

STANDARDS AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

22 JULY 2021

(7.15 pm - 8.15 pm)

PRESENT Councillor Peter McCabe (in the Chair), Councillor Adam Bush, Councillor Ben Butler, Councillor John Dehaney, Councillor Dickie Wilkinson, Councillor David Williams, Councillor Andrew Howard, Councillor Brenda Fraser, Councillor Nick Draper and Councillor Jenifer Gould

ALSO PRESENT Amy Dumitrescu (Interim Democracy Services Manager) and Krishna Chapriban (Democratic Services Officer)

ATTENDED REMOTELY Clive Douglas and Katy Willison (Independent Persons)

Suresh Patel, Elizabeth Jackson and Ian Young (Ernst Young)

Louise Round (Monitoring Officer and Managing Director South London Legal Partnership) and Margaret Culleton (Head of Internal Audit)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillors Mary Curtin, Martin Whelton and Hina Bokhari. Councillor Jenifer Gould attended as substitute

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS (Agenda Item 2)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

3 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest

4 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT (Agenda Item 4)

The Head of Internal Audit presented the Internal Audit Report 2021 to provide assurance on the councils-controlled environment. Reasonable assurance was provided based on the work undertaken, noting that 33 assurances were provided, 8 of which were limited assurances detailed in table 3 of the report.

Cybersecurity, DBS and CMS2000 which were issued in May and June have been finalised this year. The number of fraud cases that have been investigated this year were updated.

In response to member questions the Head of Internal Audit confirmed that in relation to prepaid cards and the extent of any losses actions have been taken since reported in Table 3. Further testing on prepaid cards will ensure actions have been implemented included within an update on fraud cases investigated this year.

In response to the member's questions on recovering losses and a demonstration of the monies that exists in prepaid card accounts and when audited assurances will be provided during final approval of the accounts. The Head of Internal Audit confirmed there were no significant financial loss as the prepaid cards with monies had not been activated or used and due to no financial losses it was reported as procedural issue raised on audit.

The Head of Internal Audit would update the members on the reconciliations between the two systems and the assessments made during past audits.

The Head of Internal Audit explained to committee that actions had been implemented with an outstanding query on procedures to be signed off. Further training has been offered to staff during heightened times of cyber security, strengthen of firewall have been implemented and that HR have a list updated monthly made available to management.

Outgoing External Audit partner Suresh Patel presented Partner and Audit Manager Elizabeth Jackson and Ian Young to replace Simon Mathers.

RESOLVED

The Committee reviewed and commented on the Internal Audit Annual Report 2020/21

5 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (Agenda Item 5)

The Head of Internal Audit introduced the Annual Governance Statement (AGS), the review considered the 7 core principle areas set out in CIPHA guidance. Current arrangements were looked at within the council and that have happened in 2021. This report gives the update for the year and updates on actions from last year, of which 5 of the actions are in progress and have been moved forward to this year.

RESOLVED

The Committee endorsed the final 2020/21 AGS (as contained in Appendix A) for inclusion within the Council's final Statement of Accounts

6 FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH (Agenda Item 6)

The Monitoring Officer introduced a report from the working group that considered the nominations for the award of Freedom of the Borough. The report set out the findings and recommendations of the working group who agreed that the nomination

for Mr Guy had met the criteria and demonstrated that he made a substantial contribution to the Borough.

RESOLVED:

A. That the Standards and General Purposes Committee recommended to Council that the award of Freedom of the Borough be made to Richard John Guy for his sporting achievements and continuing work within the community

7 COMPLAINTS AGAINST MEMBERS (Agenda Item 7)

The Monitoring Officer presented a report that explained the revised process to deal with complaints made against members, who may have breached the code of conduct received after 8 July 2021.

Members proposed, seconded and agreed the suggestion that the sub-committee should be comprised of 7 members.

RESOLVED:

A. It was agreed that the Standards and General Purposes Committee appoint a subcommittee to undertake hearings as and when required to consider complaints against members under the members complaints process, part 5A of the Council's Constitution (Appendix A).

B. The Standards and General Purposes Committee agreed the number of members required to sit on the Sub-Committee would be 7 members and asked the relevant political groups to nominate their representatives for appointment by the Chief Executive using her delegated authority.

C. The Committee noted the verbal update from the Monitoring Officer on complaints against members received since the last ordinary meeting of the Committee in March 2021.

8 WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 8)

The Work Programme was noted and agreed.

In response to member comments and questions, the Interim Democracy Services Manager advised that when the annual calendar of meetings for 2022/23 was consulted on in the Autumn, the financial deadline dates and the work programme would be considered when scheduling dates for meetings of the Standards and General Purposes Committee.

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING (Agenda Item 9)

The Committee noted that the date of the next meeting of the Standards and General Purposes Committee (originally scheduled for 9 September 2021) would take place on 21 September 2021.