

Open Agenda



Audit, Governance and Standards Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on Wednesday 16 November 2016 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G01A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT:

Councillor Paul Fleming (Chair)
Councillor James Barber
Councillor Catherine Dale
Councillor Nick Dolezal
Councillor Renata Hamvas
Councillor Hamish McCallum
Councillor Andy Simmons
Mr Charles Wynn-Evans (Independent member)

**OFFICER
SUPPORT:**

Jennifer Seeley, Director of Finance
Jo Anson, Head of Financial and Information Governance
Norman Coombe, Head of Corporate Team, Legal
Fay Hammond, Departmental Finance Manager
Rob Woollat, Interim Chief Accountant
Victoria Foreman, Constitutional Officer
Paul Dossett, Head of Public Sector Assurance, Grant Thornton
Chris Harris, Partner, RSM
Caroline Watson, Divisional Accountant, Treasury and Pensions
Mike Pinder, Head of Anti Fraud and Internal Audit
Dr Jin Lim, Director of Public Health (Acting)
Paul Symington, Head of Facilities Management Strategy and Performance
Barbara Crabb, Corporate Facilities Management Contract Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

Those members listed as present were confirmed as voting members for the meeting.

3. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

There were no late items of business.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2016 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the chair.

6. GOVERNANCE TOPIC: SOUTHWARK LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSIONS SCHEME - GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The committee heard from Fay Hammond, Departmental Finance Manager and Caroline Watson, Divisional Accountant. Members asked questions of the officers.

RESOLVED:

1. That the briefing regarding the governance arrangements for the Southwark local government pension scheme (Appendix A) be noted.
2. That the constitutional arrangements for the Pensions Advisory Panel and Local Pensions Board be supplied to the committee by officers.

7. GOVERNANCE TOPIC: PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENTS INTO THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS

The committee heard from Jin Lim, Director of Public Health (Acting). Members asked questions of the officer.

RESOLVED:

1. That the update on the implementation of public health impact assessments into the decision making process be noted.
2. That officers develop a guidance document to show how public health and other departments work together in order to ensure that public health is considered in all areas of the council's work.

8. REPORT ON RETROSPECTIVE CONTRACT-RELATED DECISIONS

Officers introduced the report. Members had questions of officers.

RESOLVED:

1. That the retrospective contract decisions detailed in the report be noted.
2. That the actions taken to ensure that the risk of future retrospective contract decisions is minimised for the future, as set out in paragraphs 15 to 17 and 22 to 26, be noted.
3. That officers produce a document explaining issues encountered, and how these will be prevented in the future, and share with others who had also attended audit, governance and standards committee with other retrospective contract related matters.

9. TREASURY MANAGEMENT: REVIEW OF POLICY, PRACTICES AND STRATEGY

Officers introduced the report. Members asked questions of officers.

RESOLVED:

1. That the revised Treasury Management Policy Statement (Appendix A) be considered.
2. That the council's draft 2017-18 treasury management strategy statement (Appendix B) be considered ahead of consideration by council assembly at its budget and council tax setting meeting in February 2017.
3. That the reference to 'Option 3: Asset Life Method' of the DCLG guidance referenced at point 7, page 72 of the agenda be extended and explained further to the committee and in any future reports.

10. ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2015-16

Grant Thornton introduced the report. Members had questions of Grant Thornton.

RESOLVED:

1. That the annual audit letter 2015-16 (Appendix 1) be noted.
2. That copies of the client briefings referenced at page 87 of the agenda be provided to the committee.
3. That further details of work undertaken for the council by Grant Thornton on Investors in People accreditation be provided to the committee.
4. It was noted that the Highways Network Asset work scheduled for 2016/17 had been deferred until 2017/18.

11. PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF EXTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Officers introduced the report.

RESOLVED:

That the progress and actions for implementing the external auditors' recommendations be noted.

12. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT AND ANTI-FRAUD TEAMS FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY 2016 TO 17 OCTOBER 2016

Officers introduced the report. Members asked questions of officers.

RESOLVED:

1. That the progress report on the work of the internal audit and anti-fraud teams for the period 1 July 2016 to 17 October 2016 be noted.
2. That further information regarding the applications tested in the audit of the council's disaster recovery arrangements be provided to the committee.
3. That children's and adults' services be invited to a future meeting of the committee to explain the delay in implementation of actions agreed relating to data management and security.
4. That a letter of thanks be written on behalf of the committee to RSM, who had been the council's internal auditors for the past seven years, but whose contract was ending shortly.

13. APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL AUDITOR

Officers introduced the report. Members had questions of officers.

RESOLVED:

That the option of opting in to the authorised national scheme for the appointment of external auditors through the sector-led body, Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) be recommended to council assembly.

14. WHISTLE BLOWING COMPLAINTS AND OUTCOMES

Officers introduced the report. Members had questions of the officers.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That at the end of the investigative process, whistle-blowers be given the option to agree that an anonymous and confidential version of the case be considered by the committee.

3. That future reports on whistle-blowing be produced in the style of the London Borough of Camden, as detailed at point 17, page 111 of the agenda.

15. REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH STANDARDS ALLEGATIONS UNDER THE LOCALISM ACT 2011

Officers introduced the report. Members had questions of the officers.

RESOLVED:

1. That the issues outlined in the report be noted.
2. That the amendments to the arrangements for dealing with standards allegations under the Localism Act 2011 contained in Appendix A be agreed.
3. That paragraph 27 of the arrangements for dealing with standards allegations under the Localism Act 2011 document, at page 119 of the agenda, be re-worded by the relevant officer and circulated to the committee.

16. REVIEW OF MEMBER AND OFFICER PROTOCOL AND COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL

Officers introduced the report. Members had questions of the officers.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That paragraph 23 of the communication protocol, as set out at page 147 of the agenda, be amended to include an exception for members accessing agenda papers online.

17. GRANT THORNTON - AUDIT, GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE UPDATE NOVEMBER 2016

Grant Thornton introduced the report.

RESOLVED:

That Grant Thornton's audit, governance and standards committee update, as attached (Appendix 1) be noted.

The meeting ended at 9.05 pm.

CHAIR:

DATED: