

## WNF Steering Committee

Minutes of a meeting held at 7.30pm on 10 December 2025, at the White Hart

**Present:** Paul Buckley (Chair), Tony Dale (Vice-Chair), Chris Dawkins, Judith Haverty, Richard Lawrence-Wilson (Treasurer), Katherine Kaye

### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Elaine Chaston, Mary Brown, David Stone, Cllr Steve Goddard, Cllr Jo Sandelson and Cllr Andrew Gant

### 2. Declarations of interest

There were none.

### 3. Minutes of the meeting on 22 October 2025

Draft minutes had been previously circulated, and were approved as a true record of the meeting.

### 4. Matters arising from the Minutes

*Item 5.1:* TD had notified all CIL applicants of the decisions made at the meeting on 22 October.

*Item 5.3:* (a) PB had reported to the Head Teacher at Wolvercote Primary School the committee's advice that a CIL application for £350k could not be approved at the present time, because it would consume such a large proportion of the CIL funds currently available.

*Item 5.3:* (b) A special meeting of the SC had been held on 5 November, to discuss and agree principles that would be applied by the committee when considering exceptionally large CIL applications – this had been aided by a briefing paper prepared by RLW, and had been followed up by a summary of the principles agreed, prepared by KK. These would together form the basis of a draft Policy, to be discussed and developed prior to the next meeting (Item 6.1 below).

### 5. CIL applications

#### 5.1 Outstanding items from CIL Round 8, Autumn 2025

(a) Application 8.03 (Kitchen extension for Wolvercote Mill):

TD had notified the applicants that, because the amount of CIL requested was exceptionally large, their application would be processed outside CIL round 8, following a new policy currently being developed by the committee for large CIL projects.

#### (b) Application 8.15 (Cutteslowe Greenhouse Phase 1)

TD had been notified by the applicants that they were unable to meet the conditions attached to their CIL grant of £50k, agreed at the last SC meeting: PiA had been able to provide only £25k towards the dilapidation costs, and not the £54k expected, and even after receiving other contributions there was a shortfall of about £16k; also the lease was not yet in place (expected on 12 December); and it was unclear whether the glass insurance was yet in place. In addition, aspects of the proposed Business Plan had been changed. After discussion, it was agreed that, for these reasons, the original application could not be approved, and TD would recommend to the applicants that, in this situation, they follow one of two paths. Either:

1. submit a new application for Phases 1 and 2 combined, where an exceptionally large sum of CIL would be required (ca. £200k), and the application would be assessed by the SC following procedures currently being developed for large CIL projects; or
2. submit a new application for £50k for a revised Phase 1, do-able with the reduced funds available, and after ensuring the new lease is in place and the greenhouse glass is fully insured. This project would need to restore the Greenhouse to a usable standard, so that its potential benefit to the community was not dependent on Phase 2.

**Action: TD**

### **5.2 Outstanding items from previous CIL rounds**

There were no other outstanding items needing attention.

## **6. Managing major CIL applications**

### **6.1 A policy for managing major CIL applications**

There was further discussion of what should be included in the SC policy for managing large CIL projects, starting from a first draft, previously circulated. The following key elements of the policy were agreed.

Applications for more than £50k ('major CIL applications') would be assessed outside the regular CIL rounds of decision-making, and they would be scrutinised in greater detail than smaller applications. Particular attention would be given to ensuring that the community benefits justifying major CIL applications would be durable and sufficiently low-risk. To facilitate this, normal practice would be for each major application to be assigned its own sub-group of the SC (its 'Project Working Group' ('PWG')) to carry out the detailed assessment required, and these could call on external expert advice where needed. However, the whole SC: (a) would see every application, (b) would have access to all documents relating to its assessment<sup>1</sup>, and (c) would be included in decision-making on whether to approve the application.

It was agreed that some professional guidance would be helpful, to assist in devising robust procedures for assessing projects' financial durability and risk vulnerability. KK suggested her husband Moray could advise on this and she would ask him.

---

<sup>1</sup> A means would be developed for convenient online sharing of information among the SC for this purpose.

It was agreed SC members would share their views on the current draft of the policy by email and, taking account of these, PB and TD would revise and circulate a revised draft, with the aim of arriving at an agreed draft in January.

**Action: KK, TD and PB**

### **6.2 CIL application 8.03 (Kitchen extension at Wolvercote Mill)**

It was agreed that TD would explain to the applicants that this would come within the category of a 'major CIL application' and be subject to the new policy currently being developed. This would involve close scrutiny of the Business Plan for Wolvercote Mill, so the SC would be requiring further information from them. It was also agreed there would need to be consultation with neighbouring food outlets: The Wolvercote and The White Hart.

**Action: TD**

### **6.3 Other major CIL applications received or in preparation**

TD had, 2 days previously, received a new CIL application from Davenant Road Community Group, to support the project: Davenant Road Pedestrian Safety and Traffic Calming. It requested £129,725 of CIL for implementation of changes to the road layout in Davenant Road. He noted that such an application had been expected, since the project had previously received CIL support for the detailed design work needed. A time slot for implementation, beginning 16 February 2026, had already been agreed with OCC, and the Traffic Regulation Order permitting it would expire in July 2026.

The committee was surprised and concerned that the amount requested greatly exceeded what the applicants had estimated previously (£50k) when seeking CIL funds for the design work. It would now count as a major CIL project and require in-depth scrutiny under the newly developing policy. Moreover, it would benefit only the residents of one street. The majority committee view was that it could not be approved in current form. In view of the time constraints, it was considered most helpful to the applicants to alert them to this immediately, and invite them to submit a smaller CIL request for £50k, to enable a reduced number of build-outs, or to complement funds from another source. TD would notify the applicants accordingly.

**Action: TD**

## **7. WNF response to local public consultations**

### **7.1 Planning application 25/02095/FUL**

MB and PB recommended objecting to this planning application for 16 Harbord Road (demolition of existing dwelling-house and replacement by 2x 4-bed semis), because it would result in large loss of habitats and hedgerows. There would need to be compensating biodiversity increase somewhere else, but the location was unspecified. Therefore it was in breach of Policy GBS5 of the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan, which specifies that replacement must be within the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum area. It was agreed that MB would prepare an objection along these lines.

**Action: MB**

## **7.2 Other planning applications**

MB and PB had circulated a list of all planning applications that had appeared since the last meeting. It was agreed that no response would be made to any, except that referred to above.

## **8. Review of AGM on 25 November, 2025**

The AGM and Open Meeting held on 25 November at Wolvercote Village Hall was considered to have been a success. Attendance was relatively high: in the region of 63, including SC members and WI members providing refreshments. The two presentations on the Cutteslowe Greenhouse project and the Wolvercote Mill kitchen project were helpful, in informing and gaining responses from the audience, since both are the subject of large CIL applications, in preparation and already received, respectively.

## **9. Scheduling of future meetings**

The proposed schedule of committee meetings for Spring 2026, previously circulated, was agreed. [Following subsequent requests for change, it was agreed by email to move SC meetings on 21 January to 28 January, and 25 February to 24 February].

The WNF Summer Open Meeting 2026 would be on Thursday 4 June at Cutteslowe Community Centre. PB explained the choice of a Thursday had been dictated by limited availability of the Centre on other evenings.

## **10. Any other business**

### **10.1 CIL applicants should acknowledge receipt**

It was agreed that successful CIL applicants should be asked to acknowledge receipt of their CIL funds. TD would amend the application form for the next CIL round accordingly.

**Action: TD**

### **10.2 Amount of CIL available**

TD had been told by Victoria Collett of TWO that an additional £250k of CIL was expected to be available for the Spring 2026 CIL round.

### **10.3 Printed copies of the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan**

It was agreed that printed copies of the Neighbourhood Plan should be made available to all SC members, to assist with making decisions consistent with the Plan. This might need to be the 'Draft' version of the Plan, as approved by the City Council. PB would explore this.

**Action: PB**

## **11. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting would be at 7.30pm on 21 January 2026 [**later moved to 28 January**].

JH/PB