

WNF Steering Committee

Minutes of a meeting held on 26 March 2025 at 27 Lakeside

Present: Kat Barton (observer, by invitation), John Bleach, Paul Buckley (Chair), Chris Dawkins, Louise Franklin, Cllr Steve Goddard, Richard Lawrence-Wilson, David Stone

1. Welcome and Apologies

PB welcomed Kat Barton, who was attending the meeting as a prospective SC member. Apologies for absence were received from Mary Brown, Tony Dale, Cllr Andrew Gant, Katherine Kaye, Cllr Jo Sandelson

2. Declarations of interest

PB declared an interest in the item on CIL grant applications, as a governor of Wolvercote Primary School and husband of a Trustee of Cutteslowe Community Centre.

3. Minutes of the meeting on 25th February 2025

3.1 Item 2: replace “CD..Close” by “CD had declared an interest as the lessee of a flat above the shops in the council-owned building in Kendall Crescent”.

3.2 Item 5.2: In the heading replace “round” by “rounds”.

3.3 Item 5.2 second bullet: delete “It was assumed...for now”.

3.4 Item 5.4 third bullet: after “City Council” add “on 20 February 2025”.

Subject to these amendments the draft minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

4.1 Items 4.2 and 4.6: PB said that he had yet to complete the minutes of the 2024 AGM and the notes of the open meeting in the summer.

Action: PB, carried forward

4.2 Item 5.5.3: PB had passed contact details for RLW, LF and Rob Davies to Jim Ruddick, who was leading the Summertown Stars project to replace the FMD pavilion. RLW and LF reported that all three had attended a Zoom meeting with Jim Ruddick and one other on 24 March. They reported that the project is at an early, “blue skies” stage.

4.3 Item 6.1: PB had submitted a WNF response to the Oxford Local Plan 2042 (request for site suggestions), reiterating WNF comments previously made in relation to the OUP Sports Field site, and the Pear Tree Farm site, for the draft Oxford Local Plan 2040.

4.4 Item 6.5: PB had submitted a WNF objection to the location proposed for the North Oxford Tennis Club padel courts.

5. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

5.1 Spring 2025 CIL round (round 7) - review of bids received

Summaries of the 13 applications received had been circulated. JB explained that in some of them the figures were not definite, and others raised questions that needed answering before they could be published. After discussion it was agreed to publish all applications with comments in some cases, see table below:

Ref	Applicant	Brief Description	Value	Comments
7.01	Cotteslowe Primary School	Refurbishment of the sensory room	£10,000 towards £23,000	
7.02	Wolvercote Cow Co-op	Cattle herd	£17,333	Concern about whether it is an appropriate use of CIL. A fixed term project and some items are consumables not infrastructure. Questionable value for money. Possibly duplicates existing commercial arrangements for grazing.
7.03	St Peter's Church	After school Lego club	£300 towards total £500	
7.04	Wolvercote Primary School	Nursery expansion	About £50,000	At least 2 quotations will be required.
7.05	Wolvercote Local History Society	Wolvercote archives held at Blenheim	£1,980	Questions about public accessibility and benefit if results of project are available only online.
7.06	Wolvercote and Wytham Midsummer Festival	Purchase of materials for the festival	£470	Question about whether materials are one-time use (i.e. consumables).
7.07	Wolvercote Young Peoples' Club	Replace old and defective light fixtures	£2,961	
7.08	Cotteslowe Greenhouse Ltd	Materials to improve the Community Allotment	£1,675.80	Details of funding requested to be clarified.
7.09	Wolvercote Cricket Club	Sight Screens etc.	£4,350	
7.10	Wolvercote Cricket Club	Two hybrid pitches	£26,000	Ambiguity: is cost £26k or £24k? Are there to be 2 or 3 pitches?
7.11	Cotteslowe school friends	Audio visual and projector equipment for school hall	£7,398	
7.12	Wolvercote & Wytham Midsummer Festival	Eight festival eco banners	£244.93	
7.13	Cotteslowe and District Community Association	Office improvements Materials for Sunnymead Minnows	£1,957 £2,000	Unclear what exactly the £2000 was for.

RLW expressed concern about the number of applications that contained arithmetical or other errors or ambiguities, and the lateness of some submissions, given that the deadline had been known for a long time and it had been made clear what information was required. This had created significant extra work for the CIL team. An option that should be considered was deferring any application that did not satisfy the basic requirements of the selection process by the deadline. JB said that, for the time being, the CIL team would prefer to continue a proactive approach and put in the extra effort needed to help all the applications proceed as quickly as possible. It was agreed to proceed on that basis for the present round.

JB, TD and CD were warmly thanked for their hard work on the CIL applications.

5.2 Updates from Autumn 2024 CIL round (round 6) and earlier rounds

5.2.1 From the autumn 2024 round, the application to fund solar panels for the Wolvercote Mill community building is still live: more quotes are awaited.

5.2.2 Two applications from earlier rounds remained live but unresolved:

- The electric delivery bicycle. Confirmation of some details is outstanding.
- The Baptist Church Hall renovation. This was discussed again, as follows.

5.2.3 As previously recorded, a quote has been obtained from a surveyor to assess what work is required to renovate the Baptist Church Hall, but the anticipated CIL bid for survey fees has not been received. The value of the Hall to the community is not in doubt and the SC favours using CIL to preserve it as a public asset. At present it is not clear whether there is a sponsor amongst the deacons, or anyone else within the congregation who is willing to lead on the project.

If a sponsor could be found and a survey done, a large grant would be needed to cover building renovations. It would then be necessary, to demonstrate due diligence, to take account of how long the Hall was likely to remain available for public use. A parallel was drawn with the WYPC which had been given CIL grants, although having only a limited (but quantified) guaranteed lifetime for its usage of the building. That could serve as a precedent.

After discussion it was agreed that for CIL to be agreed for the Hall project, a possible way forward would be to obtain a deed providing for repayment of the CIL grant if the church and hall are closed and sold, within a defined time-frame. This option should be explored now with the Baptist Union who might have suitable examples of agreements used at other sites. The SC would benefit from legal advice on this matter: a retired solicitor (Wolvercote resident) was suggested. CD agreed to pursue these two issues.

Action: CD

5.3 Future CIL project applications

5.3.1 It was understood that Cutteslowe Community Greenhouse group are trying to arrange a lease of land from the City Council so that they can submit an

application for support for renovations of the greenhouse.

5.3.2 An application for funding of acoustic attenuation panels for the Wolvercote Mill was expected in a future round. In principle, this seemed a valid candidate for CIL funding.

6. Local developments and consultations

6.1. County Council public consultation on COMPF Phase 1

PB, LF and DS had attended a meeting on 19 March, together with councillors and other stakeholders, to discuss with Oxfordshire County Council staff the *Central Oxfordshire Movement and Place Framework - Phase 1: City Centre and North Oxford* (COMPF). The meeting was reported to have been constructive and had clarified the County's aims for the COMPF project and ideas proposed within it. PB had submitted a response to the COMPF survey of opinion, on behalf of the WNF SC, by the deadline of 23 March.

6.2. CDC planning application (24/00539/F) for a stadium at The Triangle – new consultation

It was reported that CDC had asked for further information from OUFC on why they could not stay at the Kassam Stadium and why they had ruled out other possible sites, and had begun a further public consultation on the Alternative Sites Assessment information provided: deadline 17 April. It was agreed that the WNF SC's concerns already submitted about traffic, parking etc., were relevant to this, since a major defect of the ASAs was their neglect of such problems associated with the Triangle site. It was agreed by majority vote that WNF SC should respond to the consultation, objecting again to the OUFC planning application. PB would prepare a first draft for circulation.

Action: PB

6.3 Other local developments/consultations

6.3.1 Planning application 25/00300/FUL (14 Harefields)

DS proposed that the SC should respond objecting to the application, for a change of this property to a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO). After discussion, it was agreed to submit an objection, on the grounds that this change would take the number of HMOs in Harefields to an unreasonably high level. On that basis, DS agreed to draft the objection.

Action: DS

6.3.2 The recommendations from PB and MB of 'no comment' on all other public consultations reviewed since the last meeting were agreed.

7. WNF SC Communications with members

7.1 Verbal report by LF on WNF communication accounts

LF reported that she had gained access to and now understood the WNF functions on Gmail, Mailchimp, Wordpress, and 123reg. She was concerned that passwords might not be secure and not everything has two factor authentication. Steve

Roberts' position with the website was explained; WNF did not want to lose his input and expertise, but did not want to overload him. LF agreed to contact him and explore a way forward with the website, so as to manage the two aspects: (1) changing content (currently managed by SR), and (2) changing design of the website (currently under no management).

Action: LF

JB remains holder of the Gmail account password and is currently the only person who receives and sends out emails from the Gmail account, although incoming messages are copied to PB. However, now LF also has the password, and it was agreed desirable for at least two SC members to have access to it.

It was agreed that the website would benefit from a refresh of its design. LF agreed to consider this.

Action: LF

7.2 Open meeting 2025 – 3 June in Wolvercote Village Hall

It was agreed necessary to begin planning for this public meeting. PB suggested having a talk from JB, who would be retiring after making a huge contribution over the whole 13 years since the formation of the WNF in 2012. JB agreed to think about this. PB asked all SC members to suggest other ideas for the meeting.

Action: All

7.3 Leaflets and posters for 3 June

LF agreed to design a poster and leaflet. Printing, and delivery by the Post Office, was included in the budget and would be the first leaflet to all households since the referendum leaflet in April 2021. The role of WNF was still not widely understood and the leaflet would provide a vehicle for explaining that.

Action: LF

7.4 2025 AGM

It was agreed that the meeting should be held in Wolvercote Village Hall in November, if possible. PB would enquire about its availability, and report back.

Action: PB

8. Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan review

PB reminded the committee of the need to consider reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan and urged SC members to look at the plan and at other plans which can be seen on the ONPA website at <https://onpa.uk/>

Action: All

9. Any other business

There was no other business.

10. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 29 April 2025.

RLW/PB