

Audit, Governance and Standards Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on Tuesday 6 June 2023 at 6.30 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G01A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Barrie Hargrove (Chair)
Councillor John Batteson
Councillor Gavin Edwards
Councillor Hamish McCallum
Councillor Graham Neale
Councillor Andy Simmons

OFFICER SUPPORT: Dominic Cain, Director of Customer and Exchequer
Michelle Peake, Head of Specialist Services
Ciaran McLaughlin, Grant Thornton
Angela Mason-Bell, BDO
Greg Rubins, BDO
Geraldine Chadwick, Technical Accountant
Clive Palfreyman, Strategic Director of Finance
Virginia Wynn-Jones, Constitutional Team

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Sarah King (unavailable due to another council meeting), Michael Scorer, and Nick Baker, BDO.

2. 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 6 February 2023 and 20 May 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

6. GOVERNANCE CONVERSATION: MICHAEL SCORER

This item was postponed. The strategic director of housing and modernisation was invited back to a future meeting.

7. MEMBER ENQUIRIES REVIEW UPDATE

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

Officers undertook to:

- Confirm to members of the committee what councillors' involvement in the member enquiries review would look like
- Send an update on page 9 of the report, including updated figures for children's and adults' services
- Send a detailed breakdown of complaints per business unit and department
- Send an officer-level report on complaints to the committee.

RESOLVED:

That the audit, governance and standards committee noted the update to member enquiries.

That the audit, governance and standards committee invited officers to attend the November 2023 committee meeting to update on the performance and progress of the review detailed in the report.

8. EXTERNAL AUDIT VERBAL UPDATE

Grant Thornton updated the committee on the external audit. Members had questions for the external auditors.

Members thanked Grant Thornton for the update.

9. INTERNAL AUDIT AND ANTI-FRAUD PROGRESS REPORT: JUNE 2023

BDO introduced the report. Members had questions for the internal auditors.

Officers undertook to provide a written briefing to the committee, including information on:

- officers' responses to reporting fraud

- the schools work programme
- Finance report on team management
- fraud cases in children's and adults' services department.

Officers undertook to invite officers responsible for all outstanding audit responses in 2019-20 to the audit, governance and standards committee in July 2023.

RESOLVED:

That the committee noted the report.

10. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT AND ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2022-23: DRAFT INTERIM REPORT

BDO introduced the report. Members had questions for the internal auditors.

RESOLVED:

That the committee noted the report.

11. DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2022-23

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

Officers undertook to coordinate with the head of scrutiny to consider including the outcomes of the CFGS scrutiny improvement review report in the annual governance statement.

RESOLVED:

That the committee noted the draft annual governance statement.

12. COMPLIANCE WITH CIPFA FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CODE

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

Officers undertook to circulate a list of reserves of all London boroughs and changes over time.

Officers undertook to bring a report to the September audit, governance and standards committee on the processes of operational reserves.

RESOLVED:

That the committee noted the report.

13. FORMATION OF AUDIT, GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEES FOR 2023-24

Officers introduced the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the committee reserved their decision on the membership of the audit, governance and standards (standards) sub-committee. This item will be brought back to the July 2023 meeting.
2. That the committee appointed Councillors Barrie Hargrove, John Batteson, Sarh King and Graham Neale to form the audit, governance and standards (civic awards) sub-committee.
3. That the committee appointed Councillor Barrie Hargrove as chair of the sub-committee.
4. The committee also confirmed that Councillor Graham Neale would serve as the vice chair of the audit, governance and standards committee.

Meeting ended at 8.00 pm

CHAIR:

DATED: