



WNF Steering Committee

Minutes of a meeting held at 7.30pm on 16 September 2026, at 102 Godstow Rd,
Wolvercote

Present: Paul Buckley (Chair), Tony Dale (Vice-Chair), Richard Lawrence-Wilson (Treasurer), Mary Brown, Chris Dawkins, Judith Haverty, Andrew Leadbitter, David Stone, Cllr Andrew Gant and Sandra Bailey (by invitation as minute-taker)

1. Apologies and welcome

Apologies for absence were received from Elaine Chaston, Katherine Kaye and Cllr Steve Goddard. Paul Buckley welcomed everyone and thanked Andrew Leadbitter for hosting.

2. Declarations of interest

There were none.

3. Minutes of the meeting on 1 July 2026

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

4. Matters arising from the minutes

4.1 Item 8.1 : EXOq: It had been agreed by email to object to the planning application for the EXOq development. A response from WNF to the public consultation on EXOq had been agreed by email and submitted to Cherwell District Council.

4.2 Item 8.3 : Cutteslowe CPZ consultation: There was agreement with DS's assessment that a response from WNF was not required.

4.3 Item 11 (c) : County Hall meeting on 6 July: PB had represented WNF at this meeting of stakeholders, to give opinions to Highways officers on further development of the Oxford Parkway site and the A4165 (Banbury Rd). He had circulated a report to the committee.

4.4 Item 11 (d) : ONPA Meeting 21 July: Neither PB nor EC had managed to attend, but Oxford Neighbourhood Plans Alliance had provided notes on their online meeting, which had been circulated to the committee. The Chair of the Oxford Growth Commission had reported on his work and his report soon to be submitted to the government. One area identified for growth was north of Oxford Parkway. There would be a Greater Oxford Development Corporation (already announced by government) to facilitate development of potential sites.

4.5 Item 11 (e) : Neighbourhood Plan document PB reported that an editable version was now available, and he thanked TD and EC for their help in achieving this.

5. Updates on applications to CIL Round 9 Spring 2026

Application 9.06 (Wolvercote Tree Group noticeboard) TD reported that the Tree Group now proposed to find from its own funds the matching money the OPT would not provide, so that it could use the CIL money for the notice board as originally designed.

Applications 9.08 (Cutteslowe Community Centre solar panels and battery) TD reported that necessary permissions from the City Council, needed to progress this, were still outstanding.

Application 9.09 (Wolvercomets) TD reported that the applicants were still not in a position to meet the WNF's condition and receive the CIL funding.

Application 9.11 (Baptist Church Hall renovations) AL reported that he had been assisting Sally Croft in relation to the £53,000 application. The Deacons had not yet agreed that CIL monies allocated to this would be returnable to the community should the church no longer be needed and the building sold. Hence condition (2) set by WNF in approving the CIL application could still not be met (see minutes of the meeting on 29 April 2026). AL said that, in view of this, SC was considering modifying the CIL application to ask for a smaller sum, adequate to meet the primary needs of ensuring the church rooms are usable by Dandelions and the Monday Lunch Club, and as a voting station. She and AL had agreed that this would require only enough CIL money to cover an overhaul and a new window. David Pendry had provided a report giving a bill of works for this, costed by a quantity surveyor, indicating that both these items could be provided for £9,270 inc VAT. AL advised the committee that SC would be submitting a revised application along these lines. After discussion, the committee agreed it would not impose its original condition (2) on its approval of such a smaller sum, as the community would benefit sufficiently from the fabric of the building being usable for at least a few more years, to justify the amount of CIL required.

Application 9.19 (Summertown Arts Centre) TD reported that the application had now been forwarded to the Council.

6. CIL planning: funding round next steps and communications

It was agreed that a decision was needed on when to return to periodic announcements of CIL rounds: inviting bids, consulting residents on them, and decision-making on a defined time-table. There was agreement on the desirability of doing so soon, to resume enabling community groups to benefit from relatively small sums of CIL, that can make a big difference to them. However, it was also agreed that WNF strategy was to ensure a substantial portion of the CIL available was retained, to enable the possibility of providing significant support for a few much larger community projects, which would provide longer lasting benefit to the Wolvercote community. Several such project proposals were known to be in development.

After discussion, it was agreed to launch another CIL Round in Spring 2027 but this time, consistent with the agreed strategy, with constraints on the funding of minor applications (less than £50k). Several possible forms of constraint were discussed: setting a low cap (e.g. £5k) on the size of bids considered, or setting a cap on total CIL expenditure on minor projects – several figures were suggested for the cap: £100k and £200k. It was agreed that the details, including the deadline date and other key dates, would be decided at a later meeting, but before 24 November, so that CIL Round 10 could be announced at the AGM. In the meantime, it remained the case that CIL

applications could be made at any time. It was agreed that minor applications would be considered when it was convenient to do so, especially when there were sufficient of them to launch a viable public consultation exercise for them. PB reported that there was one application (for new heating at the scout hut in Mere Road) already waiting to be considered. It was agreed that major applications (more than £50k) would continue to be considered on an individual basis, with support from a Project Working Group of committee members and possibly others.

TD reported that figures obtained recently from the City Council suggested that approximately £700k would remain available in the WNF CIL fund, after all approved Round 9 CIL payments had been made. PB noted that the City Council had received notification that work had commenced recently on four more Oxford North sites (Plots A, B and C and the multi-storey car park. This suggested that further CIL would become available from Oxford North, but the timescale was not known.

7. Updates on major CIL applications

7.1 Wolvercote Mill kitchen extension

Although approved, this CIL grant had not yet been paid, because Planning Permission had not yet been received. Advice received from WM was that the application would be submitted soon.

7.2 Cutteslowe Greenhouse Phase 2

It was reported that the CG board had said they were not yet ready to submit a Phase 2 application. DS and PB had visited the Greenhouse on 24 July and had been shown several significant building improvements that had been achieved with the Phase 1 CIL grant. The CG board had also submitted a document providing information about these: it had been circulated to the committee. They had indicated that they would be needing funding for the outside area, entrance and bike stands. However, there was a possibility of finding a commercial sponsor.

7.3 FMD Pavilion

RLW and PB reported that Jim Ruddick (Chair of Summertown Stars) had been active over the summer developing community engagement in FMD and neighbouring streets, with social events based at the existing pavilion. These have been popular and demonstrated significant community interest in the potential of a new, improved, pavilion. JR had told local people that the Stars are hoping to obtain a 99 year lease from the City Council on the FMD recreation ground. Work would then begin on developing plans to replace the current pavilion. Since that looked certain to lead in due course to a CIL application from the Stars for more than £50k, a WNF Project Working Group would be needed. RLW is a close neighbour of the site, PB also lives nearby and KK had previously expressed interest (see minutes of 6 May, 2026). It was agreed membership of the PWG would be RLW, PB and KK (to be confirmed with KK).

7.4 WYPC Further Developments

Application 9.03 (WYPC multi-sport pitch and security fence) and possible future applications: AL reported that he, Andrew Fenton and Val Tate were about to meet to discuss the latest version of the draft of a new lease. VT has concern about the proposed break clause, which the County Council says could be invoked to meet needs relating to educational / school provision. She will be raising this with the Council. AL expressed his view that the lease as currently proposed by OCC is still not acceptable to meet condition (1) applied to the approved grant of £67,560 (see minutes of 29 April, 2026). It was agreed to defer a decision until the next meeting, when it was hoped further information on a new lease agreed with the Council would be available.

7.5 Wolvercote Village Hall improvements

PB reported that John Bleach had agreed to advise the SC in relation to any CIL application relating to proposed changes to the Village Hall building. PB also reported that EC had told him the Village Hall Committee were not yet ready to submit an application, as there was not yet agreement about what was needed. EC had also asked whether the WNF SC would consider a solar panel bid separately from changes to the building. It was agreed this approach would be acceptable to the committee, provided neither application affected the other. It was agreed that a need for a Project Working Group was likely, but not yet definite. EC would be asked to provide liaison with the WVH committee and to alert the WNF committee when a PWG was needed. CD and KK had previously offered to help with a PWG if/when needed.

7.6 Other major CIL applications in preparation

There were none known of at present.

8. WNF response to local public consultations

8.1 Land behind 9 Elsfield Way

A planning application had been submitted for construction of a two-storey block of four flats on land behind 9 Elsfield Way, in what was previously the northern portion of its back garden. It would be a 'no car' development with no car parking provided. Pedestrian access would be through the car park of the flats at 40 Harefields. MB and PB believed this would amount to over-development in such a confined a space. The flats would be a blight on several neighbouring properties, in terms of overlooking and some removal of privacy. Complaints had already been posted by neighbours at 7 Elsfield Way, the flats at 40 Harefields close to and facing the proposed flats, and other even numbers in Harefields, which back onto the plot. MB and PB proposed that WNF should object to planning permission being granted. After discussion this was agreed. An objection would be drafted for consideration by the committee.

Action: MB and PB

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

On 24th September from 3pm-7pm, at the Bowls Pavilion in Cutteslowe Park, there would be a public exhibition by the developers OUD, to accompany their 'Stage 2' public consultation, prior to their submitting an Outline Planning Application for the site. Committee members were encouraged to attend if possible, to examine the

proposals, as there might be features on which the committee would wish to submit comments to the developers before the next meeting.

8.3 Other public consultations

MB and PB drew the committee's attention to the current planning application for expansion upwards of 80 Sunderland Avenue and conversion of it to an HMO with 11 bedrooms. They both continued to believe this proposal was for over-development at that location. However, WNF had objected previously to similar plans for that site, but nevertheless they had been approved by the Council. The current proposal was actually for a smaller HMO than had already received permission, so it was agreed not to object this time.

PB had circulated a list of all current public consultations. It was agreed that no other responses from WNF were needed at the present time.

9. Forward Planning, including AGM on 24 November

The AGM and associated Open Meeting had been agreed previously to be on Tuesday 24 November at Wolvercote Village Hall, starting at 7.30pm. WVH had been booked for the evening. PB believed Wolvercote W.I. would again provide refreshments, but he was currently waiting for confirmation. CD invited PB to check with his wife Jayne (W.I. Treasurer) if in doubt. It was agreed to invite one or two visiting speakers for after the refreshment break. Suggestions/topics agreed were Val Tate (on Wolvercote Hub), and Nick Malden (on the Community Orchard). Their slots would be 15 minutes maximum including Q&A. The aim would be to end the meeting by 9.15. AL would invite Val Tate, TD would invite Nick Malden.

Actions: AL,TD

Papers needed for posting on the website in advance of the meeting were: the Annual Report for 2025/6 (PB would produce this), and the Treasurer's Report and Accounts for 2025/6 (RLW would produce this). Publicity was required, at least two weeks in advance (Para 5.2 of the WNF Constitution). It was agreed to follow recent practice and include: (1) a MailChimp emailing to all ca 600 on the list of agreed recipients (which would be updated with new email addresses provided at the Summer Open Meeting); (2) 40 posters for local noticeboards and other sites; (3) leaflets for house-to-house delivery. The default would be 1500 leaflets, distributed as previously by DS, JH, PB, CD and TD. However, leaflet delivery to *all* households was preferred, if practical. JH agreed to investigate the practicalities, number of leaflets required, and cost of employing Royal Mail for delivery to the complete WNF area. TD and PB would explore with Louise Franklin whether she could provide the MailChimp mailing, and design the poster and leaflet, as she had previously.

Actions: PB,RLW,TD,JH

PB highlighted that the terms of several committee members would expire at the AGM: MB, KK, DS and RLW (currently Treasurer). Also TD (currently Vice-Chair) had indicated his intention to retire. RLW indicated he would stand for re-election as Treasurer, and MB and DS indicated they would stand again for re-election to the committee. In addition AL indicated that he would stand for election to the committee. PB would check with KK her

intentions. It was clear that without further candidates this would leave several vacancies: Vice-Chair, Secretary and possibly a committee place. It was agreed desirable to recruit some younger volunteers, either to stand for election or to be co-opted.

Actions: PB

10. 'Wolvercote Connected'

PB had attended a meeting of representatives of local groups at Wolvercote Mill on 7 September, where the Mill committee had sought ideas on how the Mill should develop. A strong consensus to emerge from the meeting had been that Wolvercote needs a mechanism for community groups to communicate with each other, following the example of Cutteslowe Community Partnership (which holds meetings every two months). It was agreed that WNF SC should take part in this, as it promised to be an effective means of hearing community views on issues where WNF acts on behalf of the community (spending of CIL, and influencing planning). Val Tate had since taken the initiative on this, and had been consulting on the list of groups to invite: 'Wolvercote Connected' was her suggested name for the new group. PB would indicate to her the wish of WNF SC to be included.

Action: PB

11. Any other business

PB, AL and DS had visited Oxford North on 5 August at the invitation of Simon Ruck (Managing Director), and had been given a guided tour of the Red Hall. Of particular potential WNF interest was the Community Room which has two large digital screens and 100 seats and is available to hire. The cost for day or evening hire would be in the multiple £100s. However, Mr Ruck had suggested ON might consider concessions for local groups and charities. He also indicated that ON's search for tenants for their buildings had now widened beyond life sciences: e.g. one future building was now planned to provide padel courts.

12. Date of next meeting

It was agreed the committee would meet next on Wednesday 7 October, 2026, at 7.30pm. The committee gratefully accepted AL's offer to host this: so the venue would be 102 Godstow Road again.

SB/PB