



WNF Steering Committee

Minutes of a meeting held at 7.30pm on 1 July 2026, at the White Hart, Lower Wolvercote

Present: Paul Buckley (Chair), Tony Dale (Vice-Chair), Richard Lawrence-Wilson (Treasurer), Elaine Chaston, Chris Dawkins, Judith Haverty, Katherine Kaye, David Stone, Andrew Leadbitter (by invitation), Cllr Steve Goddard (only for items 7 and 8) and Sandra Bailey (by invitation as minute-taker)

1. Apologies and welcome

Apologies for absence were received from Mary Brown and Cllr Andrew Gant. Andrew Leadbitter was welcomed to the meeting and, with his consent, it was agreed to co-opt him onto the committee.

2. Declarations of interest

EC declared an interest as a member of the Wolvercote Village Hall committee.

3. Minutes of the meeting on 6 May 2026

These were approved as a true record of the meeting. PB thanked SB for her help in drafting the minutes.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

Item 8: PB had submitted the committee's WNF response to East West Rail's recent public consultation.

Item 10: PB and TD, with help from CD, had manned a table in Wolvercote Village Hall at the Wolvercote and Wytham Midsummer Festival on the 20th June. They reported it had been worthwhile. There had been multiple expressions of interest in WNF's work in relation to local developments and the spending of CIL funds.

Item 11: TD and PB had met Delena Gabbidon, City Council Locality Manager for Wolvercote, to explain WNF's role and to learn about hers. Her main role seemed to be dealing with areas of deprivation. She has a small pot of money to disburse, is interested in food larders, and has visited the White Hart's warm Space. PB had raised with her the problem of mis-use of barbecues at the Bathing Place, arising because of inadequate City Council signage. EC noted that the picnic tables had gone. The space outside the designated fenced area had been used for barbecues, and sometimes even space outside the Bathing Place area. KK pointed out that since Julian Cooper's post had gone, there was currently no-one with enforcement powers there. It was agreed to press the the City Council further on this matter.

5. Updates on applications to CIL Round 9 Spring 2026

TD reported that most approved applications had been sent to Oxford City Council and had been accepted by the Council. Exceptions were as follows.

Application 9.09 (Wolvercomets) Transfer of funds was not possible until the applicants had formed a community benefit society with a bank account, to ensure the facilities funded by CIL remain permanently available to the community.

Application 9.11 (Baptist Church Hall renovations) As noted at previous meetings, a legal mechanism was required to ensure that if, in future, the Baptist Church no longer had a need for the Hall, any improvements to it funded by CIL would remain available to the community. AL reported that progress had been slow in resolving this. The Deacons, John Harper and Jill Galloway, were trying to persuade the Baptist community. The Baptist Union would only consult with Deacons. Transfer of the funds would not take place until this was resolved.

Application 9.06 (Wolvercote Tree Group) TD reported that, although their bid had been approved, the planned noticeboard could not go ahead because Oxford Preservation Trust had refused their portion of the funding. It was agreed to inform WTG that they could use the CIL money for a less expensive form of noticeboard. JH noted the wider point that care should be taken in future to ensure any promised matched funding would materialize.

Application 9.08 (Cutteslowe Community Centre solar panels and battery) It was agreed that for the approved bid to proceed to payment, CCA needed to provide (a) assurance that either planning permission is not needed or has been granted by the LPA (Oxford City Council), and (b) assurance from the City Council, as freeholders and owners of the building, that they give permission under the terms of the lease.

Application 9.19 (Summertown Arts): The bid had already been approved, but the application had relied on some links to websites. It was agreed that TD would ask the applicants for the relevant content to be made available in the form of readable documents.

6. CIL funds available and how to respond

TD reported that £709,756 of Wolvercote neighbourhood CIL currently remained available, after the CIL grants already approved from Round 9 had been taken account of. He had been told by the City Council that this sum included the fourth and final tranche from Oxford North phase 1. Further CIL was not expected from that source in the near future. Other contributions to CIL would be much smaller, so it was agreed £709,756 should be considered the total available, for the time being. AL asked whether the ca £150k required for the Mill kitchen project had been taken account of in this figure, and TD assured the committee that it had (see Item 7.1 below). TD also clarified that the figure took account of funding required for refurbishment of the Baptist Church Hall, as this had been agreed subject to conditions. JH enquired whether there is a time limit on expenditure of the CIL available. PB replied that he believed there was not: e.g. the CIL agreement for Oxford North between City Council and developers, when referring to

WNF's spending of the neighbourhood portion of CIL, made no mention of a timescale.

It was noted that no new CIL round had been advertised for Autumn 2026, following the SC's decision to pause these (Item 4 of the Minutes of 29 April, 2026), to allow time for development of some potentially large applications, believed to be in preparation (e.g. see Item 7). These could provide more substantial improvements to community infrastructure than was possible with the usual smaller grants. It was agreed to give greater emphasis in future to encouraging applicants to also seek funding from other sources, to supplement any CIL funding received. This would apply especially to unusually large grants. The committee acknowledged, however, that obtaining such matching funding would be more difficult for some projects than for others. TD agreed to draft a revision of the application guidelines accordingly, in consultation with EC and CD. It was agreed that, during the pause, it remained the case that CIL applications could be made at any time, but at present the SC could not commit to a timeline for decision-making on them. See also Item 11.

Action: TD

7. Updates on major CIL applications

7.1 Wolvercote Mill kitchen extension

The project was waiting for planning permission. Although CIL funding had been approved already by the SC, it could not be progressed by the City Council until planning permission had been obtained.

7.2 Cutteslowe Greenhouse Phase 2

PB had requested a site visit, but this had not yet been arranged. TD highlighted the need to know how the Phase 1 funding of £50k had been spent, before a Phase 2 application could be considered. It was noted that the Greenhouse was now active in holding a series of Saturday events at which produce grown on-site was being sold: evidence that at least some of their building was now performing as a functioning greenhouse. There remained no sign yet of a Phase 2 application in preparation.

7.3 FMD Pavilion

It was reported that Jim Ruddick of Summertown Stars had been active recently in raising awareness of the need for a better pavilion, in the community around Five Mile Drive especially. It was agreed that his presentation at the recent WNF Summer Open Meeting on 4 June (see Item 9) had contributed helpfully to this. It was understood however that an application was not yet imminent. There was regret that the substantial OUP Pavilion, which is nearby, could not help in meeting the need on the recreation ground, as had been suggested in the past. SG said he doubted that OUP was planning anything immediate for their pavilion. DS noted it might be relevant that he had heard the Jordan Hill lease runs out in 2029.

PB reported that Summertown Stars were hoping to arrange with the City Council for a community asset transfer to them of the FMD recreation ground, with a 99-year lease.

7.4 WYPC Further Developments

Application 9.03 (WYPC multi-sport pitch and security fence) and possible future applications: AL had discussed this with Val Tate. He expressed the view that the current lease does not provide sufficient security of tenure for the site to receive a large CIL grant at present, meaning the condition on this grant could not be met. AL planned to discuss this with County Surveyors, with the aim of helping WYPC achieve a lease more consistent with their ambitions.

Action: AL

7.5 Other major CIL applications in preparation

(a) Wolvercote Village Hall improvements: PB had invited John Bleach to assist with this but had not yet received a response. He would pursue it further with JB.

Action: PB

(b) Scout Hut Mere Road: CD alerted the committee to a bid being considered for development of the Scout and Guide Hut in Mere Road. He had asked for photographs to illustrate what is being proposed. It was agreed that, should this turn out to be a major bid, a Project Working Group would be needed.

8. WNF response to local public consultations

8.1 EXOq

This proposal, for a new 'innovation district' on both sides of Frieze Way, was now a formal planning application to Cherwell District Council. The deadline for comments was 23/7/26. It was agreed that it would affect the WNF area through its removal of the last significant green space between Oxford and Kidlington, and through its impact on local roads, noise pollution, and possible flooding. PB noted the application failed to indicate what 'exceptional circumstances' justified the development being located within the Green Belt. It was agreed that WNF should respond. KK would host PB, EC and CD at her home at 10.30am on 7/7/26 to discuss how to respond. A draft would then be shared with the SC. PB would also share by email the 'Non-Technical Summary' of the EXOq planning application.

Action: KK, CD, EC, PB

8.2 Land West of Oxford Road (formerly the golf course)

The land is adjacent to Jordan Hill, Linkside Ave and Lakeside. PB and RLW had attended public exhibitions of outline ideas for the site, put forward by the developer Oxford University Development (OUD). TD noted that up to 800 homes were planned to be built on the golf course, whereas the Local Plan currently mentioned 720 homes. JH noted that some were planned to be 4 storey. Although the plan appeared to be at an early stage and, as presented publicly, lacked detail, it was considered possibly worth WNF responding to. An important consideration for some WNF residents would be the nature of the link (if any) between the site and Lakeside, Linkside Ave or Jordan Hill. There was a wish for the many trees to be retained, where appropriate: it was unclear which trees would be saved, possibly just native trees. In the documentation there were only four trees circled (meaning Save). PB, TD, JH and DS would consider whether and how WNF should respond.

Action: PB,TD,JH,DS

8.3 Cutteslowe CPZ

County Council had invited public comments by 24/7/26 on the Cutteslowe Controlled Parking Zone, raising the question of whether WNF should respond. PB noted it was not obvious that a WNF response would be helpful: opinions on CPZ issues tended to vary from road-to-road. SG explained that part of the reason for the survey might be to obtain opinions from residents of David Walter Close, for example, that was not included in the current CPZ. It was not known whether Jordan Hill was included. SG was not sure whether Jordan Hill residents had been consulted. DS noted that originally the Cutteslowe CPZ was not especially popular. It was agreed that DS would consult Andrew Gant (County Councillor) to seek clarification of the purpose of the present CPZ consultation, and would decide whether to recommend WNF responds.

Action: DS

8.4 Other public consultations

A full list of current public consultations had been circulated. In addition to those in Items 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3, there were two planning applications currently with open consultations: it was agreed WNF would not respond to either of them.

9. Review of WNF Summer Open Meeting 4 June

Cutteslowe Community Centre had been booked from 7pm to 10pm. There had been strong attendance (57 not counting WI members). Thanks were due to the WI members who served refreshments: PB would contact them to convey thanks. Invited talks on the FMD pavilion ambition (by Jim Ruddick) and the 'Cow-Op' project (by Rebecca Cariad) had been successful and interesting to the audience. From the committee, PB especially wanted to thank EC for her presentation on CIL, KK for recording details of attendees as they arrived, DS for creating the movie shown in the interval, and SB for her helpful notes capturing discussions at the meeting. It was agreed these should be made public on the website.

It was recognized there was one disadvantage to the good attendance level: the room had felt full, and moving around in the interval had been less easy than usual. This had reduced the ease with which WI could serve refreshments at the back of the hall, and had reduced the donations they received. It was agreed that consideration should be given in future to only using larger venues for WNF public meetings. However, it was also recognized that posed a problem: the shortage of larger venues on the east side of the WNF area. It was agreed that the contribution of the WI was critical to the success of WNF meetings, and meeting their needs was an important consideration. PB had already invited the WI to provide the refreshments at the WNF AGM at WVH in November.

10. Schedule of meetings for Autumn 2026

A suggested schedule of meeting dates had been circulated. After discussion, the following schedule of meetings was agreed.

SC meetings on: Wednesday 16 September; Wednesday 7 October (if needed); Wednesday 4 November (if needed); Wednesday 9 December. The Open Meeting and AGM would be held on Tuesday 24 November at Wolvercote Village Hall.

11. Any other business

(a) Revision of CIL guidance and application form(s) It was agreed that guidance for CIL applicants, and the application form, needed revising for several reasons: (1) recent introduction of the new policy that distinguishes between applications under or over £50k; (2) the agreed need to ask, at application stage, for assurance that any proposed changes to buildings or other assets have already received all permissions required (e.g. from the property owner or the Local Planning Authority); (3) the agreed need to ask for an explanation, at application stage, of how any resources funded by CIL would remain available to the community if the planned project failed; (4) the agreed need to encourage applicants to seek matched funding. TD agreed to consider how to revise the guidance and form, in collaboration with EC and CD (see also Item 6), and would bring back suggestions to the SC.

Action: TD, EC and CD

(b) ONPA online meeting on 16 May PB reported on the recent online meeting of Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Plans Alliance (ONPA). It had been focused on changes being made to the National Planning Policy Framework, especially the issue of allocating sites for development in Neighbourhood Plans. This has little relevance to the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan, as there is so little remaining space in the WNF area that is not already allocated for development in the Oxford City Local Plan. PB had been surprised by the extent of anti-Oxford City sentiment expressed at the meeting, apparently because so much of the need to find development sites is driven by the need to help meet 'Oxford's unmet housing need'.

(c) County Hall meeting on 6 July PB had been invited to an Oxfordshire County Council meeting for stakeholders, to discuss the County's development of a master plan for Oxford Parkway and the A4165. PB would attend the meeting and report back.

Action: PB

(d) ONPA online meeting on 21 July The next online ONPA meeting was scheduled for 21 July, featuring a talk by the Chair of the Oxford Growth Commission. It was agreed PB and EC would represent WNF and would report back.

Action: PB,EC

(e) Editable version of the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan It was agreed to progress production of an editable version of the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan, suitable for production of multiple hard copies, as had been agreed several months ago. In this, PB would be assisted by TD and EC, as previously agreed.

Action: PB,TD,EC

12. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 16 September 2026: AL offered to host this at 102 Godstow Road.

SB/PB