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WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Local Councils in Wales
Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2014

Local councils in Wales (town councils and community councils) and their joint committees may complete an Annual Return summarising their annual activities at the completion of each financial year. **Please complete all sections highlighted in pink**. Incomplete or incorrect returns may require additional external audit work and incur additional costs.

Further guidance is included in Section 5 and in the One Voice Wales/SLCC Guidance publication *Governance and accountability for local councils in Wales – A Practitioners' Guide (2011)* (the Practitioners' Guide). Section 2 includes references to where the guide has further information.

The accounts and audit arrangements follow the process as set out below. **The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) MUST sign the certificate on this page before 30 June**. Councils are requested to complete the confirmation below before the Clerk submits a copy of the Annual Return to the auditor. The RFO will certify Section 3 and the Council will approve the Annual Return and sign Section 3 at the conclusion of the audit following receipt of the external auditor's report.

RFO/Clerk prepares Sections 1 and 2. Internal audit completes Section 4. RFO certifies return below **before 30 June** and presents the return to the Council. →	Council confirms that the Annual Return has been presented to the Council. RFO/Clerk sends a copy of the Annual Return and requested documents to the external auditor appointed by the Auditor General for Wales. →	External auditor completes the audit and sends a report on the audit to the Council setting out issues identified and the proposed audit opinion. The Annual Return is not certified by the external auditor at this stage. →	RFO certifies Section 3 and presents the Annual Return and the external audit report to the Council. Council approves the return and Chair certifies Section 3. Original copy of return sent to auditor. Auditor certifies Section 3 and sends back to Council for publishing **before 30 September**.

Received
17 SEP 2014
WAO

Responsible Financial Officer Certificate

Certificate under Regulation 8B (1) and 8B (2) Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended)

I certify that the accounting statements contained in Section 1 of this Annual Return present fairly the financial position of the Council, and its income and expenditure, or properly presents receipts and payments, as the case may be, for the year ended 31 March 2014.

Certification prior to audit	**Signature:** SIGNATURE REQUIRED	**Date:** 19/05/2014

Council confirmation prior to audit

The Annual Return for	INSERT COUNCIL NAME ABERGELE TOWN COUNCIL
for the year ended 31 March 2014 was presented to the Council on:	05/06/2014

Section 1: Following certification by the RFO, the accounting statements in Section 1 were presented to the Council.

Section 2: The Annual Governance Statement has been presented to the Council. To the best of our knowledge and belief, and subject to your audit findings, the responses to each statement of assurance in Section 2 are accurate, complete and represent the Council's final responses.

Signed by Chair: SIGNATURE REQUIRED	**Signed by Clerk:** SIGNATURE REQUIRED
Name: INSERT NAME BRIAN CONWAY ROBERTS	**Name:** INSERT NAME MANDY J. EVANS
Date: DD/MM/YYYY 5/6/14	**Date:** DD/MM/YYYY 5/6/14

Please send a copy of the Annual Return, together with any additional information requested, to your appointed external auditor. Unless requested, please **do not** send any original financial records to the external auditor.

Audited and certified returns are sent back to the Council for publication or display of Sections 1, 2 and 3.

Section 1 – Accounting statements for: ABERGELE TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance for compilers
	31 March 2013 (£)	31 March 2014 (£)	**Please round all figures to nearest £. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or nil balances. All figures must agree to the Council's underlying financial records for the relevant year.**
1. Balances brought forward	173,514	175,702	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Must agree to Line 7 of the previous year.
2. (+) Annual precept	183,000	183,873	Total amount of precept income received in the year.
3. (+) Total other receipts	13,651	17994	Total income or receipts recorded in the cashbook minus the precept. Includes support, discretionary and revenue grants.
4. (-) Staff costs	53,506	57,375	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 related expenses.
5. (-) Loan interest/ capital repayments	4,165	3990	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the Council's borrowing (if any).
6. (-) Total other payments	136,792	128705	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook minus staff costs (Line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (Line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	175,702	187499 ✓	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6).
8. (+) Debtors and stock balances	14,962	14,767	**Income and expenditure accounts only:** Enter the value of debts owed to and stock balances held at the year-end.
9. (+) Total cash and investments	168,887	182,697 ✓	**All accounts:** The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and investments held at 31 March. This must agree with the reconciled cashbook balance as per the bank reconciliation.
10. (-) Creditors	8,147	9965	**Income and expenditure accounts only:** Enter the value of monies owed by the Council (except borrowing) at the year-end.
11. (=) Balances carried forward	175,702	187,499 ✓	**Total balances should equal Line 7 above:** Enter the total of (8+9-10).
12. Total fixed assets and long-term assets	707,772	721,209	The recorded current book value at 31 March of all fixed assets owned by the Council and any other long-term assets – eg, loans to third parties, other investments to be held for the long term ie, more than 12 months.
13. Total borrowing	13,333	10,000	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	No	N/A	
14. Trust funds disclosure note		✓			✓		The Council acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing (a) trust fund(s)/assets (readers should note that the figures above do not include any trust transactions).

Section 2 – Annual Governance Statement

We acknowledge as the members of the Council 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 Council's accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2014, that:

	Agreed?		'YES' means that the Council:	PG Chap.
	Yes	No*		
1. We have approved the accounting statements which have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended) and proper practices.	✓		Prepared its accounting statements in the way prescribed by law.	6, 12
2. We have 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.	6, 7
3. We have taken 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.	✓		Has only done things that it has the legal power to do and has conformed to codes of practice and standards in the way it has done so.	6
4. We have provided proper opportunity for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended).	✓		Has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the Council's accounts.	6, 23
5. We have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the Council and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		Considered the financial and other risks it faces in the operation of the Council and has dealt with them properly.	6, 9
6. We have maintained an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting records and control systems throughout the year and have received a report from the internal auditor.	✓		Arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether these meet the needs of the Council.	6, 8
7. We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in previous reports from internal and external audit.	✓		Has responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.	6, 8, 23
8. We have 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, have included them on the accounting statements.	✓		Disclosed everything it should have about its business during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.	6

	Yes	No	N/A		
9. Trust funds – in our capacity as trustee we have: • Discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s) including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.		✓		Has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.	3, 6

* Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'no' response given; and describe what action is being taken to address the weaknesses identified.

Section 3 – Certification and approval

Council approval and certification following the audit

The Council is responsible for the preparation of the accounting statements in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended) and for the preparation of an Annual Return which:

- summarises the Council's accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2014; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are important to the external auditor's responsibilities.

Certification by the RFO	Approval by the Council
Certificate under Regulation 8 Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2005 (Regulation 8B (1), 8B (2) and 8B(3)) I certify that the accounting statements contained in this Annual Return presents fairly the financial position of the Council, and its income and expenditure, or properly presents receipts and payments, as the case may be, for the year ended 31 March 2014.	**Approval of accounting statements under Regulation 9 (3) Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended) and the Annual Governance Statement** I confirm that these accounting statements and Annual Governance Statement were approved by the Council under council minute reference: 175/14 (b)
RFO signature:	**Chair signature:**
Name: MANDY J EVANS	**Name:** BRIAN C. ROBERTS
Date: 4/9/2014	**Date:** 4/9/2014.

External Audit Certificate

The external auditor conducts the audit in accordance with guidance issued by the Auditor General for Wales. On the basis of their review of the Annual Return and supporting information, they report whether any matters that come to their attention give cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. We certify that we have completed the audit of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2014 of:

ABERGELE TOWN	**Council**

External auditor's report

[~~Except for the matters reported below~~]* On the basis of our review, in our opinion, the information contained in the Annual Return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

[[~~These matters along with~~]* Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the Council/meeting are included in our report to the Council dated 1/7/14.]

(* Delete as appropriate)

External auditor's signature:	
External auditor's name: UHY HACKER YOUNG	**Date:** 22/9/14

Section 4 – Annual internal audit report to: ABERGELE TOWN COUNCIL

The Council's internal audit, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, has included carrying out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ending 31 March 2014.

The internal audit has been carried out in accordance with the Council'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 the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the following control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council.

	Agreed?			
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**
1. Appropriate books of account have been properly kept throughout the year.	✓			
2. The Council's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓			
3. The Council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓			
4. The annual precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored, and reserves were appropriate.	✓			
5. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked, and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓			
6. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓			
7. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with council approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓			
8. Asset and investment registers were complete and accurate, and properly maintained.	✓			
9. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	✓			
10. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (~~receipts and payments~~/income and expenditure), agreed with the cashbook, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate, debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓			
11. Trust funds (including charitable trusts). The Council has met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓	

For any risk areas identified by the Council (list any other risk areas below or on separate sheets if needed) adequate controls existed:	Agreed?			
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**
13.				
14.				

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

** 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, internal audit must explain why not.

Name of person who carried out the internal audit:	DAVID SHORE
Signature of person who carried out the internal audit:	
Date:	2/6/2014

Section 5 – Guidance notes on completing the 2014 Annual Return

1. For guidance please read the Practitioners' Guide (*Governance and accountability for local councils: A Practitioners' Guide 2011 (Wales)*) – available from One Voice Wales and SLCC. It contains everything you need for the financial year-end and the statutory audit.
2. **The Wales Audit Office Good Practice Exchange (www.wao.gov.uk/2594.asp) provides further information on the accounts and audit process along with guidance on governance matters.**
3. Please make sure that Sections 1, 2 and 4 are completed (ie, no empty pink boxes) by the appropriate person and the certificates on page 1 are properly signed and dated. Avoid making any amendments to the completed return. If this is unavoidable, cross out the incorrect entries, make sure the amendments are properly initialled and an explanation for them is provided to the auditor. **Please do not use correction fluid.** Annual returns that are incomplete or contain unapproved and/or unexplained amendments or correction fluid will be returned unaudited.
4. Use the checklist provided below. Use a second pair of eyes, perhaps your internal auditor or the Chair, to review your Annual Return for completeness before sending a copy to the auditor.
5. Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation you send to your auditor with the copy Annual Return covers **all** your bank accounts and cash balances. If there are no reconciling items, please state this and provide evidence of the bank balances. If your council holds any investments, please note their value on the bank reconciliation. The auditor should also be able to agree your bank reconciliation to Line 9 in Section 1. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the Practitioners' Guide*.
6. Please **explain fully** any significant variances in the accounting statements. The auditor wants to know that **you** understand the reasons for the change. Please include a relevant and quantified analysis as shown in the Practitioners' Guide examples and not just a copy of your detailed accounts.
7. Please do not send the auditor any information that you are not specifically asked for. Doing so is not helpful. Please ensure that you enclose all the information that the auditor has asked for. If the auditor has to review unsolicited information, repeat a request for information, receives an incomplete bank reconciliation or explanation of variances this may incur additional costs for which the auditor is entitled to charge additional fees.
8. Please make sure that Section 1 adds up! Also please ensure that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Line 7 of 2013) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Line 1 of 2014).
9. **Do not complete the External Audit Certificate in Section 3.** The external auditor completes this after the Council approves the Annual Return following receipt of the external auditor's matters arising report.
10. **Please deal with all correspondence with the external auditor promptly.** This will help you to meet your statutory obligations and will minimise the cost of the audit to the Council.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean that you may not have met requirements		Done?	
Initial submission to the external auditor		**Yes**	**No**
Accounts	Has the RFO certified the front page (Regulation 8B (1) and 8B (2)(a)) no later than 30 June 2014?		
	Do the papers to be sent to the external auditor include an explanation of significant variations from last year to this year?		
	Does the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2014 agree to Line 9?		
	Have all pink boxes in Sections 1 and 2 been completed and explanations provided where needed?		
All sections	Have all pink boxes in Sections 1 and 2 been completed and explanations provided where needed?		
	Has all the information requested by the external auditor been sent with this Annual Return? Please refer to your notice of audit and any additional schedules provided by your external auditor.		

Final submission to the external auditor after receipt of external auditor's report on matters arising		Yes	No
Accounts	Has the RFO certified Section 3 (Regulation 8B (2)(b)) before the Council approves the Annual Return?		
Audit report	Has the Council received and considered the external audit report before approving the Annual Return?		
Approval	Has the Chair signed and dated Section 3 in time to allow the auditor to certify Section 3 and return to the Council no later than 30 September 2014?		