

Item No. 12.	Classification: Open	Date: 27 February 2017	Meeting Name: Audit, governance and standards committee
Report title:		Draft work programme for 2017-18	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the audit, governance and standards committee consider the proposed draft work programme for 2017-18 and whether they would wish to make amendments to arrangements as set out in paragraph 8 of this report, or in respect of any other matters.
2. That the audit, governance and standards committee, subject to any requested changes, agree the work programme set out in Appendix 2 for 2017-18.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. Since its establishment in March 2007, the committee has agreed a work programme for the forthcoming year. Amendments to the programme to take account of changing circumstances can be made throughout the year.
4. The purpose of this report is to set out possible areas of work for consideration to enable members to agree a programme for 2017-18.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

5. In considering items for inclusion, it may be helpful to do this within the framework of the committee's purpose, as set out in the constitution. This was amended in 2016-17 when the committee was renamed and is stated to be:
 - Independent assurance of the adequacy of the council's governance arrangements, including the risk management framework and the associated control environment
 - Independent scrutiny of the authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment
 - Oversight of the financial reporting process
 - Scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies
 - A framework to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives.
6. The committee's revised terms of reference, as approved by council assembly, cover

functions relating to audit activity, the regulatory framework, accounts, treasury management and the council's standards framework. They are attached at Appendix 1 as they may further help the committee to determine items to be included in its work programme.

7. Using the 2016-17 revised work programme as a starting point, a draft programme for 2017-18 has been included at Appendix 2 for the committee's consideration. Items shown in brackets are standing items which will be brought forward as they arise. The draft programme is based on meetings of the committee being held in May 2017, July 2017, September 2017, November 2017, February 2018 and June 2018.
8. During 2016-17, the committee decided that it would review a range of governance issues through the year and received reports on the following: the schools building programme; communications and the promotion of financial matters; the governance arrangements of Southwark's Local Government Pension Scheme; an update on the implementation of public health impact assessments into the decision making process. The agenda for this meeting includes an update in respect of progress on IT services at the council (as part of the modernisation agenda), and also on employment and succession planning. Members are asked to consider whether they would wish to continue this approach and, if so, to identify further governance topics for consideration in the coming year. If they do not wish to continue this approach, they are asked to identify an alternative approach to the review of governance.
9. There remains a need to ensure flexibility in terms of emerging issues which come to light through items already on the committee's agenda. For example, a review of audit recommendations and progress on their implementation may highlight a need to request the attendance of individuals at a future meeting to help explain action taken. The draft programme therefore includes a standing item relating to review of the committee's work plan. There may also be a need to review the work programme to take account of any changes which may be agreed to the council's constitution during the year.
10. Items have been grouped in line with its functions, in order to ensure that there is appropriate coverage of the committee's key roles as defined in its terms of reference.
11. Training will continue to be provided for members on the role of the committee, and development needs will continue to be monitored to enable appropriate training to be provided as opportunities arise.
12. The committee is asked to consider whether the attached draft work programme reflects its priorities for the next year or whether there are other amendments which it would wish to see included.

Policy implications

13. This report is not considered to have direct policy implications.

Community impact statement

14. The decision to agree a work programme for next year is considered not to have a significant impact on any particular community or group.

Resource implications

15. There are no direct resource implications in this report.

Consultation

16. There has been no consultation on this report.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

17. None required.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None.		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Extract from the constitution – Part 3K Audit and governance
Appendix 2	Draft work programme for 2017-18

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Duncan Whitfield, Strategic Director of Finance and Governance		
Report Author	Victoria Foreman, Constitutional Officer		
Version	Final		
Dated	6 February 2017		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title		Comments sought	Comments included
Director of Law and Democracy		No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance		No	No
Cabinet Member		No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team			6 February 2017

APPENDIX 1

Extract from the constitution – Part 3K Audit and governance committee

ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

Introduction

The purpose of the audit, governance and standards committee is to provide:

1. Independent assurance of the adequacy of the council's governance arrangements, including its standards regime, the risk management framework and the associated control environment.
2. Independent scrutiny of the authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment.
3. Oversight of the financial reporting process.
4. Scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies.
5. A framework to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives.

Audit activity

6. To approve the internal audit charter
7. To approve the risk based internal audit plan, including resource requirements.
8. To approve any significant proposed advisory services, additional to those included in the audit plan.
9. To receive information on the appointment, departure, resignation or change in chief audit executive.
10. To receive in-year summaries of internal audit and anti-fraud activity and the internal audit annual report and opinion and to consider the level of assurance it can give over the council's corporate governance arrangements.
11. To receive reports dealing with the management and performance of the provider of internal audit services, including the performance of the chief audit executive.
12. To receive reports from internal audit on agreed recommendations not implemented within a reasonable timescale.
13. To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance.
14. To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.
15. To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money.

16. To have oversight over the appointment of the external auditor.
17. To commission work from internal and external audit.

Accounts

18. To review and approve the annual statement of accounts and specifically to consider compliance with appropriate accounting policies and whether there are any concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the council.
19. To consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.

Treasury management

20. To review and scrutinise the treasury management strategy and policies.

Governance activity

21. To review any issue referred to it by the chief executive or a strategic director, or any council body.
22. To monitor the effective development and operation of risk management in the council.
23. To monitor the effective development and operation of corporate governance in the council and to agree actions necessary to ensure compliance with best practice.
24. To monitor council policies on 'whistle-blowing', the 'corporate anti-fraud strategy' and the council's complaints processes.
25. To receive reports from the statutory officers under the council's whistle blowing policy.
26. To provide strategic oversight on the use of the powers regulated by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and to receive in-year reports on operational use.
27. To oversee the production of and agree the council's annual governance statement.
28. To review the council's compliance with its own and other published standards and controls.
29. To receive reports on retrospective contract related decisions as set out in contract standing orders.
30. To receive reports from the monitoring officer on any serious breach of the contract standing orders or procurement guidelines.

Standards activity

31. To advise the council on the adoption or revision of the members' code of conduct, the member and officer protocol and the communication protocol.
32. To monitor the operation of the members' code of conduct, the member and officer protocol and the communication protocol.
33. To monitor and advise on training provided for councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives.
34. To deal with any standards related complaints referred to it and any report from the monitoring officer on any matter which is referred to him or her.
35. To receive reports from the monitoring officer on unlawful expenditure and probity issues.
36. To consider the withholding of allowances from individual members (including elected members and co-opted members) in whole or in part for non-attendance at meetings, or, for elected members only, for failure to attend required training.
37. To establish the following sub-committees:
 - to consider complaints of misconduct against elected councillors and co-opted members
 - to consider civic awards.

Annual report

38. To report annually to all councillors on its work and performance during the year.

MATTERS RESERVED FOR DECISION

Matters reserved for decision by the main committee

39. The matters reserved for decision to the committee are as set out in the role and functions, other than those functions delegated to the relevant sub-committee.

Matters reserved for decision by the conduct sub-committee

40. To consider complaints of misconduct against elected councillors and co-opted members.

Matters reserved for decision by the civic awards sub-committee

41. To grant civic awards.
42. To consider the process by which the decisions with respect to civic awards applications are to be taken and to make recommendations to the standards committee.
43. To appoint non-voting co-opted members.

APPENDIX 2

Draft Work Programme for 2017-18

Items shown in brackets (✓) are standing items which will be brought forward as they arise

Item			Meeting date					Commentary
		May 2017	July 2017	September 2017	November 2017	February 2018	June 2018	
	General							
Annual work programme for following year						✓		Draft work programme for the committee – Constitutional Officer
In-year review of work programme		(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	Standing item – to pick up emerging issues
Annual report of audit, governance and standards committee						✓		Report on committee’s work and performance to be submitted to all councillors each year – Constitutional Officer
	Internal Audit activity							
Internal audit charter			✓					To review and approve changes, if needed, to the internal audit charter – Head of Anti-Fraud and Internal Audit
Internal audit plan and strategy for internal audit						✓		Proposed internal audit programme for future years – Head of Anti-Fraud and Internal Audit
Annual report and opinion on internal audit and fraud			✓					Including review of effectiveness of system of internal audit and Head of Anti-Fraud and Internal Audit’s opinion on system of internal control and report on internal audit contractor and Head of Anti-fraud and Internal Audit (chief audit executive) performance – Head of Anti-Fraud and Internal Audit
Progress report on the work of internal audit and anti-fraud		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	Issues raised and progress on implementation of recommendations, including approval of any significant additional advisory services – Head of Anti-Fraud and Internal Audit

Item	Meeting date						Commentary
	May 2017	July 2017	September 2017	November 2017	February 2018	June 2018	
Chief audit executive information	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	Report on appointment, departure, resignation or change in chief audit executive – Director of Finance
External Audit activity							
Audit fee letters (including pension fund)	17-18 letters deferred from Feb 2017 to May 2017	✓			✓		Annual fee letters setting out indicative fees and planned work/outputs for 2017-18 in July 2017 and for 2018-19 in February 2018 for the council and pension fund – Grant Thornton
Audit plans (including pension fund)	✓ Considered early at Feb 2017 meeting					✓	Audit plans setting out audit work to be undertaken for audit of financial statements 2017-18 for the council and pension fund, including approval of any significant additional advisory services – Grant Thornton
Annual Audit letter (Grant Thornton)				✓			Annual audit letter (AAL) providing a summary of Grant Thornton's assessment of the council for 2016-17, drawing from audit of financial statements and work undertaken to assess VfM – Grant Thornton
Audit findings reports (ISA 260) – including pension fund)			✓				Annual governance report (AGR) summarising findings from 2016-17 audit of financial statements and work to assess VfM arrangements – Grant Thornton
Informing the audit risk assessment for the council (including pension fund)	✓					✓	Item on oversight of management's processes in relation to risks of fraud/error, compliance with relevant laws and regulations and gong concern – Grant Thornton
Certification of claims and returns annual report					✓		Annual report summarising findings from the certification of 2016-17 grant claims – Grant Thornton
Audit update report	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	Standing item – Grant Thornton update on work being planned or undertaken – Grant Thornton

Item			Meeting date					Commentary
		May 2017	July 2017	September 2017	November 2017	February 2018	June 2018	
	Governance and standards activity							
Annual governance statement			✓	✓				Annual governance statement (AGS) is a mandatory statement setting out the council's governance arrangements – Head of Financial and Information Governance
Retrospective approvals to contract decisions		(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	Standing item – contract standing orders require retrospective contract decisions over £100k to be reported for the purpose of obtaining guidance to inform future decision making – Director of Finance
Risk management and insurance			✓		✓			Annual report on risk management and insurance in July; report on key risks in November – Corporate Risk and Insurance Manager
Progress report on implementation of external audit recommendations		(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	Standing item – progress made in implementing external audit recommendations (Including audit findings) – Director of Finance
Outcomes of the whistleblowing policy					✓			Annual report to consider outcomes of the whistleblowing policy – Director of Law and Democracy
Review of complaints made under Code of Conduct						✓		Annual report on complaints made under Code of Conduct – Head of Corporate Team
Report on operational use of Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000						✓		Annual report on use of powers under RIPA – Head of Corporate Team
Review of member and officer protocol and communications protocol					✓			Annual review of protocols, with recommendations for changes as needed – Head of Corporate Team
Establishment of Sub-committees for 2017-18			✓					Report to establish sub-committees in line with committee's role and functions – Principal Constitutional Officer
Member induction and training				✓				Report on member induction and training

Item	Meeting date						Commentary
	May 2017	July 2017	September 2017	November 2017	February 2018	June 2018	
Areas of governance for review during year		(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)		To be determined by the committee
Corporate governance framework	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	Standing item – to include e.g. council policies within remit of audit, governance and standards committee; other areas as identified: pensions governance; code of governance
Accounts							
Statement of accounts		✓	✓				2016-17 statement of accounts for consideration and approval – Director of Finance
Treasury Management							
Review of the policy and strategy				✓			Review of treasury management policy and strategy – Director of Finance