

WNF Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 31st October 2017

Wolvercote Village Hall

Present:

Steering Committee members: Christopher Hardman (Chairman), John Bleach, Mary Brown, Cllr Paul Buckley, Cllr Angie Goff (Vice Chair), Graham Jones, Richard Lawrence-Wilson (Treasurer), Sadie Paige, David Stone.

Approximately 30 members of the public.

Apologies:

Gary daLuz Vieira, Cllr Jean Fooks, Cllr Steve Goddard, Christopher Gowers, Allie Noel, Jo and Nick Malden, Kate Richenburg, Adam Symons.

Meeting opened at 7.30pm.

1. Presentation of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

Christopher Hardman explained that due to family illness Adam Symons was not able to attend the meeting, but had submitted a brief report outlining the next steps in developing the Neighbourhood Plan. This was presented in the meeting and has been posted on the WNF website. (<http://www.wolvercotenf.org.uk/the-forum/open-meetings/>)

2. Chairman's Welcome and Apologies

Christopher Hardman welcomed the audience to the fourth AGM and thanked members of the Women's Institute for providing the delicious refreshments. Apologies are noted above.

3. Minutes of the third AGM of Wednesday 26th October 2016

Approval of the minutes of the last AGM was proposed by Richard Lawrence-Wilson and seconded by Mary Brown.

4. Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda. None.

5. Chairman's Report and Progress with the Neighbourhood Plan

The full report has been included as Annex 1 to these minutes. Key points include:

- Members of Steering Committee were thanked for all their hard work, in particular those who have filled the role of Secretary, and Cllr Jean Fooks, who is standing down this year. Anne Charles was thanked for maintaining the Forum's website.
- An improved financial position that has benefitted from Government funding (£6,075), City Council contributions (£2,650) and several donations.

- An update on developments in Wolvercote:
 - CALA Homes are preparing to consult on their proposals for the Wolvercote Mill site;
 - There has been a delay in the Northern Gateway development's consultation with local residents;
 - A renewed planning application for Elsfield Hall development is to be submitted shortly.
- The Steering Committee has submitted consultation responses to Oxford City Council's Local Plan 2036 and Cherwell District Council's Local Plan – Partial Review; they highlighted traffic congestion, pollution, development on the Green Belt, urban sprawl and damage to biodiversity as areas of concern. The consultation responses are on the WNF website.

Questions arising from the audience related to CALA Homes and the Co-Housing model, and issues associated with noise pollution from the A34.

6. **The Treasurer's Report and Accounts 2016 – 2017.**

Richard Lawrence-Wilson presented the Treasurer's Report and Accounts for the year to 14/10/17. They have been audited by Neil Geddes. The full report has been included as Annex 2 to these minutes.

Christopher Hardman added that it would be necessary to raise extra funding if there were to be a second interpretation board at Godstow Abbey.

Cllr Angie Goff proposed and Mike Gotch seconded that the accounts be approved.

7. **Election of Steering Committee Members.**

Cllr Angie Goff took the floor for the elections.

There were seven vacancies on the Steering Committee with six members re-standing: John Bleach, Cllr Angie Goff, Christopher Hardman, Graham Jones, Richard Lawrence-Wilson and David Stone (under the terms of the constitution they may do so for a further 2 years), and Sadie Paige stood as Secretary.

A block nomination was made to elect the six re-standing Steering Committee members - this was proposed by Mary Brown and seconded by Madeleine Metcalf.

Sadie Paige was nominated to fill the position of Secretary by Graham Jones and seconded by Richard Lawrence-Wilson

There were no other nominations, although details of several offers of help have been noted.

8. **Any Other Business.**

Members of the audience took the opportunity to raise awareness of upcoming/ on-going community events including the Wolvercote Farmers' Market on Sundays 10am -1pm at the White Hart, Wolvercote; afternoon teas in the White Hart on Tuesday and Thursday 2-5pm in November; and the Commoners' Half-Yearly Meeting on 18th December.

9. **Date of next AGM:** Wednesday, 10th October 2018.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT Annual General Meeting 31st October 2017

A Word of Thanks

I would like first of all to thank the members of the Steering Committee for all their support and help in producing the draft plan and in responding to a number of consultations this year.

Particular thanks are due to the committee members who have filled the role of Secretary: to Jenny Attoe for all her help up to and including last year's AGM; and to Val Tate who generously offered to take over and did so until other demands on her time meant that she could no longer continue; and more recently to Sadie Paige who has joined us and done an enormous amount of work with us and Adam Symons (Consultant Project Manager) in getting the plan and the exhibitions to the stage they have reached. I would also like to thank Anne Charles who has expertly managed our website. Very many thanks to you all.

One member of the Steering Committee will have to stand down this year and that is Jean Fooks because she is no longer a member of the County Council and does not live in the plan area. Jean has been a tireless help over the past three years and we are all grateful to her for finding the time to contribute so much to our work. We shall miss her – though I know she continues to take an interest in our progress.

How are the Finances?

As you all know one of the most difficult problems about any local initiative is finding the money to finance it. As usual, individual members of the Steering Committee have given their time and room in their houses freely. We have in the past received a number of donations, one quite large anonymous one, that have enabled us to keep going. This year we made a successful grant application to Locality, the Government funding body, and £6,075 was received in May 2017. This funding enabled the Forum to appoint a consultant project manager, Adam Symons, who has been instrumental in pulling together the work of the Steering Committee to produce the draft plan on which you are being consulted. We will be able to apply for further financial help next year.

Also, we are very grateful to Councillors Steve Goddard and Angie Goff who arranged for £2,650 money to be allocated to the Forum.

The substance of my report this year will be briefer than last year – I do not have to tell you everything we have been doing because much of that is evident in the draft plan.

And Adam has outlined where we go from here.

An Update on Major Developments in Wolvercote Ward.

Unlike other plans where residents can express views about where they would prefer there to be development, we knew when we started that there were major development sites already identified and the best we could do was to engage with the planners to try to make sure they were developed in the most acceptable way. Everyone wants to know what is happening about these sites and there has been some difficulty in getting information.

Wolvercote Mill Site

However, at last I have some news about the Mill site. The most recent response from the University was that there would be news in December. However, a few days ago I had an email from a representative of CALA Homes asking for a meeting with the Steering Committee with a view to organising an exhibition and provide an opportunity to consult local views about the development. We will of course meet them soon.

One might wonder why it has taken so long to get to this point. Though the Planning Committee approved the outline application on 1 December 2015, permission was only recently issued. It has apparently taken some time to make all the necessary legal agreements relating to 106 contributions. The details of the agreements are now on the City Planning website. If you look at the documents concerning the Mill site you will see them in the most recent additions. Neither we, as a Neighbourhood Forum, nor our local members of the Council knew about the delay, and a Council Officer wrote that he did not realise that the Neighbourhood Forum would want to know about it nor apparently our local elected members of the Council. This is not satisfactory. It is clearly something to be followed up in the interests of transparency.

Northern Gateway Development

There is also a delay with the Northern Gateway. Savills have been generally very willing to keep us informed and we have had meetings with them to discuss outline master plans for the site. It was their intention to hold another exhibition to hear local views. We expected that this would be in the summer, then in September. The development of large sites can be complex and we are not sure what is happening to cause the delay. They have told us that they will let us know when they are able to move forward.

The council response to our enquiries is:

Master Plan – has been progressing well and reflects the Area Action Plan. Those discussions are still on going.

Infrastructure – The work on the principal road layout has been completed and the technical capacity work that supports it has been completed. The various other elements of infrastructure: education, open space, cycle routes and footpaths, affordable housing, and public transport are all on going.

Viability work – This is crucial and underpins the above matters and is still on going.

All of the work is working towards the submission of an application which is not fixed yet, as work is still on going. For general information the applicant will be undertaking pre-application public consultation at some point. Once a programme timetable becomes clear I will be in a position to let you know when that public engagement and its form will take place.

Elsfield Hall Development

The planning permission for the only other site in the area at Elsfield Hall is apparently to be renewed shortly and the plan is apparently to move forward on the same basis as before.

Consultations on Developments that impact Wolvercote Ward.

Responding to Consultations has taken a lot of time and hindered progress with our Neighbourhood plan. We have made clear that our responses have come from the Forum Steering Committee and represent, as far as we are able to determine them, the views of residents from our meetings and our questionnaires. These Consultations are often extremely difficult to deal with and it is clear that many people are deterred by the difficulty of consulting long and quite complicated documents on line and then answering what sometimes seem to be loaded questions again on-line. Our responses to the City's First Steps and to Preferred Options –Local Plan 2036 are on our website. We responded too to the Cherwell Local Plan – Partial Review – Oxford's Unmet Housing Need in January and we scrupulously examined all the proposed sites which was very time-consuming. Very recently we have responded to the proposals for development that have emerged from this and I am sure that you are all aware that as expected the ones proposed that most affect us are the sites up to Oxford Parkway station and on the Golf course. Our concerns are problems of traffic congestion, consequent pollution, development of the green belt contrary to National Planning policy, increased urban sprawl, the coalescence of settlements, damage to biodiversity. Answering this Consultation was particularly difficult and as one correspondent in the Oxford Times suggested, seemed to be designed to deter people from responding. Of course while we have every right to respond to this consultation and to others where we are affected it is not in our Neighbourhood Plan area.

I would like to appeal to you all to respond to these Consultations. When it is said that a majority of people accepted a particular view it is relevant to ask how many citizens of Oxford did accept the view. Oxford now has a population of 161,000. All have the opportunity to respond but almost always relatively few do.

If there are any questions you would like to ask about my report I will do my best to answer them.

Christopher Hardman

31/10/17

TREASURER'S REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2016-2017**EXPENDITURE**

The Forum's expenditure in 2016-17 was modest at just over £6,000, although this was much greater than in 2015-16 (£601), reflecting a surge in activity as completion of the Neighbourhood Plan draws nearer.

The Steering Committee and working groups meet in the private homes of members and no costs have been incurred on meetings. No committee members or officers have been paid any fees or expenses.

INCOME

Councillors Steve Goddard and Angie Goff arranged for £2,650 Community Infrastructure Levy money to be allocated to the Forum. A successful grant application was made to the DCLG and £6,075 was received in May 2017. This funding enabled the Forum to appoint a consultant project manager, Adam Symonds, who has pulled together the work of the Steering Committee and its working groups to produce a draft plan on which the Wolvercote community is being consulted.

BALANCE SHEET

On 14 October 2017 the Forum's assets comprised a balance at bank of £4,257.45 after deduction of unrepresented cheques. This will enable work to continue for a few months into the new financial year. Further grants will be sought to fund finalisation of the Neighbourhood Plan and completion of the consultation and ratification processes.

Income and Expenditure Account: 15 October 2016 to 14 October 2017

	Income	£	Expenditure	£
	<u>General Fund</u>		<u>General Fund</u>	
27/10/16	Donations at 2016 AGM	48.92	Printing and display materials	243.51
10/01/17	Oxford City Council - CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy)	2,650.00	Website annual fee	71.86
15/05/17	Locality Grant - from Dept of Communities & Local Government	6,075.00	Venue hire for public meetings	210.00
			Project consultant's fees	5,501.00
			Surplus for the period	2,747.55
		8,773.92		8,773.92
	<u>Godstow Project Fund</u>		<u>Godstow Project Fund</u>	
	No income in this period		No expenditure in this period	
		0.00		0.00

Balance sheet on 14 October 2017

	£		£
General fund			
Accumulated fund on 15 October 2016	1,030.80	Balance at bank, 14 October 2017	6,268.45
Add surplus for the period	2,747.55		
Accumulated fund carried forward	3,778.35	Less unrepresented cheques	-2,011.00
Reserved fund: Godstow Abbey Project			
Fund on 15 October 2016	479.10		
No activity in this period	0.00		
Reserved fund carried forward	479.10		
Total funds	4,257.45	Total assets	4,257.45



Richard Lawrence-Wilson, Treasurer