Milton-under-Wychwood Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 16th July 2025

at Milton-under-Wychwood Village Hall

Present: Cllr Graham Smith, Chairman
Cllr Rod Blackman
Cllr Jeff Haine
Cllr John Pratt
Cllr Peter Rawlins
Cllr Pat Ward
Vanessa Oliveri, Parish Clerk
Chris Trotman, RFO
County Cllr Liz Leffman
4 members of the public

25/116 Apologies for Absence: were received from District Cllr Adam Clements. The Council noted that Glynn Allcock had stepped down from being a Parish Councillor. On behalf of the people of Milton-under-Wychwood the Council expressed their regret that Glynn is standing down and extended their grateful thanks to him for all he had done whilst being on the Parish Council; his efforts have helped make Milton a better place to live.

25/117 Declaration of Interests: Cllr P Rawlins declared an interest in item theS137 item MUW Community Orchard Section grant application and took no part in the decision made.

25/118 Minutes of the 18th June 2025: Cllr J Haine proposed to approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 18th June 2025. Cllr P Rawlins seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all in favour.

25/119 Matters arising from the June meeting: None.

25/120 Public session for all items related to this Agenda: None.

25/121 To receive the following reports:

1. **Chairman's report –** Cllr G Smith reported that he and Cllr P Rawlins had attended a site meeting with the owner of Homestead to hear the outline of a possible development.
2. **District Councillor's report –** Not present and no report.
3. **County Councillor's report -**
    - A consultation on part night lighting is under way.
    - A consultation on proposed congestion charges in Oxford is also in train. This is to mitigate the impact of congestion on buses while the Botley Road bridge repairs continue. The proposal is for £5.00 per journey between the hours of 0700 and 1900. 25 passes per person per year will be available to residents of Oxfordshire; each pass will cover the £5 charge. OCC will review the consultation at the end of August/early September 2025 and is planning to implement the charge by the end of October 2025.
    - The Botley Road will be closed for another year due to Network Rail coming across problems with services. The repairs are now due to be completed in October 2026.
    - A survey of air quality in Oxford has indicated that it has already improved as a result of measures taken by OCC.
    - Oxfordshire Growth Commission, as part of a wider Government initiative, is looking at how they can grow the local economy through improved transport and connectivity in the county, and how housing needs to support that growth can best be met.
    - The Local Plan 2041 – A consultation on housing allocations in WODC is due in October 2025.

- Cllr P Ward asked about progress on extending the 20mph speed limit in Upper Milton. Consultation is scheduled for October and action will happen after that.
- Cllr G Smith asked about progress with unitary authority proposals given that there are three different proposals being considered and WODC had circulated theirs for consultation. The three proposals (comprising one, two and three unitary authorities respectively) need to be submitted to the Government by 28 November. The Government will then consider those proposals alongside proposals from multiple other areas of the country. That consideration will be complicated by the Fair Funding Review which is also under way and could have a significant impact on the money each authority receives from government and therefore on the amount of council tax households will be asked to pay.

25/122 Planning (PW/PR/JH)

1. Draft Local Plan consultation update (JP) – A draft response had been circulated by JP prior to the meeting. Cllr J Pratt proposed to submit the document as the Parish Council's response to WODC's draft Local Plan consultation. Cllr J Haine seconded the proposal. A vote was taken, all were in favour.
2. No planning applications had been received for consideration.

25/123 Review of policies: -

1. The PC reviewed the Freedom of Information policy. Cllr P Rawlins proposed and Cllr J Haine seconded approval of the policy. All were in favour.
2. The PC reviewed the Internal Financial Controls Statement. . Cllr J Pratt proposed and Cllr P Rawlins seconded approval of the policy. All were in favour.
3. The PC reviewed the PC's Privacy Policy. Cllr P Rawlins proposed and Cllr J Haine seconded approval of the policy. All were in favour.
4. The PC reviewed the PC's Complaint Procedure. Cllr P Rawlins proposed and Cllr J Haine seconded approval of the policy. All were in favour.

25/124 RFO report (CT) –

1. RFO report- Cllr J Pratt proposed to approve the RFO report and Cllr R Blackman seconded the proposal. The PC unanimously approved it.
2. June Summary – Cllr P Ward proposed to approve the June Summary and Cllr J Pratt seconded the proposal. The PC unanimously approved it.
3. Q1 Statement – Cllr J Haine proposed to approve Q1 statement and Cllr P Rawlins seconded the proposal. The PC unanimously approved it.
4. Cllr P Rawlins proposed to approve the invoices for immediate payment: - HMRC, HSBC, Salaries, invoices that would incur late payment penalties, emergency items to allow the PC to continue to function and defibrillator items. Cllr J Haine seconded the proposal. The PC unanimously approved it.
5. Asset Register – Cllr J Pratt proposed to approve the asset register and Cllr R Blackman seconded the proposal. The PC unanimously approved it.

25/125 Fincom meeting report (JP)

1. The PC reviewed the Finance Committee minutes dated 3rd July 2025. Cllr P Rawlins proposed and Cllr J Haine seconded acceptance of the minutes. All were in favour.
2. Recommendations arising from the Finance Committee meeting were covered in the RFO report.

25/126 Village green

1. Football pitch improvement update (GS)- Glynn Allcock was in the process of completing an application form to get a grant from the Football Foundation (FF), which application required the PC to have service level agreements (SLAs) with the adult and junior teams. Representatives of those teams have some questions about the SLAs which need answering, and expressed their reluctance to contribute towards the cost of maintaining the pitches. In

the meantime, the FF has suspended the application after learning about the delay to SLA completion and Glynn stepping down from the PC. Cllr G Smith has taken on the application process and will liaise with representatives of the two teams. Subject to the agreement of the PC the question of financial contributions from the teams will be set aside and the focus will be on getting the grant (and S106 funding for the PC) agreed. The PC agreed with the proposed approach

2. Car park re-surfacing update (GS) – GS has chased Becky from Cotswold National Landscape to see if our proposal for funding is under consideration. In the meantime, the Clerk will start the process of applying for monies from the Lottery Fund.
3. Play equipment safety checks and remediation (PR/GS) – Confirmation that the order has been placed for Playdale to repair the aerial runway spring and locking cap which spend of £730.95 was agreed at the June PC meeting.
4. Proposal to submit a S106 bid for £3,765 to be used with Playdale to repair/maintain other items of play equipment. WODC Infrastructure payments team have advised that there is £3767.86 available for play equipment repair and maintenance (the balance of £29,690.20 has to be used for grass pitch provision and maintenance). GS has shared a suggested list of equipment with PR, and subject to an updated quote from Playdale will then submit the S106 application. The PC agreed with the proposed approach.

25/127 Biodiversity plan (GS/PW)

1. Update on award of a TOE grant for Sarah's Meadow – impending Management Plan visit by Wild Oxfordshire. A representative of Wild Oxfordshire visited the site on Tuesday 15th July to gather information for the production of the Management Plan. A draft of the Plan should be available at the end of the summer.

25/128 Section 137 grants –

1. The Wychwood Bowls Club had confirmed that they had been successful in obtaining a National Lottery fund for the remainder of the money required for their project. The PC unanimously approved to release the grant fund of £500 awarded to them at a previous PC meeting.
2. Life Centre – The PC received and considered a Section 137 grant application for £4,301. Cllr J Haine proposed to award £2,150.00 and Cllr R Blackman seconded the proposal. All were in favour of the proposal.
3. MUW Community Orchard – The PC received and considered a Section 137 grant application for £300. Cllr Rawlins took no part in the decision made on this grant application. Cllr P Ward proposed to award £300.00 and Cllr R Blackman seconded the proposal. All were in favour of the proposal.
4. 1st Wychwood's Scouts – The PC received and considered a Section 137 grant application for £500. Cllr J Haine proposed to approve £500.00 and Cllr Pratt seconded the proposal. All were in favour of the proposal.
5. Wild About The Wychwood's – The PC received and considered a Section 137 grant application for £1,000. Cllr J Pratt proposed to award £300.00 and Cllr P Rawlins seconded the proposal. All were in favour of the proposal. The PC will review its S137 funds towards the end of the financial year and if circumstances permit will then award an additional grant.

25/129 Insurance quotations – The PC received three insurance quotations. Cllr P Rawlins proposed to approve the Ansvar quotation, Cllr J Pratt seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with five in favour, and Cllr J Haine voted against the selection as he wanted to go through the small print first to make sure that the quotes were genuinely comparable with the quote provided by the existing insurer, Zurich. Cllr G Smith proposed to go through the information submitted with each quotation and if the Ansvar quote is not comparable in all significant respects with Zurich then will recommend that the PC accept the Zurich quotation. The PC was unanimously in favour of that proposal.

25/130 Recruitment of additional councillors – Cllr G Smith confirmed that Glynn Allcock is standing down from the Council. He will pick up the football pitch improvement work and Cllr P Rawlins has agreed to take on managing the contract for grass cutting and associated maintenance activities. A vacancy notice has been published on the PC website and the noticeboard in the village. In addition, the Clerk has done a Facebook post of the first 'recruitment ad' drafted by GS. We will place 5 or 6 more, one a week going forward.

25/131 Tree Preservation Order – The PC noted that a TPO application has been submitted to WODC to apply for TPO's on three trees in the Vicarage Field plot.

25/132 Winter Preparedness – Cllr P Rawlins agreed to check the quantity of salt in the salt bins in the village and would let the Clerk know the quantity of salt required so that an order could be placed with OCC.

25/133 Pedestrian Exit to St Judes – The PC discussed additional signs and cost for the St Judes pedestrian exit. Cllr J Haine proposed to approve the purchase two signs raising awareness of people crossing the road at the pedestrian exit to St Judes. The signs would cost £232.51 which includes the brackets for fixing the sign. Cllr P Rawlins seconded the proposal. All were in favour of the proposal. Cllr G Smith will contact OCC notifying them of this decision.

25/134 Food Van (JH) – The PC considered an enquiry received to have a food van use the car park by the recreation ground from Ali Karimi T/A Ali's Tornado Chips on Wednesdays 1600 to 2000. A copy of Public Liability cover certificate has been received and the applicant knows that there will be a cost of £27.00 per week. The PC unanimously approved this request.

25/135 Public session for non-Agenda items

- A resident raised that the QR signs were not visible on the Posts adjacent to the art project monolith stones. Cllr G Smith confirmed that Glynn Allcock has offered to construct replacement QR codes from fibreglass resin, which should make more durable replacements for the previously laser printed codes.
- A question was raised as to whether or not the PC would provide a representative to sit on the Village Hall Committee. No volunteer was forthcoming at the meeting; Cllr G Smith to contact Joanna Van de Poll

25/136 AOB.

- Cllr J Pratt noted that the Thames Water works in the village are due to be completed by 27.10.2026. He also referred to a proposed adjustment to the responsibilities of councillors for each area of the village. All accepted his proposed adjustment.
- Cllr P Ward noted that Wild Oxfordshire had approved the application to supply further hedging for the school, Sarah's Meadow and Springhill Farm subject to finance being obtained. He also advised that he had attended a Parish Transport Committee meeting.
- A wheelie bin was being left on the pavement outside of 88, High Street blocking access for pedestrians, pushchairs and mobility scooters. The Clerk is to write to the resident asking if they could put their wheelie bin on their drive.
- Glynn Allcock had stated that he would be happy to help out with repairs and other practical help even though he is no longer a councillor.
- Cllr J Haine noted that the village fete had been very successful.
- Cllr P ward raised the issue of trade vans associated with the building work on the Homestead plot being parked on The Sands just above the junction with Frog Lane. The parking causes a serious obstruction for road users, obscuring vision of oncoming vehicles in both directions. An accident happened earlier in the week involving a cyclist and a car. Cllr G Smith agreed to email the owner of the property to request that the vans be parked on site and not on the road.
- Cllr G Smith raised that the PC does not have a Deputy Chair at present. This will be an agenda item for the next PC meeting

- RFO CT advised that he had been through an HSBC fraud and financial security session and passed

25/137 Date of Next Meeting: 17th September 2025

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.