Milton-under-Wychwood Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 19th November 2025

at Milton-under-Wychwood Village Hall

Present: Cllr Graham Smith, Chairman
Cllr Alan Allday
Cllr Nick Gibson
Cllr John Pratt
Cllr Peter Rawlins
Cllr Pat Ward
Vanessa Oliveri, Parish Clerk
Chris Trotman, RFO
County Cllr Liz Leffman
3 members of the public

25/180 Apologies for Absence: were received from Cllr Blackman, Cllr Haine and District Cllr A Clements.

25/181 Declaration of Interests: None.

25/182 Minutes of the 15th October 2025: Cllr Rawlins proposed to approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15th October 2025. Cllr Allday seconded the proposal. All were in favour of the proposal.

25/183 Matters arising from the October meeting: None.

25/184 Public session for all items related to this Agenda: None.

25/185 Co-option of a Parish Councillor – One application had been received for Co-option of a Parish Councillor from Nicholas Gibson. Cllr Rawlins proposed to Co-opt Nicholas Gibson as Parish Councillor. Cllr Allday seconded the proposal. All were in favour of the proposal. Nicholas Gibson signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the Parish Councillors at the meeting.

25/186 To receive the following reports:

1. **Chairman's report –** There were no items to report as all items are on the agenda.
2. **District Councillor's report –** Not present at the meeting and no report received.
3. **County Councillor's report –**
    - SEND report – OCC had just received the outcome of the latest SEND inspections and the report showed it had very much improved from the previous year and was well on track to get a good OFSTED report next time.
    - District Cllr A Clements will be attending the forthcoming PC meetings. The Clerk was to let him know that there was no PC meeting in December.
    - Local Government Re-organisation – OCC had held a Cabinet meeting last week where OCC had voted for a Single Unitary Council. A general committee would discuss the overall specific issues. Town Council's would be asked if they would take on aspects such as leisure. This will be discussed further at the next County Council either later this month or December.
    - Cotswold Railway Line – Plans were being discussed to make improvements to the Cotswold Railway Line including Kingham, Charlbury and Hanborough.

25/187 Planning (PW/JH)

1. 25/02145/FUL Dashwood House, Shipton Road, MUW
   Proposed alterations and enlargement of existing building including extension at rear ground floor for kitchen/dining area for first and second floor flat (part retrospective).

COMMENT: – Cllr Rawlins proposed to object on the basis that no further planning permission should be granted until they have returned the ground floor units to commercial premises and they are being advertised for tenants at a rate consistent with the local market? All were in favour of the proposal.

2. Local Plan 2043 – Spatial Options Consultation – WODC were carrying out a Spatial Options consultation, comments to be received by 22.12.2025. WODC were holding an exhibition at the Village Hall, Milton-under-Wychwood to show the public the plans displaying the spatial areas for proposed development by 2043. The PC agreed to put a response in now rather than wait. Cllr Pratt agreed to work with John Brian on compiling a response to the consultation. All Parish Councillors were in favour of this approach.
3. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – The PC noted the CIL charging schedule update.

25/188 Finance

1. RFO report- The PC received and unanimously approved the RFO report for October 2025.
2. October Summary – Cllr Rawlins proposed to approve the October summary. Cllr Allday seconded the proposal. All in favour.
3. Finance Committee minutes of 11th November 2025 – Cllr Pratt proposed to approve the Finance Committee minutes of 11th November 2025. Cllr Smith seconded the proposal. All were in favour of the proposal.
4. Draft 2026/27 budget and three-year plan – The PC received the draft 2026/27 budget and three-year plan which included an increase to the cemetery charges. Cllr P Rawlins proposed to approve the draft 2026/27 budget and three-year plan. Cllr Pratt seconded the proposal. All were in favour of the proposal.
5. Precept amount for 2026/27 – The PC discussed to keep the annual carry forward amount at the level recommended by NALC and the auditor, and to avoid the PC budgeting to incur a significant annual deficit over the next few years. The Finance Committee recommended increasing the precept from £52K in 2025/6 to £56K in 2026/7. This amounts to just under an 8% increase. The PC noted that the precept in 2023/4 was £53K, it was reduced to £52K in 2024/5 to recognise the cost of living challenges people were facing. The PC then held it at £52K for 2025/6, again to recognise cost of living challenges.

   Cllr Rawlins proposed the precept amount for 2026/27 to be £56,000.00. Cllr Allday seconded the proposal. A unanimous vote was taken of all in favour of the proposal.
6. The appointment of an Internal Auditor for 2025/26 – The Clerk had contacted Jan Olds, Internal Auditor and had obtained a quotation and a letter of appointment. The PC unanimously approved the quotation of £315.00 to undertake the annual internal audit and all were in favour to appoint Jane Olds as the Internal Auditor for 2025/26.
7. Tenders for the carpark resurfacing adjacent the play area - The receive Finance Committee had met at 6.30pm prior to the PC meeting to go through the tenders received for resurfacing the car park adjacent to the play area. The Finance Committee recommended to investigate further into the lowest quotation received. Cllr Allday agreed to carry out the information required and to report back to the Finance Committee before a final decision was to be agreed. When the PC had agreed on a preferred contractor a meeting was to be set up with Bentley and the appointed contractor to go through the work required.

25/189 Section 137 grant applications

a. To consider a Section 137 grant application received from BODS/Saplings – Cllr Smith was to ask for more financial information and copies of bank statements before the PC can make a decision. This was to be included on the January 2026 PC agenda for consideration.

b. To consider a Section 137 grant application received from West Oxfordshire Community Transport – Cllr Smith agreed to ask for further information as the PC agreed that they would

not contribute towards covering deficit costs but would contribute towards a project. This was to be included on the January 2026 PC agenda for consideration.

25/190 Village green

a. Football pitch improvement update (GS) – Cllr Smith met with Jim Littlewood to discuss next steps. Jim needs to get MUW FC accredited with the Oxfordshire FA then Cllr Smith can make progress with applying for a grant from the Football Foundation and then apply for S106 money to cover the cost of pitch improvements.
b. Car park re-surfacing update (GS) – An advert had been placed in the Witney gazette requesting tenders. This has been discussed under Item 25/188 – 7. The PC unanimously agreed that this would need to include submission of a lottery fund grant application and contact with potential sources of additional funds.
c. Play equipment safety checks and remediation (PR/GS) – Playdale have carried out the repairs funded by S106 money and WODC have been informed of the spend and sent photos of the work in progress.
   Cllr Smith agreed to circulate the latest ROSPA inspection report to Parish Councillors. The Councillors agreed to meet at the recreation park to discuss the works required and to work a plan to repair the equipment required.
   Cllr Smith will circulate a proposed schedule following the November PC meeting to accommodate the new councillor.
d. Update on visit to the Oxford History Centre (GS) – Cllr Smith has sent a draft note setting out the newly discovered information about the Village Green committee and its work to Simon Randall for review and is awaiting a date from Simon to meet to discuss how best to approach the Charity commissioners.

25/191 Website quotations

The PC received three quotations to provide a website for the Parish Council and gov.uk email Addresses. Cllr Gibson agreed to work with the Clerk to define the best quotation for the PC.

25/192 Biodiversity plan (GS/PW)

a. Update on fencing of ponds in Sarah's Meadow – The Chairman reported that the fencing around the three ponds have been erected. Cllr Smith agreed to notify TOE that the work was now complete and let them know the total amount for the work carried out.
b. Update on provision of a management plan – Imogen Parker from Wild Oxfordshire has drafted most sections of the plan and once they are all received it will be circulated for information and to elicit help from people prepared to volunteer to help implement the plan. The PC agreed the hedges included in the management plan were to be trimmed and not to be cut heavily back.

25/193 Tree survey actions on priorities (RB) - update on eliciting bids to carry out highest priority tree surgery – Cllr Blackman has requested bids from tree surgeons, some received, awaiting remainder so that we have three quotes. This was to be an item for the January 2026 PC agenda.

25/194 OCC Highways Consultation (Upper Milton) The PC noted the proposed 20mph speed limit on the road through Upper Milton southwards by approximately 460 metres, replacing the length of 60mph national speed limit in the process.

25/195 Speed Reduction Measures – The PC discussed speed reduction measures in the village – Cllr Allday has obtained information about a range of devices designed to encourage motorists not to speed and had circulated the information prior to the meeting. Cllr Smith has recorded the PC's interest in the Police and Crime Commissioners Community Fund which hopefully can be taken forward before the Commissioners are dispensed with by Government!

25/196 Temporary Traffic Regulation Notice – The PC received and noted a temporary traffic regulation notice on road through Upper Milton to facilitate installation of a new electrical supply cable starting on 26.1.2026. The anticipated completion date is 30.1.2025.

25/197 British Heart Foundation 65th Anniversary Living Memory Benches – The PC discussed the offer of the provision of a 65th Anniversary Living Memory Bench from the British Heart Foundation. Cllr Smith to ask if they would provide future maintenance costs to the wooden bench and to see if they have a specific site in mind.

25/198 Trees overhanging from the cemetery into a neighbouring garden – Cllr Rawlins agreed to speak to the lady who had brought this matter to the attention of the PC. Cllr Smith and Cllr Rawlins agreed to trim the overhanging branches.

25/199 Public session for non-Agenda items – One member of the public was pleased that District Cllr Clements was representing the village especially with WODC's Local Plan going forward.

25/200 AOB

- Trees for the school have been approved and were due to be delivered at the end of November.
- The under 11's girls football team have requested the use of the tennis court area in the winter months? The PC agreed to this request if no one else was using the tennis courts.
- Cllr Smith to ask Bruern Farms for a Christmas tree.
- Cllr Allday is arranging the Christmas Carols around the tree on Christmas Eve this year.
- Cllr Allday will keep the PC updated on Cllr Haines recovery. The Chairman agreed to send a get-well card to Cllr Haine.
- OALC confirmed the annual library grant can come out of Sec 137 payments.

25/201 Date of Next Meeting: 21st January 2026

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.