

DRAFT MINUTES

Grafton Underwood Parish Council



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Minutes of the meeting of Grafton Underwood Parish Council held at Grafton Underwood Village Hall on Thursday 14th September 2023

Present: Cllr Penny Sneddon (Vice-Chair), Cllr Alastair Wildgoose, Cllr Alex Medri, Pat Bird (Clerk), Steve Barber (Parish VAS Self Purchase Scheme Facilitator, Kier), Sam Rees (Estate Manager, Boughton Estate), Dan Ferrier (Renewable Energy Manager, Buccleuch Estates), 7 residents

- 23/027 Cllr Penny Sneddon chaired the meeting in the absence of Cllr Rob Corney. Cllr Sneddon welcomed Steve Barber to the meeting. Steve stated that whilst speed is not the main cause of road accidents, it is a significant contributing factor adding that an average speed reduction of 2mph would reduce the seriousness of accidents. Steve outlined the Parish VAS Self Purchase Scheme process and his responsibilities and those of the Parish Council in the Scheme. Steve also described the various types of speed indicator devices available to the Parish Council and what would be required for each type. Steve explained about the Section 50 Licence which would be required. Steve also advised that the Parish Council would be able to apply for a grant of up to £5000 from Northamptonshire's Office of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to help cover the cost of the speed indicator devices and required accessories. Steve said that if the Parish Council wanted to pursue the Parish VAS Self Purchase Scheme, a site walk would need to be arranged to discuss and agree the locations of the speed indicator devices, ensuring maximum effectiveness whilst meeting required health and safety conditions. Cllr Sneddon thanked Steve for attending the meeting and for his very helpful presentation. It was **RESOLVED** that the Parish VAS Self Purchase Scheme be pursued with the Clerk to arrange a site walk with Steve and the councillors. Before Steve left the meeting, Cllr Sneddon mentioned that the warning lights at the Grafton crossroads were not working again. Steve said he would raise this with one of his colleagues at Kier.
- 23/028 Apologies received from Cllr Rob Corney were approved.
- 23/029 It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 18th May 2023 be approved as a correct record and these were then subsequently signed by Cllr Sneddon, as Chair

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- 23/030 The following **matters arising** were noted:
22/123 The Clerk is currently waiting for an update regarding the faulty street lights at the access to the Village Hall and next to the telephone box.
22/123 The Clerk will chase the removal of the plastic barriers on Warkton Road

23/031 No declarations of interests were received in relation to any items on the Agenda

23/032 Three persons, Rob Davies, Benjamin Goodwin and Nigel Grove were nominated and seconded to be considered to fill the casual vacancy on the Council. Following a vote by the Councillors present, Rob Davies was declared co-opted to the Parish Council

Public participation

23/033 The following points were raised by residents attending the meeting

- the timber is rotting on the wooden bridge on the public footpath to Slipton
- two dangerous Ash trees on Warkton Road
- Chestnut stump – low probability, high impact risk
- Aerial archaeological survey to be explored
- 30mph sign on Brigstock Road has been damaged
- Some of the wooden posts along the green have been damaged by tractors
- Manhole cover in front of Manor House does not seem fit for purpose
- Potholes on Main Road
- Shelves have been put up in the telephone box to stack the books

23/034 No report was received from the Unitary Ward Councillors

Village Matters

23/035 Sam Rees said that following on from the work on desilting the brook last year, there are plans to dig a channel around the back of the brook. Sam said that whilst the water flow in the brook has improved, the appearance of the brook looks worse now because of the amount of vegetation present. Sam added that Glynn Davies from the Environment Agency had said about strimming and spraying the vegetation. Sam will check with Glynn as to when this is likely to be done.

Sam said that the digging out of the south end of the brook will be undertaken
Cllr Rob Corney had suggested a small group of volunteers to start work in October tidying up the brook.

Sam stated that the hedge at the crossroads had been cut back to improve visibility

23/036 Dan Ferrier explained that in his supporting role to Scottishpower he was currently working to discharge the remaining conditions of consent on the Solar Farm planning application and was willing to answer any questions the Parish Council may have with regards to the Noise Impact Assessment report which had been previously circulated to the councillors.

It was **RESOLVED** that no concerns regarding the Noise Impact Assessment report be raised. The councillors asked if reports for the remaining conditions of consent were available. Dan responded that further reports were available, and he would provide a link to these.

Dan explained that the next step is to implement drainage for the proposed scheme.

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There will be 800m of ditching providing a watercourse and preventing pollution and vegetation. This work is likely to start before the beginning of October. This was welcomed by the councillors as it was hoped that the drainage would alleviate the flooding of the drain at the bottom of Old Head Wood.

Dan added that a track will be prepared for emergency vehicle access only. This will be contained within Boughton Estate's internal road network.

Cllr Sneddon thanked Dan for attending the meeting and providing an update with regards to the discharge of conditions and the next steps.

23/037 Cllr Rob Corney had previously circulated to the parish councillors, a copy of an open letter to NNC Councillors from a number of parish/town councils expressing their strong objection to the proposed Kettering Energy Park development. It was **RESOLVED** that this letter be supported.

23/038 Cllr Alastair Wildgoose stated that writing the Neighbourhood Plan was due to be completed in the next couple of months. If any further costs are to be incurred, a grant application will be made to cover these. Cllr Wildgoose added that following writing the plan, there are 3 further steps, i.e., consultation, submission, and independent examination before the plan is made.

Planning Matters

23/039 Having considered the documents relating to planning application NK/2023/0501 for the erection of a timber shed to the rear of Appletree Cottage, 24a Cranford Road, Grafton Underwood, it was **RESOLVED** that no objections be raised for this proposed development.

It was proposed that an update on the alleged breach of planning control be given at this point of the meeting rather than in item 23/045 the updates from the Clerk. This proposal was agreed by all councillors.

The Clerk stated that they were awaiting the NNC officer's report following investigations into this alleged breach of planning control. The Clerk had been made aware of a number of concerns and had shared these with the investigating officer at NNC. Once the Clerk receives the Officer's report, the Parish Council will consider what it can do to help alleviate distress and concern amongst residents if a similar situation emerges.

Finance Matters

23/040 It was **RESOLVED** that:

- the Cash Book as at 31st August 2023 showing a balance of £9.261 be noted
- the Budget Spend as at 31st August 2023, showing there is sufficient monies to pay the £321 for the Section 50 Licence for the speed signs but that the purchase of the speed signs themselves would be subject to a successful grant application to the Northamptonshire's Office of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
- the Schedule of Payments, listed below, be approved

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Schedule of Payments

Payments made

Payee	Description	Amount	Relevant Legislation
SLCC	Clerk's membership	£36.96	LGA 1972, s.143
Community Heartbeat Trust	Defibrillator annual support	£162.00	Public Health Act 1936 s.234
PM Bird (Clerk) & HMRC	July Salary	£122.80	LGA 1972, s.112
PM Bird (Clerk) & HMRC	August Salary	£122.80	LGA 1972, s.112

Payments to be made

Payee	Description	Amount	Relevant Legislation
PM Bird (Clerk) & HMRC	September Salary	£122.80	LGA 1972, s.112
PM Bird (Clerk) & HMRC	October Salary	£122.80	LGA 1972, s.112
PM Bird (Clerk) & HMRC	November Salary	£122.80	LGA 1972, s.112

23/041 Following consideration of the Clerk's report detailing the administration costs of the Clerk, it was **RESOLVED** that a payment of £213.90 be made to Cranford Parish Council for Grafton Underwood Parish Council's contribution to the Clerk's administration costs incurred up to 30th September 2023.

23/042 It was **RESOLVED** that a poppy wreath be purchased to commemorate Remembrance Day, using monies allocated in the budget for Section 137 expenditure.

23/043 It was **RESOLVED** that the review of the council's Asset Register be deferred to the next meeting

Other Matters

23/044 There were no other updates from the Chairman

23/045 There were no further updates from the Clerk

23/046 The date of the next scheduled meeting was set for Thursday 16th November, subject to the Village Hall being available. The main focus of the meeting will be to set the council's budget for 2024/2025 and to include an asset review.

23/047 The meeting was closed at 8:50pm