

Local Councils in England

Annual return for the year ended 31 March 2011

Local councils in England with an annual turnover of £1 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' means a Parish Meeting or a Parish Council or a Town Council.

The annual return on the following pages is made up of four sections:

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

Each council must ensure this annual return is approved no later than 30 June 2011.

Completing your annual return

Guidance notes, including a completion checklist, are provided on page 6 and at relevant points in the annual return.

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

Please send the annual return, together with your bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2011, 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.

If required, your auditor will identify and ask for any documents needed for audit. Unless requested, please 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.

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 is available 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

PRESCOT TOWN COUNCIL

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 2010 £	31 March 2011 £	
1 Balances brought forward	49654	26601	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	225 000	239 600	Total amount of precept received or receivable in the year.
3 (+) Total other receipts	197 704	146 602	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept received (line 2). Include any grants received here.
4 (-) Staff costs	222178	212 902	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	NIL	NIL	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the council's borrowings (if any).
6 (-) All other payments	223579	230507	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	26 601	-30 606	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	24 361	26 993	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	37 755	15 219	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	NIL	NIL	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11 Trust funds (including charitable) disclosure note	YES NO	YES NO	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.)

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2011 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

DM Lomax

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

18/11/11

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

11/11/11

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE 76 REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting approving these accounting statements.

D Allen

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

17/11/2011

Section 2 – Annual governance statement

We acknowledge as the members of ENTER NAME OF LOCAL COUNCIL HERE 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 2011, that:

	Agreed – Yes or No*	'Yes' means that the council:
1 We have approved the accounting statements prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.	YES	prepared its accounting statements in the way prescribed by law.
2 We have maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	No	made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
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.	YES	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.
4 We have provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	YES	during the year has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the council's accounts.
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.	No	considered the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly.
6 We have maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council accounting records and control systems.	No	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 have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	No	responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
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 in the accounting statements.	YES	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 have discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and , if required, independent examination or audit.	YES/ N/A	has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

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

MINUTE REFERENCE 76

dated 11/11/11 YY

Signed by:

Chair D. Allen SIGNATURE REQUIRED

dated 17/11/2011

Signed by:

Clerk D. M. L. L. L. SIGNATURE REQUIRED

dated 18/11/11 YY

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

External auditors' report

We have audited the annual return of **Prescot Town Council** for the year ended 31 March 2011.

Respective responsibilities of the Prescot Town Council and the auditors

The Council's responsible for preparing accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 and for an annual return which:

- summarises the Council's accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2011; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are important to our audit responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to conduct an audit in accordance with guidance issued by the Audit Commission and, on the basis of our review of the annual return and supporting information, to report whether any matters that come to our attention give cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Basis for a qualified opinion

The police are undertaking an investigation of the books and records of the Council. We are unable to obtain sufficient evidence about the income and expenditure of the Council for the year ended. Consequently, we are unable to determine whether any adjustments to the amounts in boxes 3,4,5 and 6 were necessary. There is a breach of regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulation 2011 which requires authorities to review the effectiveness of internal control which includes arrangements for the management of risk and to maintain adequate internal controls. There was also a breach of regulation 13, paragraph 3a of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 which states that the accounting statements shall be approved "as soon as reasonably practicable and in any event before 30 June immediately following the end of a year."

External auditors' Qualified report

On the basis of our review: In our opinion, except for the possible effects of the matters described in the basis for a qualified opinion;

- The information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices,
- Other matters not affecting our opinion are referred to in the attached issues arising report
- the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices,
- no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislative and statutory requirements have not been met.

Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We are unable to certify completion of the audit until the police have completed their enquiries and until we have considered the potential impact of the outcome of their enquiries for the exercise of our statutory functions.

BDO LLP

BDO LLP
Southampton

13/9/13

Section 4 – Annual internal audit report to

ENTER NAME OF LOCAL COUNCIL HERE

The council's internal audit, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2011.

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 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 the council.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose from one of the following Yes/No*/Not covered**
A Appropriate books of account have been kept properly throughout the year.	No
B The council's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	YES
C The council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	No
D The annual precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	No
E Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	No
F Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	YES
G Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with council approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	No
H Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	No
I Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	YES
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, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	No
K Trust funds (including charitable) The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	YES N/A

For any other risk areas identified by the council (list any other risk areas below or on separate sheets if needed) adequate controls existed:

Name of person who carried out the internal audit KAREN WALLS NATHAN

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit S. Nathan Date 14/11/2011

***Note:** 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).

****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, internal audit must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).