

MAGHULL TOWN COUNCIL
AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD 6TH MARCH 2013

386. PRESENT – Councillor (Ms) S. Williams (In The Chair) and Councillors (Mrs) G. Kermode, P. Dowd, S. Kermode, A. Blackburn, A. Robertson. Miss E. Skelly (Finance & Projects Officer), Mrs. P. M. Annal (Minutes)

387. WELCOME BY THE CHAIRMAN - The Chairman welcomed colleagues and members of the Press and Public to the meeting.

388. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – None received

389. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (MEMBERS AND OFFICERS) – None indicated

390. MINUTES – *RESOLVED* that the **Minutes of an Audit & Governance Committee Meeting, held 16th January 2013** – 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 (Mrs) G. Kermode – *AGREED UNANIMOUSLY*.

391. MATTERS ARISING – **Councillor (Ms) S. Williams** referred to **Min. No. 303 under the heading ‘Function Suite Lease Compliance’**. She enquired as to whether the Lease has now been finalised. In response, Miss Skelly, Finance Officer, informed Members that she had been in touch with Sefton Legal Department who advised her that the Lease submitted was quite confusing with too much detail. Sefton Legal are working on it to provide an ‘easy to follow and understand’ Lease. She further stated that once this ‘simpler’ version of the Lease has been received, then it can be signed by the Licensee.

Councillor S. Kermode referred to **Min. No. 304 under the heading ‘Standing Orders’**. He stated that the last time this issue was raised the Council were looking into the ‘named substitutes’ at Council Meetings. The Finance Officer responded that NALC have advised that for consistency and good practice, it must always be a ‘named substitute’. The Chairman, Councillor (Ms) S. Williams asked that specific names are **deferred** until after the forthcoming By-Election. She asked that this matter be an item on the next Full Council on 20th March.

Councillor (Ms) S. Williams referred to **Min. No. 306 under the heading ‘Whistle Blowing Policy’**. She enquired if this has now been finalised, and if so, could it be readily available for members of the public i.e. the procedure which gives details of the ‘**Do’s and Don’t’s**’ to be displayed on all Maghull Town Council external notice boards. The Finance Officer responded that it has been finalised and she will ensure that it is displayed.

392. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT QUARTER 3 AND ACTION PLAN – Councillor (Ms) S. Williams stated that this was a very good report in that it is very detailed and that the Internal Auditors have done a thorough job. She informed Members that the contract for the Internal Audit has been renewed for a further 12 months. She felt this would be good practice in light of the many changes in Town Clerks, all in all she said, it was a very good report. However, she highlighted the following points :

MINUTES OF AN AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING, HELD 6TH MARCH 2013 ... (MIN. NO. 392 CONT'D)

Xpresso Coffee Shop - This is still closed at the moment. The Council have plans in operation for the future use of this room.

Review of Debtors/effectiveness of debt collection – Councillor Williams referred to the monies owed by the former manager of the Xpresso Coffee Shop. She stated that this needs to be chased up in order that the Town Council receive all monies owed.

The Finance Officer responded that some money has been paid to the Debt recovery firm. She stated that she will contact them again to ascertain exactly how much money has been paid to date. She further stated the Debt recovery firm may well enter into litigation with the former manager if the recovery of this debt is prolonged.

Councillor Williams also asked that all outstanding monies owed by football clubs using the Town Council's pitches, be chased up. The Finance Officer confirmed that this is in hand.

PAYE Healthcheck – Councillor Williams referred to 'a dispensation in place in respect of P11D's with HMRC regarding the reporting of expenses/benefits' ? The Finance Officer responded that Maghull Town Council has got a dispensation from it as the level of expenses reclaimed is minimal.

To this end it was *PROPOSED* by Councillor (Ms) G. Kermode that the Internal Audit Report Quarter 3 and Action Plan be approved and *ACCEPTED*, *SECONDED* by Councillor S. Kermode – *AGREED UNANIMOUSLY*

393. REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL AUDIT - The Finance Officer addressed this item and confirmed that it is best practice to annually review the effectiveness of the system of Internal Audit. She stated that as Accountants, Alexander Myerson have carried out their duties ethically, with integrity and objectivity.

Members considered all the 'Expected Standards' and following a brief discussion it was *PROPOSED* by Councillor S. Kermode, *SECONDED* by Councillor (Mrs) G. Kermode that the Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit be *APPROVED*. This was *AGREED UNANIMOUSLY*.

394. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - The Chairman Councillor (Ms) S. Williams took this opportunity to thank the Finance Officer, Miss Skelly for all her hard work in ensuring that the Council received a good report from the Internal Auditors. She stated that Maghull Town Council have tightened up on all procedures and is happy with the direction that the Town Council is going.

The Finance Officer thanked the Chairman for her comments. She confirmed that the External Audit has now been closed off in light of the conclusion of the Police investigation into the Roof Procurement Project at Maghull Town Hall.

395. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – No issues were raised.

