



Internal Audit Checklist ‘Year End 2023/24’

Name of Authority:Melbourn Parish Council

Date of Audit:

Audit Completed by: [redacted] & [redacted]

Governance & Procedure

Legislation

Process	Notes/Action to be Taken
Standing Orders	2018 NALC Model with 2022 update – adopted Nov 2022. Document has 12-month review date but doesn’t appear to have been reviewed in Nov 23
Financial Regulations	2019 NALC Model – reviewed January 2024
Code of Conduct	LGA 2020 Code – adopted 2021
Health & Safety Policy	Suitable H&S policy – adopted Mar 23 with 12-month review date
Disciplinary Policy with Procedures	Compliant policy – adopted Mar 23 with 2-year review date
Grievance Procedure	Compliant policy – adopted Mar 23 with 2-year review date
Data Protection Policy	Compliant policy – adopted Nov 22 with 2-year review date
Publication Scheme	Publication scheme based upon ICO template is available online.
ICO	Registration number ZA080261 (expires Oct 24)
Insurance	Resolved Sept 23 (Oct renewal) BHIB/Clear Councils £10 million public liability cover £250k fidelity guarantee limit £10 million employer liability cover Cover appears to be suitable for assets Building valued in Sept 2021 (listed on asset register)

	£25,000 data breach response cover Evidence of cyber cover not seen – being looked into
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Councillors and Ethical Framework

Process	Notes
Clr Declarations of Office	Dec of acceptance of office for all councillors seen. No declaration of office for chairman from May 23 – advised to sign at May meeting each year.
Register of Interests Current	Links to all members ROI on SCDC website. Evidence of annual review not seen Advised to destroy when members leave
Evidence of Declarations of Interests at Meetings	Clear evidence of interests being declared. Libby advised can do longer lasting forms if desired No instances of pecuniary interest declaration seen but advised members should leave room in these cases.
Dispensation Grant Policy	Procedure document - adopted Jun 23 with a 12-month review date.
General Power of Competence (GPC)	Using GPC– adopted May 23 Two thirds apply (election results checked) & Clerk status confirmed by Libby. Different Clerk in place when declaration made. Noted that minute does not include confirmation of eligibility criteria.

Agendas and Minutes

Process	Notes
Agendas	
Is there evidence that correct procedures are in place?	Appropriate numbering commenced May 23 Three clear days’ notice evidenced. Electronic signature by clerks Location, time & summons evidenced Separate agenda pack is produced
Annual Meeting of Council	Annual meeting held on 22 nd May 23 Election of Chairman was first item GPC declaration noted
Annual Parish/Town Meeting	APM held on 15 th May 23 APM agenda published with 7 days’ notice APM called by Chairman
Matters Arising?	Matters Arising not used

Minutes	
Minute book	<p>Advised not to double side minutes. Advised to put payments/bank rec in body of minutes. Minutes are clear. Talked about consistency of minute formatting. Noted that year is not always included in minutes (example - 15th Jan).</p> <p>Each page of minutes is signed. Noted that minutes should be signed at meeting approved. Advised to make amendments in pen at time of meeting.</p> <p>Resolutions are clear in minutes</p> <p>Minute items match agenda</p> <p>Decisions in sample comply with SOs</p> <p>Evidence of declaration of interest being made</p> <p>Minutes are concise and not verbatim</p> <p>Evidence of public participation</p> <p>Evidence of planning considerations in public meetings</p> <p>S137 not seen but council are using GPC</p>

Policies and Processes

Process	Notes
Monitoring and Updating	<p>Ample evidence of regular policy reviews. Tracker document online, needs review. Need to implement policy review schedule to keep on track. Reviews information on policies could include minute the document was reviewed under.</p> <p>Advised some policies could be consolidated – possible employment policies into one handbook.</p>
Risk Management Policy	<p>Risk Management Policy review not seen in Annual Meeting minutes – advised needs actioning.</p> <p>Financial RA reviewed Nov 23 and General risk register reviewed Mar 23</p>
Asset Register	<p>Asset register on website dated to Mar 23. Has been reviewed by committee before going to FC in Mar 24</p> <p>Audit figures included as well as insurance values for buildings. Further insurance figures will be added when moved to Rialtas.</p>
Data Protection & GDPR	<p>Both clerks require GDPR training. Advised CAPALC can offer.</p> <p>Some members had GDPR training from other sources but not council specific.</p> <p>DPO appointed through CAPALC membership</p> <p>Noted personal information is stored in locked cabinets and on computers with password protection</p> <p>SARR in place</p> <p>Advised to put log of data breaches in place</p> <p>Privacy notice is online but not known when it was reviewed, advised to review ASAP and include date of review.</p> <p>ROPA in place</p>
Management of Information	<p>Record management and retention policy in place – adopted June 2021. Does not appear to have reviewed in June 23 as document review requires.</p> <p>Shredder present for destruction of documents and advised to destroy anything no longer required.</p>
Email Addresses	<p>Clerks/staff all have council specific email address</p> <p>Cllrs all have council specific email address</p> <p>.gov.uk in place for all including website</p> <p>Contact details for staff and members on website</p>

Privacy noted in footer of emails
Advised re web accessibility. Some flags when website run through Wave accessibility tracker.

Risk Management

Process	Notes
Unusual Financial Activity	As previously noted, payment list should be included within minutes. PCN grant money is being held by council which is inadvisable. Memorandum of Understanding seen and Libby/Tor seeking advice on the set up. Rest of sample aligns with financial regulations and proper practices.
Risk Assessments	Risk Management policy needs urgent review
Annual Assessment of Current Procedures	As above, review of risk management processes is required.

Employment

Process	Notes
Clerk	NALC contracts in place for staff All relatively new staff. Clerks began Apr 23. JD reviewed at recruitment Performance reviews undertaken in Jan 23 and JDs reviewed as part of this Salaries reviewed in Nov with national agreement implemented. ILCA uplift also implemented. Advised to “report” contractual uplifts to council. No resolution is required. NOW pensions scheme in place. Registered with Pensions Regulator
Payroll	Spot check of HMRC payments undertaken Council runs its own payroll using SAGE
Other Staff	There are 6 members of staff, a mixture of full and part time, and employment contracts are in place for all.

Finance

Process	Notes
Precept	23/24 Precept was £314,890 – it would be helpful to list precept figure in minutes for clarity. Comprehensive budget features within agenda pack but advised it should be listed separately on website once approved. 23/24 Precept resolved by Full Council 16 th Jan 2023
	As above, budget available online in agenda information but should also be published separately online.

Budget	Budget is contained within agenda pack of FC 16 th Jan 2023 but no specific resolution to approve seen. No s137 allocation on budget but using GPC Budget appear to be reflective of assets Regular budgetary reporting evident in minutes Minutes evidence quotes being sought/considered
Reserves	£238,000 General Reserves – in line with recommendation of 3-12 months precept. £340,000 earmarked reserves held and justified Investment options discussed. Clear evidence of EMR's being current. PCN money contained within S106, advised to separate.
Bank	Bank reconciliation noted monthly within minutes Sample of bank recs checked.
Cashbook	Council currently uses EDGE but moving to Rialtas in Jun 24 Electronic cashbook up to date All payments within sample were properly authorised and supported with invoices/receipts. All income in sample was properly recorded Invoicing done by Clerks. Invoices done on Word and fees checked to match current rates. Receipts not sent unless cash. Then handwritten.
S137	Council not using S137 as have GPC
Petty Cash	£45 petty cash in place but aiming to remove petty cash as there is a pre-paid debit card in place.
Purchases	Sample test undertaken which evidence purchasing being undertaken in accordance with financial regulations and proper practices.
VAT	Council is not VAT registered. Quarterly 126 Form claims being made. VAT income noted on bank statement inspection.

Engaging Contractors

Process	Notes
Best Value	Minutes evidence multiple quotes when engaging contractors. The grounds maintenance contract expires in June 24 and plans are already in place to go to tender (including Contract Finder) No evidence seen of Cllrs undertaking work for the council
Contractor	All regular contractors have PL in place, and this sought at time of tender. Advised to do seek this when appointing one-off contracts too. Qualifications and H & S requirements are all checked at the time of appointment.

Services

Burial Authority Yes/~~No~~ **TO BE COVERED AT NEXT VISIT**

Process	Notes
Burial Records	
Processes	
Closed Churchyard	

Playground Yes/No

Process	Notes
Playground/LEAPs	<p>The council currently has two playgrounds and an annual ROSPA inspection takes place. Visual inspections are also conducted by wardens – Advised to check when they last attended training for undertaking visual inspections. Confirmed that LA have adequate PL insurance</p> <p>Risk Management processes for play areas to be reviewed. Play equipment is included on asset register Insurance includes play equipment cover Visual inspection sheets are filed with office and reviewed in maintenance meeting. Budget includes maintenance provision for play equipment</p>

Allotments Yes/No

Process	Notes
Allotments	<p>Tenants are invoiced on Edge.</p> <p>Insurance in place for allotments Payment is made ideally by BACS. Cheques and cash are also accepted.</p>

Defibrillators Yes/No - TO BE COVERED AT NEXT VISIT

Process	Notes
Defibrillators	

AGAR - TO BE COVERED AT NEXT VISIT

In order to be able to sign off the AGAR the following processes need to be checked and notes made where appropriate. Some areas refer back to the checks completed earlier in the internal audit process:

AGAR Box	Process	Notes
A	Appropriate Accounting Records have been kept throughout the year.	
I	Periodic bank reconciliations were properly carried out during the year <i>(Para 5.10 to 5.23)</i>	
B	The Authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for <i>(Para 5.39 to 5.47)</i>	

C	<p>The Authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these <i>(Para 5.84 to 5.93)</i></p>	
D	<p>The Precept resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves are appropriate <i>(Para 5.24 to 5.27)</i></p>	
E	<p>Expected income was fully received based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked and VAT appropriately accounted for <i>(Para 5.46 to 5.47)</i></p>	
F	<p>Petty Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for <i>(Para 5.44)</i></p>	
G	<p>Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with the</p>	

	<p>authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied <i>(Para 5.48 to 5.51)</i></p>	
H	<p>Asset and investment registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained. <i>(Para 5.56 to 5.66)</i> This section / assurance should be extended to include loans to or by the authority <i>(Para 5.67)</i></p>	
J	<p>Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cashbook, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate, debtors and creditors were properly recorded <i>(Para 5.120 to 5.199)</i></p>	
K	<p>If the Authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in the prior year, it met</p>	

	the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt <i>(Para 5.200 to 5.204)</i>	
L	The Authority publishes information on a website/web page, and complies with the relevant Transparency Code <i>(Para 5.71 to 5.74)</i>	
M	The Authority has, during the previous year, correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required <i>(Para 5.75 to 5.83)</i>	
N	The Authority complied with the publication requirements for the prior year AGAR	
O	Trust Funds (including charitable) – the Council has met its responsibilities as a trustee <i>(Para 5.105 to 5.115)</i>	