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**Minutes of a Meeting of the Old Marston Parish Council
held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 5 September 2000
at the Mortimer Hall**

Members Present

Mrs. C. Stone (Vice-chairman) in the Chair
Mesdames Bradley, Cox, Nurse, Stone and Tiwari
Messrs Agent, Batey, Bartleet, Cann, Drinkwater and Taylor
The Clerk Mr. L.M. Garner in attendance

Apologies

An apology for absence was received from the Chairman Mr. C Haynes

Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 July 2000 were, with the entry of the sum paid to Wicksteeds, confirmed and signed.

Matters Arising

News that the proposed Traveller's sites in the Parish had been deleted from the list of those being considered by the City Council was received with relief. A vote of thanks to the Chairman and Mr. Batey for their efforts with the petition was recorded. The Clerk to write to Mrs. Burgess to thank her for her support.

Correspondence

Royal Mail said that a replacement letterbox was on order for Oxford Road.

The Oxford Preservation Trust said that it required wooden goal posts for Mill Lane. Mrs. Stone said she would speak to OPT in favour of metal posts. Mr. Cann said that the posts donated by Marston Saints had been cut up for fencing posts.

Ms. Bradley and Mr. Cann were appointed to attend the OALC Meeting on the Local Government Act on 21 September 2000.

Comments were invited ~~on~~ by the Audit Commission on audit arrangements. It was decided to ask that the current arrangements should be continued.

Planning

Applications

The following were considered and it was decided to make no comment: -

12 Elsfield Road – New front door and internal alterations

2 Mortimer Drive – Elderly person extension (amended)

Old Stables Boults Lane – extension

107 Oxford Road – new house

38 Oxford Road – replacement garage

10 Dents Close – rear extension (plans not received)

The application for the conversion of 3 Fairfax Avenue into "2/3" flats was accepted but concern expressed that the third flat could not be identified.

Decisions

The following were reported –

Centre for Islamic Studies – approved

19 Mill Lane – extension - approved

41 Oxford Road – conservatory - approved.

Other Matters

The Clerk to investigate that no application had been made for roof lights at 19 Oxford Road

Attention was drawn to the extension of the No. 10 bus service to the station and the Peartree Park and Ride service to the Churchill Hospital.

Haynes

Transport Strategy

A letter was received from Oxford City Council giving notice that Colin Buchanan and Partners had been appointed to review traffic matters relating to the Headington and Marston Area Transport Strategy. As this would affect the Parish the Clerk was asked to arrange a meeting with the consultancy.

Boundary Commission

The Commission were to consider possible changes to the wards for City Council elections and were inviting comments and suggestions for changes to ward boundaries. One proposition, being discussed with Risinghurst and Sandhills Parish Council (RS) is that the present three member combined ward should be changed to separate wards with RS having two members and Old Marston one. It was decided that the present arrangement was to be preferred on the basis that three member representation as more likely to be effective. The possibility of changes suggested by Mr. Coats that would alter the Parish boundary was rejected. The Clerk was asked to write to the Commission to ask for the combined ward to continue. However should the detached warding be unacceptable then no change to this parish's boundaries should be made.

Clerk's Salary

It was decided to accept the recommendation of the National Association of Local Council's recommendation that the Clerk's salary should be increased by 3% effective from 1 April 2000.

Accounts

An audited copy of the Allotment Association's Accounts for the year ended 30 September 1999 was received.

It was noted that the minimum wage had been increased to £3.70 per hour.

The following accounts were passed for payment

	£
Oxford City Council	Ground maintenance
	362.39
P.J. Wheeler	Legal costs of Land Registration
	425.50
Mortimer Hall Management Committee	Hire of hall
	12.00
L.M. Garner	Salary and expenses
	1327.91
L.M. Garner	Back pay April - September
	72.74

Recreation Ground

It was decided to place a dark green "Super Guppy" litterbin in each of the three recreation grounds.

Mrs. Stone, Mrs Cox and Mrs. Nurse agreed to meet and recommend what new amusements should be provided.

Highways

Attention was drawn to the appearance of Mill Lane made worse by the obstructions placed to prevent travellers going onto the grassed areas at the end. The Clerk was asked to write to the City Council to enquire whether it would provide bollards so that the obstructions could safely be removed.

It was decided to support the City Council's proposal to adopt the City Council's proposal to adopt the provisions of the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 that would create an offence for the keeper of a dog failing immediately removing dog fouling from designated land (this includes most open land to which the public has access except land along a highway subject to a speed limit of 40 mph or less. That can be subject to separate legislation).

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The application of a noisy dressing and its poor standard of application to Cherwell Drive were noted and the Clerk requested to draw these comments to the attention of the Highway Authority.

Other Matters

The Clerk was asked to write to the Chair of the City Council's Housing Committee to express concern about recent tenancy changes in its houses in the Park Way area.

Next Meeting

3 October 2000

CPA

+8

Parish Council Meeting 20 September 2000

Boundary Commission Review of City Ward Boundaries

Review of City Council Proposals

Clerk's Report

Notice is short – although the City Council has been considering the matter since early this year, its proposals only reached me on 11 September with a deadline date for comments to the City Council by 28 September 2000, allowing only 17 days for Parish Council and public consultation that is totally inadequate. A special meeting, at such short notice, has been called but there is so little time for Parish Council Members to sound out local opinion and think about the implications long term. However this précis will be helpful.

Mr. M. John, the City Council Officer, responsible for overseeing the project in its progress through his Council's deliberations, has kindly agreed to attend the meeting. He will be able to advise on procedural matters.

The position has changed somewhat since the last Parish Council Meeting. The Boundary Commission has a duty to review administrative boundaries on a regular basis, usually on a ten to fifteen year cycle to take account of movements in population and ensure, as far as possible on forecasts that far ahead, that all electors are fairly represented at all levels

Once the Commission has decided that a review is desirable any person or body can make recommendations but invariably it falls to the local authority to make a scheme for ward boundaries for consultation and eventual submission.

It is the electoral ward boundaries that are the subject of this review that sets out to ensure that an electorate of equal size elects each councillor.

The City Council has decided to recommend that it should have, within the guidelines laid down, a Council of 48 members which, on the basis of the projected electorate, would mean 2170 electors per councillor.

In drawing ward boundaries parish boundaries are ignored, split wards are not permitted and any imbalance of the number of electors between wards shall not exceed 10% without justification and anything above 20% will only be permitted in extreme circumstances.

The City Council has produced two schemes (copy plans attached)

Option A

To provide 16 wards with 3 members each
New ward 9 would have 6319 electors, New ward 10 would have 6163 electors.

Amber

Option B

To provide 24 wards with 2 members each
New ward 9 would have 4211 electors. New ward 10 would have 4622 electors.

Old Marston currently has 2635 electors and this is unlikely to change significantly in the period of the review. Within either scheme this parish, with a target of 2170 electors per member, could not become a single member ward within the tolerance permitted.

With either scheme the Parish Council would remain unchanged for the immediate future but a review of parish boundaries within the City at a later date is a possibility. Option B does keep the Parish intact within one ward. Option A does not

The City Council has a scheme in embryo to provide "Peoples Parliaments" for groups of wards to recommend on local needs with possibly some funds for local projects. Since these mirror some Old Marston Parish Council functions it is possible that if Option B was adopted the part of the ward not in the Parish could be joined with other wards for this purpose leaving this Council with its duties and responsibilities unchanged. Its present functions and financial arrangements for allotments, burial and recreation grounds would be very difficult to include in a parliament for a ward extending beyond its boundaries.

Any observations made as a result of this Parish Council meeting (20 September 2000) will be forwarded to the City Council and taken into account when making its choice for submission to the Commission but the decision will not be finalised until 8 October 2000. Never the less the Parish Council Meeting at 7.30 p.m. in the Mortimer Hall on 3 October 2000 will be opened for discussion so that electors attending can contribute and further submissions made to the Boundary Commission if necessary. Individuals have an opportunity to make representations direct to the Boundary Commission. Dolphyn Court, 10/11 Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7JU before 16 October 2000.



L.M Garner
Clerk
13 September 2000

