Audit, Governance and Standards Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on Monday 13 July 2026 at 6.30 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G01C - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Colin Boyle (Chair)
Councillor Graham Neale
Councillor John Batteson
Councillor Esme Dobson
Councillor Felix Hamer
Councillor Richard Macmillan

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:

OFFICER SUPPORT:

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor James Moyse – Councillor Renata Hamvas was present as reserve; and from Angela Mason-Bell, BDO.

1. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

The members present were confirmed as the voting members.

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

There were none.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

5. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 3 February 2026 were agreed as a correct record.

6. CORPORATE ANTI-FRAUD TEAM AND SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS TEAM YEAR END REPORT 2025-26

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

Officers undertook to bring back further details on the corporate anti-fraud team and the special investigations team to the next meeting, including:

- Types of right to buy fraud and details of prosecutions, including information on Crown prosecution test
- Information on the council's actions on tenancy fraud, including the council's overall strategy and approach, and potential risks, as well as information on Operation Silver
- Information on the costs of operations versus the value of detecting fraud and recovering losses.

RESOLVED:

1. That the audit, governance and standards committee noted the Corporate Anti-Fraud Team (CAFT) and the Special Investigations Team (SIT) Year End Report 2025-26.

7. SOUTHWARK360: SIX-MONTH PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING (ERP) REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME

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

Officers undertook to bring back the benefits register for the Southwark360 update to the next meeting.

Officers undertook to include further information on key milestones, risks and mitigations, and confirmation of any material changes for the update to the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee noted the six-month progress update on delivery of the Southwark360 Programme for replacement of the council's Enterprise Resource Planning system, including progress since the previous report presented in November 2025.

8. EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN - SOUTHWARK COUNCIL & PENSION FUND

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Audit, Governance and Standards committee:

a. Noted the Southwark Council External Audit plan attached at Appendix A of the report, setting out planned audit scope, risk assessment and approach for the year ending 31 March 2026.

b. Noted the External Audit plan for 2025-26 for the Pension Fund attached at Appendix B of the report.

9. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT FOR 2025-26

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

Officers undertook to invite the director of adult social care to the next meeting to discuss the outcomes of two internal audit reports.

RESOLVED:

1. That the audit, governance and standards committee noted the update reports, as attached at Appendix A, including appendices 1, 2 and 3 of the report.

10. INTERNAL AUDIT - ANNUAL REPORT & OPINION 2025-26

Officers introduced the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the audit, governance and standards committee note the update reports, as attached at Appendix A.

11. INTERNAL AUDIT RISK-BASED PLAN, STRATEGY, CHARTER AND MANDATE

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee approved:

   a) the Internal Audit Plan for 2026/27 (Appendix 1 of the report)
   b) the three-year Internal Audit Strategy (Appendix 3 of the report); and
   c) the Internal Audit Charter and Mandate (Appendix 4 of the report).

12. DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2025-26

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

Officers undertook to ensure:

1. That the Annual Governance Statement 2026-27 be updated to reflect a fuller description of the council's commercial governance arrangements once the revised procurement framework, and associated operating arrangements have become

more embedded and are able to demonstrate delivery and outcomes.

2. That the Annual Governance Statement 2026-27 be updated to reflect the programme of the Administration elected in May 2026, including but not limited to the prioritisation of community resilience and adaptation in response to the increasing severity of climate change impacts on the borough.

It was moved, seconded, and

RESOLVED:

That the audit, governance and standards committee:

1. note the draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2025-26 as attached at Appendix A of the report.

2. agree that the Annual Governance Statement 2025-26 be updated to reflect the role of anchor institutions through the anchor network.

13. COMPLIANCE WITH CIPFA FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CODE

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee note the report.

14. FORMATION OF AUDIT, GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEES FOR 2026-27

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the committee established a sub-committee to consider complaints of misconduct against elected councillors and co-opted members (the audit, governance and standards (standards) sub-committee).

2. That the committee appointed Councillors Colin Boyle, Esme Dobson and Graham Neale to form the audit, governance and standards (standards) sub-committee.

3. That the committee appointed Councillor Colin Boyle as chair of the sub-committee.

4. That the committee established a sub-committee to consider civic awards (the audit, governance and standards (civic awards) sub-committee).

5. That the committee appointed Councillors John Batteson, Esme Dobson, Pascale Mitchell, and Graham Neale to form the audit, governance and standards (civic awards) sub-committee.

6. That the committee appointed a chair of the sub-committee.

There was one contested position.

The position of chair of the audit, governance and standards (civic awards) sub-committee was put to the vote, and it was agreed that Councillor Pascale Mitchell be appointed chair of the audit, governance and standards (civic awards) sub-committee.

15. IN YEAR REVIEW OF WORK PROGRAMME 2026-27: JULY 2026

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the audit, governance and standards committee noted the proposed work programme for 2026-27, with the following amendments:

    a. The inclusion in the scheduled report of the corporate anti-fraud team and special investigations team noted in item 6
    b. The inclusion in the scheduled report on Southwark360 noted in item 7
    c. The inclusion in September of the attendance of the director of adult social care noted in item 9
    d. A new item on the governance structures and risk management around the changes to the budget setting process used for 2027-28, to be taken in September.

Meeting ended at Time Not Specified

CHAIR:

DATED:

[CABINET ONLY]

DEADLINE FOR NOTIFICATION OF CALL-IN UNDER SECTION 17 OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES IS MIDNIGHT, [DATE].

THE ABOVE DECISIONS WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTABLE UNTIL AFTER THAT DATE. SHOULD A DECISION OF THE CABINET BE CALLED-IN FOR SCRUTINY, THEN THE RELEVANT DECISION WILL BE HELD IN ABEYANCE PENDING THE OUTCOME OF SCRUTINY CONSIDERATION.