Milton-under-Wychwood Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 21st January 2026

at Milton-under-Wychwood Village Hall

Present: Cllr Graham Smith, Chair
Cllr Alan Allday
Cllr Rod Blackman
Cllr Nick Gibson
Cllr Jeff Haine
Cllr John Pratt
Cllr Peter Rawlins
Vanessa Oliveri, Parish Clerk
Chris Trotman, RFO
County Cllr Liz Leffman
District Cllr Adam Clements
9 members of the public

26/001 Apologies for Absence: were received from Cllr Pat Ward.

26/002 Declaration of Interests: Cllr Pratt declared an interest in 7.1 on the agenda and took no part in the discussion or decision to be made.

26/003 Minutes of the 19th November 2025: Cllr Pratt proposed to approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 19th November 2025. Cllr Rawlins seconded the proposal. All were in favour of the proposal.

26/004 Matters arising from the November meeting: None.

26/005 Public session for all items related to this Agenda: None.

26/006 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 –**
    - The planning application for the Homestead to which the PC had objected had been granted planning approval because WODC cannot yet demonstrate a five year supply of land. The new Local Plan will be subject to pre-submission consultation in mid-2026
    - A new CIL schedule is in place at WODC 31/01/26.
    - WODC have decided to go ahead with their elections in 2026.
3. **County Councillor's report –**
    - The Fire Service consultation had been extended to the end of January 2026. Plans include an upgrade Chipping Norton fire station.
    - Residents need to book to take anything to the re-cycling centres in Oxfordshire and must take ID to prove that they are an Oxfordshire resident.
    - Charlbury railway station has launched an access map to promote coming to Charlbury and using cycles etc.,
    - OCC have been setting their budget for 2026/27 and are planning further cuts this year to help balance their figures. OCC will lose £26M in revenue over the next three years and will be increasing Council Tax by 4.99% which is the maximum by which the County Council can increase Council Tax.

26/007 Planning (JH)

1. Planning Application Consultation 25/02956/HHD Kincardine House Bruern Road
   Construction of open fronted car port.
   The Planning Sub-committee recommended objecting to this application because it was not that long ago when this property and its neighbour (both replacing a single bungalow) were allowed at appeal and at that time it was agreed that there would be no further development on the site, specifically at the front, to protect the neighbouring landscape. The fact that there are hedgerows there makes no difference as they can disappear at any time. Furthermore, the structure itself is definitely not in keeping with that entrance to the village.

   Our Neighbourhood Plan states that existing front garden space should be conserved and greenery maintained to minimise urbanisation. This application is not in accordance with Local Plan Policy CH1. In addition it does not accord with WODC Plan policies OS1, OS4, EH1 and EH2 or the Cotswold National Landscape. All were in favour of the recommendation.
2. Planning Application Consultation 25/02779/FUL Owls View Shipton Road
   Demolition of existing stable block and erection of single storey extension to existing fitness studio.
   The Planning Sub-committee recommended making no objection to this planning application. All were in favour of the recommendation.

26/008 Finance

1. RFO report- The PC received and unanimously approved the RFO reports for November and December2025.
2. November and December summaries – JP proposed and PR seconded approval of the November report and summary; JH proposed and PR seconded approval of the December report and summaries.
3. To confirm membership of the Finance Committee – The PC unanimously approved Cllr Allday to be a Finance Sub-committee member.
4. The PC received and noted the approved Finance Committee minutes of 9th December 2025.
5. Finance Sub-committee members unanimously approved the Finance Committee minutes of 15th January 2026 and the contents were noted by Councillors.
6. The PC received and unanimously approved the updated draft 2026/27 budget and three-year plan.
7. The PC received and approved the Q3 summary.
8. The Chairman and RFO signed the Internal Auditor's Agreement of Terms 2025/26 for Jane Olds.

26/009 Section 137 grant applications (there was £6197 left in the S137 pot as at the date of this PC meeting)

1. BODS/Saplings deferred from the November meeting – The grant request for BODS is for £1919.30, £919.30 to purchase a light and £1000 for ongoing running costs. The grant request for Saplings is for £1272, £272 for new shirts and £1000 towards festival running costs.
2. Wychwood Minis – The grant request is for £1,000.00 to help towards purchasing new toys and hall hire.
3. Wychwood Day Centre – the grant request is for £1,000 towards fixed costs, hall rental, insurance and coordinator salary.
4. Citizen's Advice Bureau – The grant request is for £500.00 to maintain its support for MUW residents
5. West Oxfordshire Community Transport grant request received on 15 October, but it was essentially to cover a deficit. The Chairman had agreed to meet and discuss their requirement which is to build up funds to convert existing diesel buses to electric.

Due to the total sum of grant requests and the remainder of Section 137 funds left until 31st March 2026, the PC unanimously agreed to pay 50% of each grant request made this month apart from the CAB which the PC agreed to pay £500.00. If there are enough funds in March after considering any further grant requests the PC would award the remaining 50% of the grant requests above. The RFO will notify the applicants of the PC's decision.
The PC noted that there is a MARC meeting immediately after the PC meeting where the charity will confirm to contribute £242.00 to pay for the Saplings new shirts.

26/010 Village green

1. Football pitch improvement update – Cllr Smith has drafted a grant application in the Football Foundation web site, but completion requires the MUW football team to become accredited to the Oxfordshire FA. The team is very concerned that the PC is going to charge it to play on the pitches on the Village Green and won't become accredited to enable the grant application unless the PC confirms that it will not charge them to play. Cllr Smith recommendation is for the PC to agree that no charges will be levied on the teams to play on the pitches: he will then email the teams and we can get on with pitch improvement. Cllr Haine proposed to accept Cllr Smith's recommendation to not charge football teams to play on the football pitches on the village green. Cllr J Pratt seconded the proposal. All were in favour of the proposal.
2. Car park re-surfacing update (GS) – Following our issuing an ITT in September we received a number of quotes. Cllr Allday did a lot of work to validate and explore them as a result of which at a Fin com meeting we dispensed with one quote because we didn't think the supplier had the requisite track record. That left us with three suppliers with whom to discuss the requirement in more detail. In particular that led to discussions about drainage and how we could ensure that water didn't drain into Shipton Road (making the large puddle at the entrance worse), drain onto the pitches, or drain down into the sports pavilion. Those discussions have led to a further revision of the specification. That revised spec will be sent to the three suppliers in the coming week so that they can adjust their quotes to show how best they would tackle the drainage issue. They will be asked to submit revised quotes by 31 Jan, after which we will aim to have an Extraordinary PC meeting in w/c 2nd Feb to select the preferred supplier.
3. Play equipment safety checks and remediation (PR/GS) – confirmation that the safety check schedule works for all councillors. GS and PR have done their checks, the next one is PW on 25/1.
4. Update on contact with the Charity Commission in relation to the Recreation Ground charity – GS conferred with Simon Randall (SUW PC Chair and a retired lawyer with extensive experience of the Charity Commission). Subsequently GS sent a note to the CC setting out the result of investigations at the Oxford History Centre which demonstrate that the CC's previous conclusion about the status of the charity was ill founded, and requesting that the charity be de-registered.

26/011 Website and email addresses (NG)

To receive an update on the provision and potential modification of the website and provision of gov.uk email addresses. – Cllr Smith and Cllr Gibson met to discuss the PC's requirements. Cllr Gibson summarised the priorities as he saw them. The PC agreed for Cllr Gibson to form a small group to work with him to pull together the PC's requirements and report back on progress at the next PC meeting.

26/012 Biodiversity plan (GS/PW)

1. Update on fencing of ponds in Sarah's Meadow and the associated grant and provision of signage – The fencing was completed in November 2025. Subsequently TOE agreed that surplus funds from their grant could be used to provide signs explaining what is happening in Sarah's Meadow, and about the flora and fauna there. They will allow up to 10% of the grant (c. £590) on the signage. Cllr Smith has contacted four potential suppliers. Three of them only supply the raw material (ie the medium the sign is printed on and the frame/posts to support it). Their costs ranged from £1,000 upwards. Subsequently a conversation with a supplier being used by the Wild Garden concluded that the graphic design and printing of the sign could be done for c. £150 (incl VAT). The supplier then recommended that given the very rural environment in which the signs will be placed, and the nature of our rustic fencing already in place, we use rustic posts and frame to display the sign. The cost of those raw materials is likely to be c. £100 (incl VAT). At a total cost per sign of c£250 we should be able to erect two signs, at either end of the public footpath alongside the Meadow. A mock up of the proposed sign was shared with councillors.
2. Update on provision of a management plan for Sarah's Meadow and initial work as set out in the Plan. TOE also provided a grant of £750 for Wild Oxfordshire to development a Management Plan for Sarah's Meadow. A copy of the plan was shared with councillors. The first piece of work, to build two hibernacula and to start to clear over and undergrowth alongside the stream took place with a group of volunteers on 18th Jan. Further work to continue clearing by the stream will be done

through to mid-Feb when bird nesting starts.

26/013 Tree survey actions on priorities (RB)

Recommendation on the preferred supplier of tree surgery following up on the priority work identified in the tree survey. The PC received three quotations for the work required as follows.

Supplier	Work proposed	Cost (£ incl VAT)
A	To remove Tagged tree and 4 others with Ash Dieback and 1 Whitebeam in Elm Grove ,	2,220
B	To remove Tagged tree and 4 others with Ash Dieback and 1 Whitebeam in Elm Grove,	2,220
C	To remove Tagged tree and 4 others with Ash Dieback and 1 Whitebeam in Elm Grove, They also pointed out that the tree in Elm Grove ,which is the Whitebeam, had already been attended to. The other quotations had not picked up on that.	834

Cllr Blackman proposed quotation C. Cllr Rawlins seconded the proposal. All were in favour of the proposal.

26/014 Speed Reduction Measures – For the November meeting a paper was circulated setting out options for tackling reported speeding in the village. The recommendation from that paper was "Get a firm quote for the purchase of a SID device with data logging (likely to be between £2500 and £3,000), for a decision to be taken at the January PC meeting as whether or not to make the purchase in the light of the 2025/6 financials at that point or to wait and make an application to the TVP Community Fund in March. If purchased to install the device in the High Street (and moved to be east or west facing at intervals) and then review the data after three months to inform a decision about forming a speed watch scheme in the village."

The PC decided to revisit this topic in the next financial year. County Cllr Liz Leffman stated that she would have funding for items like this as from April 2026.

26/015 British Heart Foundation 65th Anniversary Living Memory Benches – The BHF has purchased the bench which will be delivered shortly. It is proposed to site it in the fenced play area on the Village Green to replace a seat there which has rotten posts. Glynn Allcock has offered to install the base free of charge, and the BHF will pay for raw materials (concrete etc) and have agreed to pay for future maintenance costs.

26/016 Salt/grit bin for Elm Close – A resident has requested a grit bin to be installed in Elm Grove following challenging conditions when it snowed/was icy recently. A bin would cost the PC £300 plus VAT, the bin would be installed by OCC. Cllr Haine agreed to have a look and report back to the PC on a location for a grit bin in Elm Grove.

26/017 Notice of Temporary Traffic Order – Burford Bridge The PC noted an order being introduced because of raised pedestrian footway works at the Windrush Bridge which are anticipated to be completed on 13th April 2026. The effect of the Order is to temporarily prohibit through traffic proceeding in the whole length of the A361 through Burford between the A424 Fulbrook roundabout and the A40 Oxford roundabout.

26/018 Public session for non-Agenda items –

- A resident thanked Chris Trotman for getting the flow metre up and running.
- A resident asked who would own the piece of land in front of the two houses being built on the Vicarage field? Cllr Haine will look into this and report back to the resident.
- A resident raised that all of the drains were blocked in Church Road. County Cllr Liz Leffman will contact the relevant OCC officer to clarify how the issue will be resolved. It was noted that OCC are checking all of the drains in Oxfordshire and unblocking them where required.

26/019 AOB

- Cllr Rawlins and Cllr Smith will deal with over hanging trees from the churchyard encroaching on a property behind.
- Cllr Rawlins will speak to Muddy Spades regarding repayment of a duplicate invoice.
- Cllr Pratt is going to attend an Evenlode Catchment meeting and will report back to the PC.
- Cllr Smith reported that WOCT had a significant shortfall in funding needed to convert buses from diesel to electric. WOCT have asked the PC for help in raising the necessary funding, potentially through social media campaigns and similar initiatives.
- Julia Sorrel had contacted the Chair asking about provision for teenagers in the Parish. She asked about the feasibility, for example, of installing a pump track which could be located behind the tennis courts. PR confirmed that this had been investigated previously and because of springs in the area which would need diverting or culverting it was considered too expensive to proceed. The Chair will seek the views of local organisations which already cater for teenagers
- Chris Trotman, RFO is booked onto an Asset Management course for Wednesday 28th January 2026.

26/020 Date of Next Meeting: 18th February 2026

The meeting closed at 8.44pm.