



## **Audit, Governance and Standards Committee**

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on Thursday 5 September 2024 at 6.30 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Barrie Hargrove (Chair)  
Councillor Maggie Browning  
Councillor Dora Dixon-Fyle MBE  
Councillor Graham Neale  
Councillor Andy Simmons  
Councillor Michael Situ

**OFFICER SUPPORT:** Clive Palfreyman, strategic director for resources  
Toni Ainge, interim strategic director for environment, neighbourhoods and growth  
Joanne Brown, Grant Thornton  
Amarjit Uppal, chief accountant  
Tim Jones, director of corporate finance  
Paul Bergin, manager, anti-fraud  
Fleur Nieboer, KPMG  
Phillip Kent, KPMG  
Angela Mason-Bell, BDO  
Aaron Winter, BDO  
Virginia Wynn-Jones, constitutional team

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Nick Johnson.

### **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 the meeting of 3 June 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

#### **6. GOVERNANCE CONVERSATION: STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND GROWTH**

Toni Ainge, interim strategic director for environment, neighbourhoods and growth, presented to the committee.

Officers undertook to ensure that the results from parking reports are published on the website within the statutory deadlines and ideally earlier.

Officers undertook to bring the committee information about consultations with area fora on the TfL delivery plan.

The committee thanked Toni for her conversation.

#### **7. AUDITOR'S ANNUAL REPORT ON SOUTHWARK COUNCIL 2022-23**

Grant Thornton presented the report.

Officers undertook to circulate information on the TMO liaison management committee to the committee.

The committee noted their extensive conversations on community housing schemes and TMOs at previous committee meetings, and appreciated the work put into this issue.

The committee thanked the member of the public who raised the issue with the 2021-22 accounts for their attention and support.

The committee thanked Grant Thornton for their work as the council's external auditor.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the committee noted the external auditor's annual report for 2022-23, as attached at Appendix A of the report.

**8. PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EXTERNAL AUDIT ACTION PLAN**

Officers introduced the report. The committee had questions of the officers.

**RESOLVED:**

That the committee noted the progress on implementation of recommendations from external audit reports for 2021-22 and 2022-23.

**9. AUDIT PROGRESS UPDATE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2024**

KPMG presented the report. Councillors had questions for KPMG.

**RESOLVED:**

That the committee note the audit progress update for the year ending 31 March 2024, as attached at Appendix A of the report.

**10. EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN & STRATEGY FOR SOUTHWARK PENSION FUND 2023/24**

KPMG presented the report. Councillors had questions for KPMG.

**RESOLVED:**

That the committee note the external audit plan for 2023-24 for Southwark Pension Fund, as attached at Appendix A of the report.

**11. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2023-24 AND 2024-25**

BDO presented the report. Councillors had questions for BDO.

BDO undertook to update the bottom paragraphs on pages 102 and 103 of the agenda (pp 13-14 internal numbering).

Officers undertook to bring a full report on cyber-security and IT hardware asset management to the committee.

**RESOLVED:**

That the committee noted the report, as attached at Appendix A of the report.

**12. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT AND ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2023-24, AND SCHOOLS ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT 2023-24**

BDO presented the report. Councillors had questions for BDO.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the committee noted the annual report and annual statement of assurance 2023-24, as attached at Appendix A of the report.
2. That the committee noted the schools annual summary report 2023-24, as attached at Appendix B of the report.

**13. DRAFT 2023/24 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR SOUTHWARK COUNCIL**

Officers presented the report. Councillors had questions for the officers.

Officers undertook to arrange an informal session to discuss the accounts with members outside of the committee.

Officers undertook to confirm whether there were any questions or challenges on the accounts before the November meeting of the audit, governance and standards committee.

Officers undertook to confirm references to specific data within the accounts before the November meeting of the audit, governance and standards committee.

Officers undertook to bring back a report looking at the risks and governance around updating the council through the Southwark360 programme to the February meeting of the audit, governance and standards committee.

**RESOLVED:**

That the committee noted the draft 2023/24 statement of accounts at appendix B of the report.

**14. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT 2023-24**

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

**RESOLVED:**

The audit, governance and standards committee approved the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2023-24 as attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

**15. 2024-25 Q1 REPORT OF THE CORPORATE ANTI-FRAUD TEAM AND THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS TEAM**

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

**RESOLVED:**

The audit, governance and standards committee noted the 2024-25 Q1 report of the Corporate Anti-fraud Team and the Special Investigations Team.

**16. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT UPDATE**

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

Officers undertook to bring a further update on resident engagement to the committee on the HRA, including the budgets for detailed issues such as cleaning, estate care, and damp and mould.

**RESOLVED:**

The committee noted the report.

**17. MEMBERSHIP OF AUDIT, GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEES FOR 2024-25**

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

**RESOLVED:**

That the committee appoint Councillor Dora Dixon-Fyle to the vacant position on the audit, governance and standards (standards) sub-committee.

That the committee appoint Councillor Dora Dixon-Fyle to the vacant position on the audit, governance and standards (civic awards) sub-committee.

Meeting ended at 8.45 pm

**CHAIR:**

**DATED:**