciliation as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025, showing balance of £25,441.10
  - c) Budget Spend as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025, showing total spend ex (VAT) of £436.28

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- 25/021 Following consideration of the letter of engagement for the NCALC Internal Audit Service, it was **RESOLVED** that the council engages with NCALC for this service for 2025/2026.
- 25/022 It was **RESOLVED** that the payments presented in the Schedule of Payments be approved
- 25/023 The clerk reported that they are awaiting one further quote. It was **RESOLVED** that the decision of who the council is to use for its insurance for the forthcoming year be delegated to the clerk, on receipt of the quote.

### Governance Matters

- 25/024 The Member Code of Conduct was reviewed and the seven principles of public life, i.e. Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, Leadership, acknowledged.
- 25/025 It was noted that the annual review of the council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations will be undertaken at the council's next meeting in July

### Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

- 25/026 It was **RESOLVED** that:
- a) The Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/2025 be noted, and the recommended actions be implemented, i.e. clarify ownership of the pocket park, move to a .gov.uk email address, approve a suitable contingency over and above quoted price for large projects
  - b) The year end Cash Book 2024/2025 be approved
  - c) The Annual Governance Statement 2024/2025 be completed and signed by the chairman and clerk
  - d) With the Accounting Statements 2024/2025 having been certified by the council's responsible financial officer, the Accounting Statements 2024/2025 be approved, and signed by the chairman
  - e) Having been certified by the responsible financial officer and the required statements confirmed, the Certificate of Exemption be signed by the chairman
  - f) The dates for the exercise of electors rights re inspection of the annual accounts (Tuesday 3 June 2025 – Monday 14 July 2025) be noted

### Other Matters

- 25/027 It was **RESOLVED** that members consider the training courses provided by NCALC and advise the clerk of courses which meet their training needs.
- 25/028 The chairman said that he was keen for the council to explore external grant funding opportunities, especially the Wind Turbine Fund. Cllr Wilcox suggested that the National Lottery Awards for All maybe worth looking into.
- 25/029 The clerk reported that they had had an informal meeting with Lucy Hawes, Projects Officer, for NNC Greenway to find out what was happening with regards to the Greenway project between Cranford and Twywell. Lucy is arranging a meeting with representatives from Twywell Parish Council and will advise the clerk of the date once arranged. Cllr Wilcox commented that one issue that needs to be taken into consideration for Greenway projects is the ongoing maintenance costs.  
The clerk also reported that Anglian Water have said that a timeframe for the repair to the damaged wall and grass verge at the pumping station is now being sought.

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25/030 It was **RESOLVED** that the next meeting is to be on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July (subject to availability of the Village Hall), and that Brendon Lovell-Moore be invited to that meeting.

25/031 The chairman closed the meeting at 20:45