

## Grafton Underwood Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Pat Bird  
Rosedale  
Twywell  
Kettering  
NN14 3AL

Tel: 07522 582251  
Email: [clerkgupc@gmail.com](mailto:clerkgupc@gmail.com)

<https://graftonunderwood-pc.gov.uk>



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### Minutes of the meeting of Grafton Underwood Parish Council held at Grafton Underwood Village Hall on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025

Present: Cllr Rob Corney (chair), Cllr Rob Davies (vice-chair), Cllr Sam Rees, Pat Bird (clerk), 5 residents, Dan Ferrier, Renewables Development Manager (Energy), Buccleuch

25/051 Cllr Rob Corney welcomed everyone to the meeting.

25/052 Apologies were received from Cllr Gary Gurney (work commitment) and Cllr Martin Leitner (family commitment).

It was **RESOLVED** that both absences be approved.

Apologies were also received from Cllr Brendon Lovell-Moore (NNC ward member)

25/053 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the council meeting held 4<sup>th</sup> August 2025 be approved as being a correct record, subject to an amendment made to the sentence under matter 25/036 'A resident reported that the footpath leading up to where the house fire was needs repairing'. This should say 'A resident reported that the gate on the footpath leading up to where the house fire was needs repairing'.

25/054 The following matters arising were noted:

The replacement oak posts will be installed as soon as the weather allows and people are available.

The clerk had invited Rosie Wrighting MP to the meeting as requested and will do for future meetings. The clerk accepted that the MP requires as much notice as possible for any meeting.

Cllr Corney and Cllr Davies are finalising the details in the Welcome Letter

The cigarette bin request outside the Pig and Waffle will not be pursued.

Dog poop signs have been placed around the village. Thanks to Simon for sorting this.

The gate on the footpath leading past no. 14 has been replaced, and the two subsequent stiles along that route are to be replaced with dog/pushchair/wheelchair friendly gates in the coming months.

25/055 No declarations of members' interests in relation to any items on the agenda were received

#### **Public participation**

25/056 No items were raised by the public attending the meeting and the clerk reported that they had not received any items from the public for consideration by the council

#### **Planning Matters**

25/057 Dan Ferrier, Renewables Development Manager (Energy), Buccleuch provided an update on the overall Grafton Underwood solar development. Dan stated that:

- Buccleuch has taken control of both solar schemes (including Brigstock scheme),

## DRAFT MINUTES

- Buccleuch has submitted evidence, to protect all grid connections for all three solar schemes
- Buccleuch team are working to achieve the energisation date of November 2027 for the Grafton Underwood solar scheme
- Work on the scheme is underway; ground investigation works will commence this month, and Buccleuch are in the process of tendering for major contracts
- Works will be in line with discharge conditions and planning obligations outlined by NNC, including use of bypass track during construction, to mitigate traffic impacts
- Buccleuch is committed to honouring the Community Benefit fund – which is £5k / MW export to grid – to be paid on energisation (Nov 2027).
- Buccleuch has submitted its Private Wire application – which will enable Grafton Underwood to connect to Brigstock’s consented substation, to the north of Old Head Wood:
  - Planning application was submitted end of October, however validation is taking some time. The parish council will be consulted on the planning application. Works will comply with conditions attached to the Grafton Underwood schemes (in terms of routing of construction traffic). If consented, there will be no need for the Grafton Underwood substation, located to the east of Grafton Road.

The chairman thanked Dan for his very useful update. Dan offered to attend the parish council meeting when the planning application is to be discussed, to answer any questions.

- 25/058 The clerk reported that planning application **25/00754/FUL** for change of use from Agricultural Building and associated yard to B8 (Storage or Distribution) and external alterations at Acreland Farm (Barn At) 50 Cranford Road Grafton Underwood NN14 3AD was handled under the council’s Scheme of Delegation to the Clerk.  
Cllr Sam Rees declared an interest in the planning application and was not included in discussions. The council raised no objections to the planning application.  
NNC has since approved the planning application
- 25/059 Following consideration of planning application **25/01203/HFUL** for single storey rear extension at 10 Cranford Road Grafton Underwood NN14 3AA, it was noted that the applicant had taken advice from the planning officer. The windows are to be timber, and whilst a flat roof is not necessarily in keeping with the area, very little of the proposed extension will be visible from the public highway.  
It was **RESOLVED** that no objections be raised by the council, however the use of ‘rubble stone’ be stipulated, rather than ‘stone’.
- 25/060 The clerk reported that NNC had received 9 responses to the Regulation 16 Consultation. The next stage is the examination of the Grafton Underwood Neighbourhood Plan by an external examiner appointed by NNC. The clerk added that there should be no further cost to the parish council relating to the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan

### Parish Matters

- 25/061 Cllr Corney reported that he had received a draft contract for a Garden Licence on the land that was previously used for allotments. This was to be initially for a period of 12 months with the option to extend this on a yearly basis. The council is looking to submit a National Lottery

## DRAFT MINUTES

Awards for All application for a grant to establish community allotments and a separate community area. The council is working with Natalie Westgate on the grant application form. Once the contract for the Garden Licence is signed, and any required risk assessments completed, the council will be offering the use of allotments to Grafton Underwood residents.

- 25/062 The clerk reported that they had received a quote of £3,910 including delivery for a new moveable speed indicator device, i.e. same as the one currently up and running. The clerk added that having applied for grant from OPFCC Road Safety Community Fund for £3,910, they were advised that a grant of £1,905 had been approved. This being 50% of the application amount as the parish council had previously been successful in an application for funding through the Road Safety Community Fund.  
After consideration of the options available, it was **RESOLVED** that the option to purchase a second moveable speed indicator device which is the same as the one already purchased by the council, be pursued. It was **RESOLVED** that if external funding could not be sourced to help fund the £1,905 required by the council, then the council's reserves are to be used if required.
- 25/063 Cllr Corney, as flood warden, gave a brief update on the flood prevention work that is currently being undertaken and will be undertaken. He emphasised that there is continual work that needs doing, with residents, parish council, and landowners working together for the benefit of the community.  
Cllr Davies, who has been working with Highways to get the manhole near Geddington Road sorted out reported Highways have advised that this job has been moved up the list. Cllr Davies added that this should alleviate the flooding in that area and having the gullies cleared will also help.
- 25/064 The clerk reported that they had been in contact with the Tree and Woodlands Officer at NNC who had suggested that Kier may be able to help the council with trees along the brook. The clerk has contacted Kier and is awaiting a response.

### Finance Matters

- 25/065 It was **RESOLVED** that a payment of £30 to the Royal British Legion for a poppy wreath be approved.
- 25/066 The November Finance Report was noted, i.e.  
a) Cash Book as of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025 showing a balance of £11,806.66  
b) Bank Reconciliation as of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025 showing a bank balance of £11,806.66  
c) Budget Spend as of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025, showing a spend of £3421.60 ex VAT
- 25/067 It was **RESOLVED** that the payments presented in the Schedule of Payments be authorised
- 25/068 Following consideration of the Budget Proposal for 2026/2027, it was **RESOLVED** that £4,430 be approved as the council's budget for 2026/2027, this being a 4.98% increase on this year's budget. It was **RESOLVED** that external funding be sought to help fund any upcoming projects
- 25/069 It was **RESOLVED** that the precept required by the council for 2026/2027 be set at £4.430.

### Other Matters

- 25/070 There were no further updates from the chairman.
- 25/071 The clerk outlined a communication from NNC regarding Urban Highway Grass Cutting 2026/27 – Section 136 Agreement. The clerk added that they will request plans of the areas of highway

DRAFT MINUTES

covered by this agreement for Grafton Underwood and send the NNC communication through to members for discussion at the council meeting in February  
Cllr Davies said that Highways had advised that 'sleeping policeman speed bumps' would not be suitable for Grafton Underwood.

- 25/072 The date of the next scheduled meeting was set as Monday 9th February 2026. If a planning application for the Grafton Underwood Solar Scheme was received by the council before then, an extraordinary meeting will need to be called
- 25/073 The chairman closed the meeting at 8:25pm