

<p>PRESENT: Chris Church, Gillian Coates, Richard Dodd, Nigel Fulford, Ian Green (Chair), Liz Grosvenor, Penelope Lenon, Thelma Martin (part), Vernon Porter, Ian Salusbury (Chair-elect), Tim Stevenson, Louise Thomas</p> <p>In attendance: Craig Cullimore</p>		
1.	<p>The Chairman welcomed CCullimore who had agreed to put his name forward as a prospective trustee and was attending to see how the committee worked. At the Chairman's invitation, he gave a brief outline of his career experience and connections with Oxford.</p> <p>IG also reflected on its being his own last meeting as Chairman after 9 enjoyable years in which he had missed only a handful of meetings.</p>	
2.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: none.</p>	
3.	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 3 February 2026</p> <p>The minutes were AGREED to be a correct record. Since this was to be her last Executive Committee meeting, PL was thanked for providing consistently high-quality minutes over the past 6 years; she will be missed.</p>	
4.	<p>MATTERS ARISING: none</p>	<p>Action by</p>
5	<p>PROGRESS REPORT</p>	
5.1	<p>OPERATIONS</p>	
5.1.1	<p>Finance</p> <p>RD reported a late additional expenditure suggestion to the budget, namely £2k for a <u>President's Event</u> of a type to be discussed further.</p> <p>If all goes to plan, the year-end balance will be some £36k which RD considers a more normal position for a charity.</p> <p>Budget holders pronounced themselves satisfied with the apportionment of funds to their activities, and IS as chairman-elect was content overall.</p>	<p>RD</p>

	Members having AGREED to the suggested President's Event, RD will now confirm the budget's final form.	
5.1.2	<p>Governance</p> <p>GC was unable to report any progress toward recruiting a new Hon Secretary: the Reach database had thrown up very few names that were sufficiently local, and none of those people had responded; the Oxford University Pensioners group does not advertise external posts but agreed to mention it at their March meeting but nothing has since been heard; the Lord Lieutenant's list had not produced anybody.</p> <p>IS mentioned having discussed the post with Rich Fisher who lives in the County and, despite still working, is thinking about it. IS will nominate stop-gaps to cover the Hon Secretary's functions for the time being.</p> <p>The Committee echoed IG's especial thanks to VP for the solid and tireless support he has given to OCS over the past 19 years. A proper celebration of such a contribution would be organised in due course.</p>	IS
5.1.3	<p>Membership</p> <p>LG was pleased to report three new members, one joint and one individual, since the Progress Report bringing the March total to four. Although lower than in the past, numbers do at last seem stable.</p> <p>IG extended his thanks to LG for all the time and trouble she has devoted to administering membership matters over the past 20-odd years; OCS could not do without her.</p>	
5.2	TECHNICAL GROUPS	
5.2.1	<p>Oxfordshire Futures Group</p> <p>CChurch had circulated a second report about <u>Community Spaces</u> prior to the meeting. It was clear that many other people are concerned about different aspects of the issue: small businesses needing working space; community groups needing cheap places to meet; short term leases; too few music venues; and problems with the attitude of landowners. A survey would be otiose; he therefore proposed moving straight to organising a seminar or workshop in the spring, bringing interested parties together to consider the issue from a planning perspective. Professionals who agreed to participate would be offered a modest stipend. He envisaged looking at what was happening elsewhere (eg Leicester) and hoped to be able to recommend the routine provision of community space in new and re-development proposals such as Templars Square (which was unlikely to be filled by retail).</p> <p>IG noted that existing spaces were at risk from the abolition of the City Council, whose assets would be subsumed into the new unitary authority. One safeguard would be for the city to seek parish/town council status, but the City Council is not pursuing this – possibly fearing that it would</p>	

	<p>weaken the case for their preferred Greater Oxford unitary. David Hine is arguing for the city to be granted a new, special status should the 3 unitary proposal be rejected; IG considered it desirable for OCS to support this proposal. (See also 5.4 below.)</p>	
<p>5.2.3</p>	<p>Planning Group</p> <p>GC did not go through the extensive material in the Progress Report, but drew attention to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A petition in support of the <u>Ultimate Picture Palace</u> had gained an astonishing 15k signatures in less than a week; • <u>Nuffield College</u> had not been at all forthcoming about plans for the island site; • The Group was set to become more involved in the <u>Diamond Place</u> development; • No acknowledgement had been received of the letter concerning the <u>Local Plan</u>; GC would chase. 	
<p>5.2.4</p>	<p>Transport Group</p> <p>NF had circulated a brief note the day before the meeting. The group is seeking to work closely with the Planning group and County officials.</p> <p>They had had a useful session in <u>Osney Mead</u> (where the traffic arrangements look very poor) and will continue to aim for early exploration meetings with developers.</p> <p>At a meeting about future plans for the <u>railway station</u>, Oxfordshire for Buses expressed disappointment that Network Rail had not put up funds for its redevelopment – seemingly unaware that any such cash comes from central government. The Group is looking at undertaking research into bus networks.</p> <p>IG hoped the Group would engage fully with data from the <u>Congestion Charge</u> experience and examine the continuing case for the introduction of <u>traffic filters</u> if the Congestion Charge has proved effective.</p>	
<p>5.3</p>	<p>ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS</p>	
<p>5.3.1</p>	<p>Communications Group [TM joined the meeting at this point]</p> <p><u>Visions</u> and the <u>Annual Review</u> are with the publishers and would be issued imminently. IG congratulated all concerned, especially LT who had masterminded their production.</p> <p>Looking ahead, TM hoped that OxClean’s 20th anniversary next year would provide a springboard for raising OCS’s profile as sponsor of the event.</p>	

<p>5.3.2</p>	<p>Community Impact Group</p> <p>The Group had deferred meeting while awaiting CChurch's report, which they will now review. CChurch welcomed the idea of collaboration and will arrange a meeting.</p> <p>In the meantime, GC and IS were liaising with <u>UPP's</u> campaign manager Alison Woodhead. One proposal is that OCS should issue a joint statement with Oxford Preservation Trust; the meeting AGREED that IS should approach Anna Eavis.</p> <p>In addition, Liz Woolley already has a prepared talk on cinemas and might be willing to deliver it at UPP as a fundraiser for them.</p> <p>The photographer has given permission for us to reproduce (with due attribution) her image of the protest outside the cinema.</p>	<p>CC/GC</p> <p>IS</p>
<p>5.3.3</p>	<p>OxClean</p> <p>In addition to the statistics in the Progress Report, ODS has confirmed that 4 tonnes of rubbish were collected, up from 3.8 tonnes last year.</p> <p>Rosanne Bostock has resigned as chairman; GC will chair for the time being. Both LG and Ingrid Lund are stepping down as depot managers in Headington and North Oxford respectively. Successors will have to be sought in good time to get them involved in team meetings; GC has contacted regular pickers to ask if they'd be interested. LG further noted that organising the depots takes the best part of February and March, and outlined the process involved in ensuring that the right number of litter-pickers, hi-vis jackets and rubbish bags were in the right place for groups to collect and return.</p> <p>It was again disappointing that OCS received little credit for the event; the 20th anniversary should offer opportunities to remedy that. PL suggested holding it after any elections in relevant years to avoid local politicians hijacking it for their own publicity.</p>	<p>GC</p>
<p>5.3.4</p>	<p>Programme Group</p> <p><i>Visions</i> includes details of the forthcoming programme of walks; there are no talks in the summer months.</p> <p>See 6.1 below about arrangements for the AGM and the talk following it.</p>	
<p>5.4</p>	<p>Local Government Reorganisation & Devolution</p> <p>IG had circulated a note by email to the committee; it had also been published on the website and mentioned in a special e-bulletin. He has since revised it to include reference to a) the newly-announced <u>Greater Oxford Development Corporation</u> which will work in parallel with local authorities so complementarity would be important and b) the need for</p>	

	<p>the city to have some <u>special status</u>, since neither town nor parish council structures would be adequate.</p> <p>Not all members had had the chance to read the latest version before the meeting. It was AGREED that they would do so and vote by email for the version they would prefer to go forward to the MHCLG by 5pm on Tuesday 24 March so as not to miss the consultation's deadline of midnight on Thursday 26 March.</p>	
6	EXECUTIVE BUSINESS	
6.1	<p>AGM</p> <p>Refreshments for 60 have been ordered. Worcester has agreed to provide access via a side gate for those with mobility difficulties.</p> <p>So far, few have signed up for Neale Coleman's talk after the AGM; there was also disquiet that the AGM might not be quorate. The regular end-month e-bulletin will give the two events top billing, and will be followed by a reminder over the Easter weekend immediately before them; there should also be something on our social media accounts. CChurch's suggestion that he circulate details to his various WhatsApp groups was AGREED.</p> <p>There will be a vote on the <u>changes to the constitution</u> before the <u>election of officers and other trustees</u>.</p> <p>In addition, members will be asked to approve the trustees' <u>proposal to invite IG to become a Vice President</u> not only in recognition of his 9 years' service as Chairman but also to ensure that he can continue his work on strategic planning under the Society' auspices. To this end, a new working group on the subject may be established and, when appropriate, IG will be invited to report on its work at Executive meetings.</p> <p>IG is a little concerned not to have heard from the <u>guest speaker</u> recently. GC suggested he might attend the OIEP meeting on 31 March and might be buttonholed there.</p>	
6.2	<p>Civic Voice</p> <p>IG reiterated his support in principle for a group of this kind and asked that the committee keep an open mind on the possibility of rejoining the new version. He also offered to provide contact details for the co-leader of the new Civic Voice.</p>	
6.3	<p>Trustee recruitment</p> <p>Members were delighted that CCullimore has agreed to join the trustees.</p> <p>No other nominations had been received, but further trustees could be co-opted through the year if the occasion arose.</p>	

7	OTHER BUSINESS	
7.1	<p>For information, GC advised that <u>East Oxford Community Centre</u> had successfully raised funds for audio-visual equipment without the need for a <u>Small Grant</u> from OCS.</p> <p>They had however commented that <u>our application form</u> is over-long and complex.</p>	
7.2	<p>VP thanked trustees past and present for their support during his 19 years in post. He wished the Society success in its future endeavours and looked forward to reading about them in the local press.</p>	
7.3	<p>IG similarly thanked the Executive for their support over his 9 years in the chair. OCS was in very good hands and he wished both the Society and his successor the very best on the cusp of what he expected to be a very successful era.</p>	
8.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The schedule of meetings proposed by IS for the rest of the year was AGREED. The next meeting of the Committee will be on Thursday 7 May at 7.30pm in St Andrew's Church, Linton Road.</p> <p>There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.05pm.</p>	