

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE
MALVERN TOWN COUNCIL**

held on Wednesday 21 February 2024

in the Council Chamber, Belle Vue Terrace, Malvern at 6.00 pm

Councillors

Cllr Jude Green (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Josephine Leibrandt (6.02pm)
Cllr David Mead
Cllr David Watkins

Absent

Cllr Caroline Bovey (apologies)

In attendance

Linda Blake – Town Clerk
Louise Wall – Minute Clerk
Cllr Clive Hooper

27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from Cllr Caroline Bovey were **NOTED**.

28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

29. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous Audit Committee meeting held on 31 January 2024 be approved and adopted as a correct record of the proceedings.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

30. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY – COMPLIANCE WITH CURRENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Report AC01/24 was received and accepted.

The Town Clerk explained that it was the committee's task to review whether the Town Council had systems in place to comply with the current Health and Safety Policy and Procedures.

Cllr Josephine Leibrandt joined the meeting at 6.02pm

Members reviewed each section in turn and made the following comments and observations:

Accident reporting – accident books are kept at the offices and the cemetery, and staff are aware that they must be filled in when accidents occur, with copies of reports being sent to the appropriate line manager.

First aid – first aid boxes have been renewed recently, and are checked regularly to ensure that contents have not passed their expiry dates. First aid kits are kept in all Town Council vehicles, at the cemetery lodge and in the offices.

Fire Procedures – there are procedures in place to safely evacuate the building in the case of fire, but it was noted that a new procedure will need to be written once the new community hub/office building is occupied. Escape routes and alarms have been considered in the design and build of the new community hub.

Substances hazardous to health – the operations manager has the relevant qualifications for the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) and

employees are provided with protective equipment and workwear when working with these.

Electricity at Work – appropriate safety measures are taken and Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 adhered to.

Management measures – management of health and safety procedures is carried out by the appropriate line manager.

Council workplaces – once operating from the new community hub building, a review of employees workstations will be carried out, and a budget has been provided for the purchase of new desks and chairs. There is also a budget for the refurbishment of the mess area at the cemetery lodge, used by the operations team.

Display screen equipment – this is reviewed regularly, and there is a work scheme in place for employees to use vouchers for a free eye test once a year, and towards the purchase of glasses required for screen use.

Personal protective equipment – the operations manager carries out regular checks of the PPE provided to the operations staff, including the expiry date. Work wear is provided annually to the operations team, and this includes uniform, safety boots, hi-vis vests/coats and waterproof coats/trousers. Goggles and masks are replaced more frequently, as required.

Manual handling – a record is kept of all training courses undertaken by staff. Training is part of the Town Council’s policy, and staff are sent regular to update and maintain their skills. Manual handling and first aid are included.

Work equipment – all work equipment required for employees to carry out their jobs in a safe and efficient manner is provided, checked and updated. This includes PPE, workwear, tools and machinery.

Members then discussed and agreed to update the wording of clause 9.2 xi. *“The Town Clerk will need to ensure that suitable facilities are provided for staff to rest, especially for any person at work who is a pregnant woman, nursing mother or non-smoker”* to

“The Town Clerk will need to ensure that suitable facilities are provided for staff to rest, especially for any person at work who is pregnant or nursing”

With this change, Audit Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Council should note that systems and controls were in place to comply with its Health and Safety Policy.

31. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Town Clerk updated the committee regarding the review of Town Council Aims and Objectives. Although this had been agreed as part of the work plan for the Audit Committee for the 2023/24 year, the task and finish group delegated to carry out the review had not yet been able to finish their work.

Therefore, it was **AGREED** to defer this to the following year, 2024/25, once the task and finish group had completed their review.

32. DATE OF NEXT AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING

It was **AGREED** that the next meeting of the Audit Committee would be on Wednesday 5 June 2024 at 6.00 pm.

The meeting ended at 6.30 pm

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(Chairman)