

Audit, Governance and Standards Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on Tuesday 20 October 2020 at 6.30 pm at Online. Contact virginia.wynn-jones@southwark.gov.uk for details.

PRESENT: Councillor James McAsh (Chair)
Councillor Graham Neale
Councillor Humaira Ali
Councillor Sunil Chopra (reserve)
Councillor Dora Dixon-Fyle MBE
Councillor Andy Simmons
Councillor Michael Situ

OFFICER SUPPORT: Duncan Whitfield, strategic director of finance and governance
Ciaran McLaughlin, Grant Thornton
Rob Woollatt, departmental finance manager
Geraldine Chadwick, senior finance manager
Virginia Wynn-Jones, constitutional team

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tom Flynn. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Sunil Chopra.

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

The chair agreed to accept Item 7: 2019-20 Statement of Accounts for Southwark Council and Audit findings report (ISA 260) – including pension fund as late and urgent for the reasons set out in the relevant minute.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

5. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 9 September 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

6. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019-20

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the audit, governance and standards committee approved the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2019-20 as attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

7. 2019-20 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR SOUTHWARK COUNCIL AND AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT (ISA 260) - INCLUDING PENSION FUND

This item was accepted as late and urgent by the chair, as:

- The audit of the accounts is ongoing up to the date of receipt of the audit opinion. The Audit Findings Reports were received close to the deadline for the dispatch of the audit, governance and standards committee agenda.
- The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require the council to approve the accounts by 31 July each year. However, the Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 revised the statutory deadline to 30 November for 2019-20. The audit findings report and audited statement of accounts 2019-20 must be issued for committee consideration prior to the audit opinion being released.

The external auditors introduced the report. Members had questions for the auditors and officers.

The audit, governance and standards committee and the strategic director of finance and governance thanked the finance team, BDO as the council's internal auditors, and Grant Thornton as the council's external auditors for their quick and effective work.

RESOLVED:

1. That the audit, governance and standards committee:
 - a) considered the matters raised in Grant Thornton's audit findings report for 2019-20 (appendix A of the report) before approval of the council's main accounts
 - b) noted the adjustments to the main accounts as set out in page 21 of the audit findings report

- c) approved the council's letter of representation set out at appendix B of the report
- d) considered the matters raised in the Pension Fund audit findings report 2019-20 (appendix C of the report) prior to approval of the Pension Fund accounts
- e) noted the adjustments to the Pension Fund accounts as set out in page 14 of the pension fund audit findings report
- f) approved the Pension Fund letter of representation set out at appendix D of the report
- g) approved the Statement of Accounts 2019-20 (appendix E of the report), subject to any final changes required by the conclusion of the audit being delegated to the Strategic Director of Finance and Governance in consultation with the chair of Audit, Governance and Standards Committee.

8. FORMATION OF AUDIT, GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEES FOR 2020-21

RESOLVED:

That the membership of the sub-committees be as follows:

Audit, governance and standard (civic awards) sub-committee
Councillor Dora Dixon-Fyle (Chair)
Councillor Graham Neale
Councillor Andy Simmons
Councillor Michael Situ

Audit, governance and standard (standards) sub-committee
Councillor Michael Situ (Chair)
Councillor Humaira Ali
Councillor James McAsh

Meeting ended at 7.10 pm

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.