

815

1 May 2020

Attleborough Town Council

Dear Sirs,

**Internal Audit for the year ended 31st March 2020**

I thank the Council for re-appointing me to carry out the internal audit for the 2020 accounts. I remind you that, according to the Local Councils' Governance and Accountability Guidance, the purpose of internal audit is to review whether the systems of financial and other control are effective; neither the internal nor the external auditor can be expected to look for fraud. I do not give an opinion on the accounts, I am required to review controls and give recommendations.

I carried out the following work on the Council's books and records over the past few days:

1. **Proper Bookkeeping:**
  - checked on a sample of payments from the nominal ledger to invoices, including all large amounts
  - checked a sample of receipts from nominal ledger to supporting documentation or bank statements, including precept and all large amounts
  - checked that VAT had been correctly identified on invoices
  - VAT is reclaimed quarterly
2. **Financial Regulations:**
  - S.137 grants are within the legal limit
  - Financial Regulations were reviewed by the Council in May 2019
  - a Review of Internal Controls was done in May 2019
  - cheques are signed by two councillors
  - payments lists are checked and signed by a councillor
  - bank reconciliations are prepared by Anne, checked by Gina and then by a councillor
3. **Risk Arrangements:**
  - reviewed minutes for unusual items
  - reviewed various risk assessment documents
4. **Budgetary Controls:**
  - budget is reviewed by the Finance Committee before being discussed by the full Council
  - reports comparing actual spending/income to budget figures are presented at each meeting

- Precept was increased for 20/21 to pay for the future projects
- 5. **Income Controls:**
  - reviewed receipt of precept
  - reviewed significant income during year
  - reviewed receipt of burials income and letting income
- 6. **Petty Cash**
  - discussed systems for the administration of petty cash expenditure
- 7. **Payroll Controls:**
  - compared the total in the accounts to end of year payroll figures for reasonableness
  - checked the November and March totals: tax appears to have been correctly calculated, given the tax codes listed
  - employment costs in the Annual Return are for the clerk, office staff and groundsmen.
- 8. **Asset Controls:**
  - asset register values are based on insurance schedule and/or cost
  - reviewed minutes for significant additions
  - checked additions to supporting documentation
- 9. **Bank Reconciliation:**
  - checked October's reconciliation to the bank statements and to the cashbook balances
- 10. **Year-end Procedures:**
  - reviewed year-end bank reconciliation and checked it to the bank statements
  - reviewed nominal ledger for unusual items
  - reviewed income and expenditure for unusual items
  - annual return prepared using income and expenditure method
  - the year-end VAT return equals the figure in the accounts and was reclaimed in April

The above tests and review work showed the accounts are supported by invoices and receipts, and agree to year-end bank statements. The Council has a good system of internal controls. I have therefore signed the internal auditor's part of the Annual Return.

I have raised various minor issues with [REDACTED] and have received satisfactory responses. I have nothing to bring to the attention of the Council.

Yours faithfully,

*Pauline James*

Pauline James BA  
Cert of Higher Education in Community Engagement and Governance

15/04/2020

11:19

8C

## Attleborough Town Council Current Year

## Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2020

31st March 2019

31st March 2020

	<b>Current Assets</b>		
5,522	Debtors	230	
9,013	Vat Refunds	16,197	
880	Prepayments & Accrued Income	1,340	
0	Lloyds Current Account	407,553	
460,581	Current/Deposit Account	36,330	
81,648	Barclays Base Rate Reward	81,991	
85	Petty Cash	127	
25	TIC Cash Book	25	
140,113	NatWest Business Reserve	140,395	
<u>697,866</u>			<u>684,187</u>
	<b>Total Assets</b>		<u>684,187</u>
	<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
20,720	Creditors	6,060	
20,084	Accrued Expenses	15,712	
938	Receipts in Advance	942	
<u>41,742</u>			<u>22,714</u>
	<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>		<u>661,473</u>
	<b>Represented By</b>		
300,644	General Reserve		305,992
141,575	Earmarked Reserves Toilets		141,575
84,232	New Cemetery Extension Reserve		84,232
2,617	Machinery Reserve		2,617
15,557	Play equipment reserves		15,557
15,000	Town Hall Project Reserve		15,000
7,500	Open Spaces for Tree Work Res		7,500
80,000	Play Parks Commuted Sum		80,000
9,000	S106 Grovner Park Commuted Sum		9,000
<u>656,124</u>			<u>661,473</u>

15/04/2020

**Attleborough Town Council Current Year**

11:19

**Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2020**

**31st March 2019**

**31st March 2020**

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 31st March 2020 and reflects its Income and Expenditure during the year.

Signed :  
Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Signed :  
Responsible  
Financial

\_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_

**Attleborough Town Council Current Year**

**Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 31 March 2020**

807

<u>Confirmed Bank &amp; Investment Balances</u>		
<u>Bank Statement Balances</u>		
31/03/2020	Barcalys bpa -atc reserve	3,733.20
31/03/2020	Barclays Current Account	33,381.14
18/03/2020	Petty Cash	126.53
31/03/2020	TIC Cash Book	24.60
31/03/2020	Nat West Bond ATC	140,395.45
31/03/2020	Base Rate reward	81,990.94
17/03/2020	Lloyds Current Account	407,552.72
		<b>667,204.58</b>
	<u>Other Cash &amp; Bank Balances</u>	0.00
		<b>667,204.58</b>
	<u>Unpresented Payments</u>	784.46
		<b>666,420.12</b>
	<u>Receipts not on Bank Statement</u>	0.00
		<b>666,420.12</b>
	<b>Closing Balance</b>	
	<u>All Cash &amp; Bank Accounts</u>	<b>666,420.12</b>
1	Current/Deposit Account	36,329.88
2	Petty Cash	126.53
3	TIC Cash Book	24.60
4	NatWest Business Reserve	140,395.45
5	Barclays Base Rate Reward	81,990.94
6	Lloyds Current Account	407,552.72
	Other Cash & Bank Balances	0.00
	<b>Total Cash &amp; Bank Balances</b>	<b>666,420.12</b>



Attleborough Town Council Current Year  
Earmarked Reserves

82

Account	Opening Balance	Net Transfers	Closing Balance
320 Earmarked Reserves Toilets	141,574.85		141,574.85
321 New Cemetery Extension Reserve	84,231.75		84,231.75
322 St Mary's Church Drive Reserve	0.00		0.00
323 Machinery Reserve	2,617.00		2,617.00
324 Mayor's Youth Project Reserve	0.00		0.00
325 AIB Reserve	0.00		0.00
326 AIB Reserve 2009	0.00		0.00
330 Town Hall Lighting Reserve	0.00		0.00
331 Community Notice Board Reserve	0.00		0.00
332 Play equipment reserves	0.00		0.00
333 Town Hall Project Reserve	15,557.00		15,557.00
334 Play Park Equipment Reserve	15,000.00		15,000.00
335 Open Spaces for Tree Work Res	0.00		0.00
336 Play Parks Commuted Sum	7,500.00		7,500.00
337 S106 Grovner Park Commuted Sum	80,000.00		80,000.00
	9,000.00		9,000.00
	<u>355,480.60</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>355,480.60</u>





**Attleborough Town Council Current Year  
Income and Expenditure Account for Year Ended 31st March 2020**

8c

31st March 2019		31st March 2020
476,425	<b>Income Summary</b>	
<u>476,425</u>	Precept	518,928
	Sub Total	<u>518,928</u>
	<b>Operating Income</b>	
22,543	Administration	21,760
18	Toilets	6
20,819	Open Spaces	25,803
870	Attleborough in Bloom	1,135
90	Markets	1,640
13,444	Town Hall	18,875
2	TIC	1
<u>534,210</u>	Total Income	<u>588,148</u>
	<b>Running Costs</b>	
329,714	Administration	409,019
23,848	Street Lights	29,726
5,031	Toilets	5,455
14,819	Christmas Lights	13,888
341	Archive	59
14,397	Attleborough Neighbourhood Pla	3,894
79,994	Open Spaces	75,559
1,230	Attleborough in Bloom	1,092
226	Markets	48
27,859	Open Spaces Capital Exps.	1,750
37,839	Town Hall	31,442
3	TIC	68
23,945	Contingency	10,800
<u>559,247</u>	Total Expenditure	<u>582,800</u>
	<b>General Fund Analysis</b>	
320,930	Opening Balance	300,644
534,210	Plus : Income for Year	<u>588,148</u>
<u>855,141</u>		888,792
559,247	Less : Expenditure for Year	<u>582,800</u>
295,894		305,992
(4,750)	Transfers TO / FROM Reserves	0
<u>300,644</u>	<b>Closing Balance</b>	<u>305,992</u>



# Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

8d)

We acknowledge as the members of:

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for 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 2020, that:

	Agreed		Yes means that this authority:	
	Yes	No*		
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			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 Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing 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.			during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.	
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			considered and documented 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 accounting records and control systems.			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 this smaller authority.	
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			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 this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.	
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A	has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

and recorded as minute reference:

Chairman

Clerk

Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)

Authority web address

# Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

## ATTLEBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

This authority's internal auditor, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2020.

The internal audit for 2019/20 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2018/19, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2018/19 AGAR tick "not covered")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
L. The authority has demonstrated that during summer 2019 it correctly provided for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
M. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

01/05/2020

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

PAULINE JAMES

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

01/05/2020

\*If the response is 'no' you must include a note to state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

# Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

ATTLEBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	
1. Balances brought forward	681,161	656,124	Please 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. 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. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	476,425	518,928	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	57,785	69,220	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	255,651	306,775	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	NIL	NIL	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	303,596	276,025	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	656,124	661,473	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	682,451	666,420	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 plus long term investments and assets	2,449,652	2,446,269	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	NIL	NIL	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2020 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.  
Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Date

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

## Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2019/20

In respect of

### 1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2020; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

### 2 External auditor report 2019/20

(Except for the matters reported below)\* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (\*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

### 3 External auditor certificate 2019/20

We certify/do not certify\* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2020.

\*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

External Auditor Signature

Date

\*Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website ([www.nao.org.uk](http://www.nao.org.uk))

## Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this Annual Governance and Accountability Return. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide\** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. Where amendments are made by the authority to the AGAR after it has been approved by the authority and before it has been reviewed by the external auditor, the Chairman and RFO should initial the amendments and if necessary republish the amended AGAR and recommence the period for the exercise of public rights. If the AGAR contains unapproved or unexplained amendments, it may be returned and additional costs will be incurred.
- The authority **should** receive and note the annual internal audit report if possible before approving the annual governance statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2020.
- Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically requested. However, you **must** inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant email addresses and telephone numbers.
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (Section 2, page 5). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide\**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on page 5. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or variances are not fully explained, additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2019) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2020).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the period for the exercise of public rights. From the commencement date for a single period of 30 consecutive working days, the approved accounts and accounting records can be inspected. Whatever period the RFO sets it **must** include a common inspection period – during which the accounts and accounting records of all smaller authorities must be available for public inspection – of the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor before 1 July 2020.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights, been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations from last year to this year been published?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2020 been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

\*Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices, can be downloaded from [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk) or from [www.ada.org.uk](http://www.ada.org.uk)

# Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 Part 3

## To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities\*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
  - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
  - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

## Guidance notes on completing Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
  - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** is completed by the authority's internal auditor.
  - **Sections 1 and 2** are to be completed and approved by the authority.
  - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published **before 1 July 2020**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2020**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
  - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
  - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2020
  - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
  - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
  - Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

## Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on a publicly accessible website:

Before 1 July 2020 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2019/20**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2019/20**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2020 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

\*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.