

Item No. 15	Classification: Open	Date: 2 June 2021	Meeting Name: Audit Governance and Standards Committee
Report title:		Formation of audit, governance and standards sub-committees for 2021-22	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Director of Law and Democracy	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the committee appoint three members to form the audit, governance and standards (standards) sub-committee.
2. That the committee appoint a chair of the sub-committee.
3. That the committee appoint four members to form the audit, governance and standards (civic awards) sub-committee.
4. That the committee appoint a chair of the sub-committee.
5. That the committee considers the nominations for the positions of co-opted members of the audit, governance and standards (civic awards) sub-committee outlined in closed Appendix 1 and agree the nominations.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

6. Southwark Council's constitution sets out as part of the role and responsibilities of the audit, governance and standards committee to establish the following sub-committees:
 - standards sub-committee; to consider complaints of misconduct against elected councillors and co-opted members
 - civic awards sub-committee; to consider civic awards.
7. The responsibilities of these two sub-committees are excerpted from the constitution below:

PART 3K: AUDIT, GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS 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 audit, governance and standards committee.
- 43. To appoint non-voting co-opted members of the civic awards sub-committee.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 8. The membership for these sub-committees is drawn from the main committee.
- 9. There is one meeting of the civic awards sub-committee, around February of each year to discuss and agree the grants of civic awards.
- 10. The standards sub-committee meets when it is required on an ad hoc basis; it has been required once in the past five years.
- 11. The meeting of the audit, governance and standards committee of 14 July 2016 recommended that the civic awards sub-committee be gender-balanced, with at least two of the Southwark members and two of the community representatives serving on the sub-committee being women. This is not a constitutional requirement.
- 12. Sub-committees are not 'ordinary' committees and are each considered individually for the purposes of proportionality. So far as it is reasonably practicable to do so, the allocation of seats a sub-committee should bear the same proportion to the number of the seats held by that group on the council. The audit, governance and standards committee can agree an allocation that is disproportionate, provided no member votes against this.
- 13. The most proportionate allocation will depend on the number of members of the sub-committee. The following sub-committee sizes would provide the following allocation of places:

Sub-committee	Total	Lab	Lib Dem
Audit, governance and standards (civic awards) sub-committee	4	3	1
Audit, governance and standards (standards) sub-committee	3	2	1

Co-opted members of the civic awards sub-committee

- 14. The Southwark civic awards scheme was initiated in 1997 for the purposes of recognising exceptional contributions to community life by

individuals and organisations in the borough. Up until 2015, the scheme was administered on behalf of the council by the Southwark Civic Association which made recommendations to standards committee for the granting of civic awards.

15. Council assembly on 8 July 2015 resolved that from the 2015/2016 civic year, the administration of the civic awards be carried out by the council pending a longer term review of the operation of the awards scheme. Officers were requested to put in place the necessary arrangements for the running of the awards within existing council resources. Council assembly in 2016 also resolved that the decisions on the granting of civic awards be delegated to a sub-committee of the audit, governance and standards committee.
16. The audit, governance and standards committee agreed at its meeting of 14 July 2016 that the membership of the audit, governance and standards (civic awards) sub-committee (henceforth "civic awards sub-committee") must include four co-opted members, two of whom must be women.
17. It is necessary for the audit, governance and standards committee to appoint these co-opted members formally; and the names of the volunteers will be presented in the closed report.
18. The granting of awards is a constitutional function of the audit, governance and standards (civic awards) sub-committee and members have the final discretion whether or not to grant an award. Members also have a particular responsibility to safeguard the non-political nature of the awards scheme.
19. Members need to be satisfied that the co-opted membership nominations meet the appropriate criteria.

Resource implications

20. There are none.

Community impact statement

21. Clear arrangements concerning the accountability of members are very important for promoting high standards of conduct. In addition it is important in aiding the decision-making process and helping to boost public confidence in the council. These arrangements ensure that members of the public are aware of the process in place to ensure that high standards of conduct are maintained within the council.
22. The council is committed to promoting civic engagement and good relations in our communities. The awards attract media interest and recognise the voluntary work of a number of people and organisations within Southwark, thus strengthening community cohesion.

APPENDICES

No.	Title
1	Nominees for position of co-opted member (circulated separately in closed agenda)

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Southwark Council Constitution	Southwark Council, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Virginia Wynn-Jones 020 7525 7055
http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=425&Year=0		

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Doreen Forrester-Brown, Director of Law and Democracy	
Report Author	Virginia Wynn-Jones, Principal Constitutional Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	20 May 2021	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments sought	Comments included
Director of Law and Democracy	N/A	N/A
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		20 May 2021