

MAGHULL TOWN COUNCIL
AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD 16TH JANUARY 2013

298. PRESENT – Councillor (Ms) S. Williams (In The Chair) and Councillors : A. Blackburn, (Mrs) G. Kermode, S. Kermode. Mr. J. Melia, Interim Executive Officer, Miss E. Skelly, Finance & Projects Officer, Mrs. P. M. Annal (Minutes)

299. WELCOME BY THE CHAIRMAN – The Chairman welcomed colleagues and members of the Press to the meeting

300. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – None Indicated

301. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (MEMBERS AND OFFICERS) – None Indicated

302. MINUTES – *RESOLVED* that the **Minutes of an Audit & Governance Committee Meeting, held 10th October 2012** – copies of which have been printed and circulated – be taken as read and signed by the Chairman. *PROPOSED* by Councillor S. Kermode, *SECONDED* by Councillor G. Kermode – *AGREED UNANIMOUSLY*

303. MATTERS ARISING – Councillor (Ms) S. Williams referred to **Min. No. 189 Internal Audit Report Quarter 1 and Action Plan :**

Function Suite Lease Compliance : Councillor Williams asked the Interim Executive Officer for an update on this. Mr. Melia responded that the lease has been forwarded to Sefton MBC Legal Department for their consideration. He did confirm that the Licensee Mr. Simons had agreed to the amendment in relation to a suitable period of notification of cancellation, as being five days and not two days as previously detailed within the lease.

304. STANDING ORDERS – Councillor (Ms) S. Williams highlighted a few minor amendments that need to be inserted into the Standing Orders. She asked the Interim Executive officer and Finance Officer to ensure that these amendments are inserted and forwarded to NALC for their consideration, before they are presented to Full Council for ratification. *PROPOSED* by Councillor S. Williams, *SECONDED* by Councillor S. Kermode – *AGREED UNANIMOUSLY*.

305. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS – Councillor (Ms) S. Williams highlighted a few minor amendments which need to be inserted into the Financial Regulations. The Interim Executive Officer and Finance Officer both confirmed that the amendments will be made before they are presented to Full Council for ratification. *PROPOSED* by Councillor S. Williams, *SECONDED* by Councillor S. Kermode – *AGREED UNANIMOUSLY*.

MINUTES OF AN AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING, HELD 16TH JANUARY 2013

306. WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY – The Committee *DEFERRED* a decision on this new Policy at the request of Councillor A. Blackburn, in order that Lib Dem colleagues may consider this Policy before it was presented to Full Council for ratification. The Chairman *AGREED* to Councillor Blackburn's request.

307. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT QUARTER 2 AND ACTION PLAN – The Finance Officer addressed this issue and confirmed that the first two items on the Action Plan have been completed, and the third item is, at the moment, still on going.

She then referred to the Audit Report for Quarter 2 and stated that overall, it appeared to be a very good report. She stated that the Auditor highlighted two areas of 'minor' concern :

Review of Sage System – change of passwords on Sage system. The Finance Officer confirmed that this could not be done as historical passwords would need to be remembered to access archived financial information. The Auditor accepted that individual passwords on the computers were changed regularly. This would ensure unauthorised access to the Sage system.

Review of Council reports and Minutes – Inconsistencies surrounding the documentation in the minutes. The Auditor recommended that in all instances, the reasoning behind why a particular tender was successful or a decision taken, needs to be documented and minuted for transparency and also to show the thought process behind the Council's decision.

The Chairman, Councillor (Ms) S. Williams also stated that she was happy with the report. She further stated that she had asked the Internal Audit to be more critical in future reports.

To this end, it was *PROPOSED* by Councillor (Mrs) G. Kermode, *SECONDED* by Councillor S. Kermode that the Internal Audit Report for Quarter 2 and Action Plan be *AGREED* and *ACCEPTED – AGREED UNANIMOUSLY*.

308. PHOTOCOPIER LEASE - The Finance Officer informed Members that the lease for the photocopier will expire on 17th June 2013. The lease is usually taken out over a three or five year period. She stated that after conversations with the photocopier provider, they confirmed that it would be cheaper for the Council to lease the machine on a 12 month basis. The Finance Officer will explore other options and will keep members informed.

309. UPDATE REPORT ON USAGE OF PHOTOCOPIER - The Finance Officer referred to the usage of the Photocopier up to 7th January 2013. She confirmed that the generic password for black and white copies will be changed on 23rd January 2013, and every three months hence. After this period a further report will be circulated which will give a clearer indication of the actual number of photocopies.

MINUTES OF AN AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING, HELD 16TH JANUARY 2013

310. CRITERIA FOR COMMUNITY FUNDING - The Chairman, Councillor (Ms) S. Williams asked the Finance Officer and the Interim Executive Officer to formalise the criteria for Community Funding, with emphasis on providing evidence of the benefit to the wider community.

The Interim Executive Officer stated that the current criteria needs to be 'tweaked' in some places, i.e. the Council would need to know exactly what the money is required for. The Chairman stated that there should be clear written evidence on how the funding will benefit the community.

311. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - The Chairman commented that she was very happy with the Audit Report for Quarter 2. She also stated that there is a very clear definition between Financial Management, which is the role of Officers of the Council, and Financial Governance which is the role of the Council.

312. ANY OTHER BUSINESS - No further items were raised.

CHAIRMAN

