

Local Councils in England Electronic annual return Year ended 31 March 2012

Local councils in England with an annual turnover of £6.5 million or less must complete an annual return summarising their annual activities at the end of each financial year. In this annual return the term 'local council' includes a Parish Meeting, a Parish Council and a Town Council.

The annual return on pages two to five is made up of four sections:

- Sections 1 and 2 are completed by the person nominated by the local council.
- Section 3 is completed by the external auditor.
- Section 4 is completed by the local council's internal audit provider.

The council must approve this annual return no later than 30 June 2012.

Completing your electronic annual return (e-AR)

Guidance notes, including a completion checklist, are provided on page 6 and at relevant points in the annual return. For further information on e-AR go to <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/audit-regime/support-guidance/Pages/Annualreturn.aspx>

Once downloaded you are able to complete certain sections of this e-annual return. You must then print the e-annual return to complete the remainder of the information required before approval by the council. The sections available for completion electronically are:

- the name of your council in Sections 1, 2 and 4 on pages 2, 3 and 5
- boxes 1 to 11 in Section 1 on page 2, and
- the responses in boxes 1 to 9 in Section 2 on page 3.

You cannot save the e-annual return or send it electronically. You may only print it.

Complete all sections highlighted in green. Do not leave any green box blank. Incomplete or incorrect returns require additional external audit work and may incur additional costs.

Send the annual return, together with your bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2012, an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements and any additional information requested, to your appointed external auditor by the due date.

Your auditor will identify and ask for any documents needed for audit. Therefore, unless requested, do not send any original financial records to the external auditor.

Audited and certified annual returns will be returned to the council for publication or public display of sections 1, 2 and 3. You must publish or display the audited annual return by 30 September 2012.

It should not be necessary for you to contact the external auditor or the Audit Commission directly for guidance.

More guidance on completing this annual return may be found in the Practitioners' Guide for local councils that can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.slcc.co.uk

Section 1 – Accounting statements for

Readers should note that throughout this annual return references to a 'local council' or 'council' also relate to a parish meeting.

| | Year ending | | Notes and guidance | | | | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|---|-----|----|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| | 31 March 2011 £ | 31 March 2012 £ | | | | | | | | |
| | | | Round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records. | | | | | | | |
| 1 Balances brought forward | 11,959 | 12,252 | Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year. | | | | | | | |
| 2 (+) Annual precept | 5,318 | 5,318 | Total amount of precept received or receivable in the year. | | | | | | | |
| 3 (+) Total other receipts | 656 | 2,365 | Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept received (box 2). Include any grants received here. | | | | | | | |
| 4 (-) Staff costs | 1,030 | 0 | Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses. | | | | | | | |
| 5 (-) Loan interest/capital repayments | 0 | 23 | Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the council's borrowings (if any). | | | | | | | |
| 6 (-) All other payments | 4,651 | 7,503 | Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (box 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (box 5). | | | | | | | |
| 7 (=) Balances carried forward | 12,252 | 12,453 | Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6) | | | | | | | |
| 8 Total cash and short term investments | 12,252 | 12,453 | The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – to agree with bank reconciliation. | | | | | | | |
| 9 Total fixed assets and long term assets | 27,315 | 26,949 | The recorded book value at 31 March of all fixed assets owned by the council and any other long term assets e.g. loans to third parties and any long term investments. | | | | | | | |
| 10 Total borrowings | 0 | 0 | The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB). | | | | | | | |
| 11 Trust funds (including charitable) disclosure note | <table border="1"> <tr> <td>YES</td> <td>NO</td> <td>YES</td> <td>NO</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input checked="" type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input checked="" type="radio"/></td> </tr> </table> | YES | NO | YES | NO | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | Disclosure Note: The council acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing trust funds or assets. (Readers should note that the figures above do not include any trust transactions.) |
| YES | NO | YES | NO | | | | | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | | | | | | | |

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2012 the accounting statements in this annual return present fairly the financial position of the council and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

I confirm that these accounting statements were approved by the council on this date:

and recorded as minute reference:

Signed by Chair of the meeting approving these accounting statements.

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

Section 2 – Annual governance statement

We acknowledge as the members of:

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2012, that:

| | Agreed – | | 'Yes' means that the council: |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| | Yes | No* | |
| 1 We approved the accounting statements prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | prepared its accounting statements in the way prescribed by law. |
| 2 We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge. |
| 3 We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | has only done things it has the legal power to do and conformed to codes of practice and standards in the way it has done so. |
| 4 We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the council's accounts. |
| 5 We assessed the risks facing the council and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | considered the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly. |
| 6 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council's accounting records and control systems. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of the council. |
| 7 We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit. |
| 8 We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the council and, where appropriate included them in the accounting statements. | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant. |
| 9 Trust funds (including charitable) – in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit. | YES <input type="radio"/> | NO <input type="radio"/> | met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts. |
| | | NA <input checked="" type="radio"/> | |

This annual governance statement is approved by the council and recorded as minute reference

dated

Signed by:

Chair

dated

Signed by:

Clerk

dated

*Note: Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response. Describe how the council will address the weaknesses identified.