



MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT 7.00 P.M.
ON THURSDAY 17 JULY 2025
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

Councillors

Cllr C Bennett

Cllr R Burbridge*

Cllr T Cobby*

Cllr H Nicholson*

Cllr D Nicholas*

Cllr M Scully* (Chairman of the Council)

Cllr B Steel

Cllr E Townsend*

Cllr R Tyler

Cllr C Walker* (Vice Chairman of the Council)

Cllr M West*

PRESENT*

ALSO PRESENT: Parish Clerk B. Bell.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Council AGREED the prior commitment apologies of Cllrs C Bennett, B Steel and R Tyler.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- Cllr E Townsend declared she is a Surrey County Councillor and Waverley Borough Councillor.
- Cllr R Burbridge declared she is a Trustee of Rowleys.
- Cllr D Nicholas declared he is a member of the Football Club.

3. PUBLIC SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

4. MINUTES

The draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 19 June 2025, having previously been circulated, were AGREED signed by the Chairman as a true record.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Council NOTED the Chairman's Report:

- He had a meeting with Glebelands Headteacher to discuss pupil behaviour outside of school.
- He asked Councillors to endeavour to attend Committee meetings and reminded Councillors to give apologies if they are unable to attend.
- He had received the resignation of Alan Morrison and wished to record his thanks to Alan who has been a great contributor to the Parish Council and will be missed.

6. CLERK'S REPORT

The Council NOTED the following report:

- The tree survey advises public consultation for veteran oak tree 247 on the corner of the Bruce MacKenzie Field car park before felling and advises fencing off the drip line of veteran oak 847 oversailing the Knowle Park car park.

The Clerk has advised the arboriculturalist that it is not possible to fence off the drip line as it will prevent football being played and the Council cannot insist that Knowle Park suspends parking bays under the drip line. The Council will need to consider public consultation before felling.

- There was a substantial sudden limb drop from an ash tree by the sub station over the public footpath at Snoxhall Fields overnight. The Clerk asked the tree surgeons to remove the branch and check the tree, and they advised felling the tree as it was re-trenching due to the heat and ash dieback. The tree was felled within the week and the Council's insurers thanked the Clerk for the decisive action. The subsequent annual tree survey advised felling of the tree due to ash dieback.
- The defibrillator will be installed at the public toilets on the Common on 30 July.
- The Council is now required to purchase environmental permits from the Environment Agency for the composting bays at the Bruce MacKenzie Field, Beryl Harvey Field and Amlets Lane allotments.
- The SALC newsletter has been shared with all Councillors – please complete their annual survey by 16 August 2025.
- Natural England are in the process of preparing the public consultation for the final order to vary the AONB boundary. The proposal is to delete land at Cranleigh Waters at Drodges Close and add Cranleigh Waters at Smithwood Common.
- The Clerk has submitted the Community Ownership Fund final report, the only outstanding item is the conclusion of audit this year.
- The Council has appointed Keri Vass as the new Finance and Admin Assistant who joins us on Monday 15 September 2025.
- WBC are holding a public engagement event on Tuesday 29 July 2025 7.00 – 8.30pm at Cranleigh Methodist Church.
- The Clerk reminded Cllrs R Burbridge, C Bennett, T Cobby H Nicholson and C Walker to use the link emailed to them to complete their DBS check for Youth Council.
- Cllrs R Burbridge, D Nicholas, M Scully and C Walker offered to help clear the cleaner's room at the Pavilion and to move the filing from the Snug Room to the cleaner's room to enable the Nursery to use the Snug Room from September.
- The Council declined to hold an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council to discuss the licensing application for Cranleigh School Staff Social Club.

7. REPORT FROM SURREY AND WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

Cllr E Townsend reported:

- WBC are holding a consultation event on local government reorganisation on Tuesday 29 July 2025 7.00 – 8.30pm at Cranleigh Methodist Church.
- WBC has given budget approval for the use of s106 and CIL funding to purchase land and provide a new skate park in Cranleigh, although location cannot be released until the land purchase is complete.
- Summerlands has achieved green flag status, the Council will send a letter of congratulations.
- UK Oil and Gas have surrendered their drilling licence for the Dunsfold site.
- She has met new Police Officer Billy Dann.
- A highway safety audit is being carried out at Park Mead School.
- There are ongoing Thames Water issues.
- New road closures for Amlets Lane and Barhatch Road have been announced for later this month.
- The first phase contractor has been agreed for the Leisure Centre and they will engage with stakeholders including the use of the tennis courts and town path 378.
- She will follow up on the High Street improvements.

8. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

- The minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting on 06 May 2025 were AGREED.
- The minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting on 06 May 2025 were AGREED.
- The minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting on 02 and 23 June 2025 were AGREED.

9. COUNCIL STRUCTURE

The Council DEFERRED the review of the Committee Structure to the September meeting.

10. FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. The expenditure list for July 2025, circulated earlier, was AGREED by the Council and Cllrs D Nicholas and C Walker will authorise the online payments for July.
2. The bank reconciliation to 30 June 2025 was AGREED and signed by Cllr T Cobby.
3. The cashbook reconciliation to 30 June 2025 was AGREED.
4. The Council AGREED to withdraw £50,000 from CCLA, Cllrs M Scully and C Walker signed the redemption form.
5. The Council DEFERRED switching its current account from Lloyds to Unity Bank.
6. The Council DEFERRED the decision to invest with Insignis to a future meeting.
7. The Council AGREED to the release of a further £750 from the Grounds Maintenance Reserve for the new tractor for bespoke wheels, if needed.
8. The Council AGREED to delegate authority to the Clerk and Cllrs H Nicholson, M Scully and C Walker to approve and authorize the August accounts for payment.

11. OUTSIDE BODIES

- Beryl Harvey Conservation Field – The ecology report is awaited.
- Centenary Garden – Property & Asset Committee to discuss replacement benches.
- Community Speedwatch – More volunteers are needed.
- Recreation Users – The Chairman attended a Football Club meeting earlier this month, and the Chairman and Clerk will be meeting with the Football Club Chairman before the Property and Asset Committee meeting next week.
- Youth Council – The Youth Council had a visit from Cranleigh Lions to discuss ideas for future facilities for young people, and they enjoyed ice cream for their final meeting of the term. In September they are having a guided tour of the Cranleigh Heritage Trail and may get a look inside Cranleigh Cottage Hospital. In October they are starting the Duke of Cornwall Community Safety Award with a visit to Cranleigh Fire Station.
- Carnival – A great time was had by all including our Youth Councillors.
- VJ Day – Cllr T Cobby said a service has been arranged for 11.00am on Friday 15 August 2025 at the War Memorial. The Chairman will read the Exhortation. Cllr T Cobby will organise a banner for the Village Hall to promote the event. The Chairman's wife is organising a small reception at the Village Hall for attendees.

12. DEVOLUTION

- The Council NOTED the Clerk's report from the NALC Power Shift Conference.
- The government announced the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill (2025) this month.
- The Council DECLINED to submit a corporate response to the Surrey local government reorganisation consultation and opted for Councillors to respond individually.
- The Council discussed potential community asset transfers from Waverley Borough Council. Cllr E Townsend explained that the unitary authority will continue to look after assets within Cranleigh at their cost so the Council decided not to request any additional transfers.
- The Council AGREED for the Clerk to prepare two staffing budgets for financial year 01/04/26 – 31/03/27: one with the current staff structure and one to include two new members of staff to support the Council's open spaces and properties.

13. NEIGHBOURHOOD CIL

- The Council AGREED to allocate the Neighbourhood CIL for the periods of 01/04/24 – 30/09/24 and 01/10/24 – 31/03/25 to the Machine Shed project and earmarked reserve.
- The Council AGREED to use the Neighbourhood CIL funds for the period 01/10/20 – 31/03/21 for implementation of the planning permission for the machine shed and to check the spend deadline with WBC.

14. APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR 01/04/25 – 31/03/26

The Council AGREED to appoint April Skies as Internal Auditor for the financial year 01/04/25 – 31/03/26 with the following terms of engagement:

- **roles and responsibilities**

April Skies Accounting Ltd provides the services of Mike Platten to Cranleigh Parish Council in respect of the above assignment. Mike Platten is a member of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). CIPFA maintains a professional disciplinary scheme under which complaints of misconduct by CIPFA members will be investigated. The client has a right to refer to CIPFA any matters affecting professional conduct or competence. April Skies Accounting Limited holds professional indemnity insurance cover to a limit of £250K.

April Skies Accounting Ltd has no relationship with staff or Councillors of Cranleigh Parish Council, beyond that required to carry out a professional internal audit. Furthermore, in line with NALC guidance, April Skies Accounting Ltd will not take on any form of consultancy work with the Council.

1. Responsibilities of the Council

1.1 The Council is responsible for ensuring that it maintains an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption. For clarity, responsibility for safeguarding the assets of the Council and for the prevention and detection of fraud, error and non-compliance with law or regulations rests with the Council.

1.2 The Council is also responsible for ensuring that accounting statements are prepared in accordance with the requirements of accounting regulations applicable to parish councils.

1.3 The Council should make available to internal audit, as and when required, all accounting records and all other relevant records and related information, including minutes of all meetings. We are entitled to obtain from the Council's members and employees any information or documentation we think necessary for the performance of our duties as internal auditors.

1.4 We, as your internal auditors cannot absolve management of responsibility for internal controls and must ensure that we are not involved in the operation of controls or making management decisions as such activities may compromise our objectivity.

2. Responsibility of Internal Audit

2.1 It is our duty to complete and sign off section 4 of the Annual Return for Local Councils in England. We must report on the following assertions:

2.2 We will carry out any audit testing we deem necessary to complete section 4 of the Annual Return for Local Councils in England. Internal Audit has a responsibility to report any evidence of what we judge to be material non-compliance with any of the assertions set out in table 1 above via the annual report.

2.3 We will also report to you in writing any areas where we judge your systems of internal control may need to be strengthened, on completion of our audit work.

Table 1 – Internal Control Objectives

Source: *Annual Return for Local Councils in England* Appropriate books of account have been kept properly throughout the year

A	
B	The Council's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved, and VAT was appropriately accounted for.
C	The Council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these
D	The annual precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate
E	Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.
F	Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved, and VAT appropriately accounted for.
G	Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with council approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.
H	Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.
I	Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.
J	Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.
K	Exemption from limited assurance review (smaller councils only)
L	Transparency Code (smaller councils' compliance)
M	Inspection - Council met responsibilities to allow public inspection of the accounts
N	Publication requirements AGAR
O	Trust funds (including charitable) The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.

- **audit planning and timing of visits**

April Skies Accounting Ltd is able to supply Mike Platten to act as internal auditor to Cranleigh Parish. April Skies Accounting is able to carry out the internal audit for the Council for 25-26 financial year at a cost of £550 plus travel from Farnham in Surrey. This covers the cost of:

- An interim audit, to be completed in November, December or January
- The year end audit, to be completed at the Council's convenience after 1 April and in time to permit the Council to approve the AGAR before 30 June.

For 25-26 April Skies Accounting will carry out an interim audit at all councils where we are engaged for internal audit services.

- **reporting requirements**

- We will contact you by email in order to confirm arrangements for the audit.
- We will set out any matters arising from the audit in the following formats:
 - by email, on conclusion of the audit, to enable discussion of recommendations
 - a report will be issued by email, in time to enable you to complete the Annual Return
- We will, of course, contact you regularly in the course of the financial year with regard to audit and other matters.

- **rights of access to information, members and officers**

The Council should make available to internal audit, as and when required, all accounting records and all other relevant records and related information, including minutes of all meetings. We are entitled to obtain from the Council's members and employees any information or documentation we think necessary for the performance of our duties as internal auditors.

Our fees do not include attendance at meetings of the Council. If this is required, an additional charge will be incurred.

- **period of engagement**

This letter is effective for accounting periods ending on or after 31-03-2026.

- **remuneration**

April Skies Accounting Ltd is able to supply Mike Platten to act as internal auditor to Cranleigh Parish. April Skies Accounting is able to carry out the internal audit for the Council for 25-26 financial year at a cost of £550 plus travel from Farnham in Surrey. This covers the cost of:

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For 25-26 April Skies Accounting will carry out an interim audit at all councils where we are engaged for internal audit services.

We calculate our fees using a standard hourly rate plus expenses. Mileage will be charged at 45p mile. All other expenses will be charged at cost.

Invoices should be settled within 30 days of submission to the Council.

Our fee assumes a robust level of internal controls at the Council and documented procedures of a high standard. If additional work is required, this is charged at £65 per hour.

15. IT POLICY

The Council AGREED to adopt the amended IT Policy.

16. LEISURE CENTRE BRIDGE

Cllr E Townsend said she has asked for the £40,000 s106 funding to be passed from WBC to SCC and payment from SCC is now awaited. WBC have offered £15,000 - £20,000 from LCWIP.

The Council AGREED to appoint Robin Nugent Architects to oversee the bridge replacement including working with the structural engineer, Environment Agency permission, specification, issuing tender invitation and construction.

17. CRANLEIGH VILLAGE HALL PUBLIC WIFI

The Council AGREED in principle to enter into an agreement for the provision of a public WIFI hot spot at Cranleigh Village Hall, subject to clarification of external equipment permission in the Conservation Area.

18. STAFF MATTERS

The Council considered this agenda item in private and confidential session: reason – staff in confidence.

- The Council AGREED that the performance award for grounds staff from 01 August 2025 be deferred until the outcome of the National Salary Award for 01 April 2025.
- The Council AGREED the performance award advancement of one SCP from 01 August 2025 for one member of staff.
- The Clerk left the room.
- The Council discussed the Clerk's performance award for 01 August 2025.
- The Council AGREED to appoint Hive HR to undertake a review of the appraisal process.
- The Council AGREED to investigate quotations for benchmark profiling and staff grading review.
- The Council AGREED to amend the terms of reference for the Personnel Committee to reduce their role to Discipline and Grievance matters only. All other staffing decisions will be made by full Council.
- The Council AGREED for the Clerk to prepare the 2026 – 2027 staff salary budget based on a 2.5% increase.
- The Clerk returned to the room.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 18 September 2025.

The meeting closed at 8.57pm.

Signature.....

Date.....