

Old Marston Parish Council – Value for Money

Old Marston Parish Council adheres to its' financial regulations and standing orders which are reviewed regularly to consider changes in the legislation.

Annual Budget setting.

The annual budget is reviewed annually with the process commencing in October. The draft budget is discussed at the finance committee meeting in November and at the parish council meeting in December. This is to ensure that the final budget is confirmed at the January meeting of the parish council. For information purposes the budget is sent to the financial accounting officer at Oxford City Council. The budget is reviewed at each monthly parish council meeting to ensure expenditure does not exceed income. If required money can be moved from reserves to cover emergency/unexpected costs.

Auditing of Accounts.

Accounts are audited annually by an Internal auditor, as turnover is over £25,000 the accounts are sent to the external auditor for approval. The internal auditor also performs an interim review of the accounts to ensure procedures are being followed.

Appointing contractors.

Invitations for tenders are sent out on a three yearly programme to invite tenders for internal auditing of the accounts. Tenders received are discussed at parish council meeting and the successful company is invited to carry out the annual internal audit.

The procedure for invitations to tender and undertake works for the parish council.

“When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are expected as set out in paragraph
(a) the clerk/RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 and above £100 the Clerk /RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10 (3) above shall apply.”

The clerk obtains three quotations for work if possible. This year the parish council has reviewed its annual insurance policy and grass cutting contract to ensure value for money.

The parish council regularly check costings regarding stationery, and it was found that the parish council is using the cheapest supplier.

Improvements to the Environment.

During 2020/2021 the parish council had six solar powered streetlights installed in various locations around the parish and hedging planted along one boundary of Boult's Lane Recreation Ground.

The parish council work with local organisations such as Old Marston Mill Lane Allotments Association, to manage the allotments in Mill Lane, and Marston Community Garden Group, to assist in completing projects which enhance the local environment.

The parish council seeks advice from other local authority partners to link into their skills knowledge and experience for help with larger projects when required.

Working relationships have been established with Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council, the Society of Local Clerks and the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils, which then bring links to councils, over the country to facilitate the adoption of best practice.

Grant applications.

The parish council has a grant application policy and invites local organisations to apply by the end of October. This enables the parish council to consider the application during budget setting discussions at the November finance committee and December parish council meetings. Local organisations apply via an application form which is available via the parish clerk. The parish council reviews each application and awards a grant if agreed. The organisations who have applied for a grant are informed by the parish clerk on the grant awarded.

The parish council works towards an action plan which is reviewed annually.

| Adopted: | Minute Reference | Signed by Chair |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 16 th May 2022 | 22/05/20 | Duncan Hatfield |
| 15 th May 2023 | 23/05/19 | Duncan Hatfield |
| May 2024 | | |
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