

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.

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?	NA	
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.	NA	

***Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices**, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20

LEOMINSTER 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.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
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.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	✓		
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.	✓		
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")			✓
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.	✓		
M. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
			✓

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

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

DD/MM/YY 3 JULY 2020

IAN A SELKIRK FCA TOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

3 JULY 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 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

We acknowledge as the members of:

LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

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	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
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.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
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.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
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.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>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.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
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.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
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
			✓
			<i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>

*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:

27/07/20

and recorded as minute reference:

18/20 (6) REFERENCE

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

Chairman

C. Thom SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

Julie Dudgeon SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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

leominster.town.council.gov.uk

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	
1. Balances brought forward	284,421	481,910	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. <i>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.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	484,632	512,222	<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts	321,218	77,437	<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs	241,186	331,085	<i>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.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	27,971	42,134	<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments	339,204	287,048	<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward	481,910	411,302	<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	477,630	406,908	<i>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.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	828,074	859,520	<i>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.</i>
10. Total borrowings	658,333	630,642	<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.</i> <i>N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.</i>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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

Julia Debbage
SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

27/07/20
SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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

27/07/20

as recorded in minute reference:

18/20 (C) REFERENCE

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

C Thom
SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2019/20

In respect of

LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

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

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YY

*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)

Leominster Town Council

Income and Expenditure Account (Unaudited)

for the year ended 31 March 2020

2019	2020 £ Gross Expenditure	2020 £ Income	2020 £ Net Expenditure
DIRECT SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC			
(21,880) Public Buildings	(54,661)	21,227	(33,434)
(36,077) Tourist Information Centre	(62,585)	23,045	(39,541)
(10,543) Public Toilets	(6,808)	-	(6,808)
(127,012) Open Spaces	(150,414)	5,285	(145,129)
1,105 Allotments	(3,070)	5,907	2,837
8,253 Market and Events	(2,446)	11,573	9,127
(28,125) Economic Development	(32,105)	-	(32,105)
(3,669) Planning	(1,642)	-	(1,642)
DEMOCRATIC, CIVIC AND CENTRAL COSTS			
(172,861) Central and Corporate Costs	(212,447)	400	(212,047)
(39,464) Community Grants	(30,149)		(30,149)
(6,407) Civic and Democratic	(10,550)		(10,550)
149,537 Capital Projects	(93,391)	10,000	(83,391)
(287,143)	(660,267)	77,437	(582,830)
484,632 Annual Precept			512,222
(178,450) Transfer to Earmarked Reserves			61,884
19,039			(8,724)

Reserve Movements

	Balance April 2019	Movement for Year	Balance March 2020
General Fund	114,397	(8,724)	105,673
Earmarked Reserves	122,025	5,500	127,525
Capital Receipts Reserve	245,488	(67,384)	178,104
	481,910	(70,608)	411,302
	Box 1		Box 7

Leominster Town Council

Income and Expenditure Reconciliation to Annual Return

31st March 2020

Annual Return Box Numbers	Income			Expenditure			
	Box 2	Box 3		Box 4	Box 5	Box 6	
	Precept	Other Income	Total	Staff Costs	Loans Repaid	Other Costs	Total
Direct Services							
Public Buildings	-	21,227	21,227		27,571	27,090	54,661
Tourist Information Centre		23,045	23,045	47,170		15,415	62,585
Public Toilets	-	-	-			6,808	6,808
Open Spaces	-	5,285	5,285	117,492		32,921	150,414
Allotments	-	5,907	5,907			3,070	3,070
Market and Events	-	11,573	11,573	2,376		70	2,446
Economic Development	-	-	-			32,105	32,105
Planning		-	-			1,642	1,642
Democratic, Management and Civic							
Central and Corporate Costs	-	400	400	164,047		48,400	212,447
Community Grants	-	-	-			30,149	30,149
Civic and Democratic	-	-	-			10,550	10,550
Capital Projects		10,000	10,000		14,563	78,828	93,391
Precept	512,222	-	512,222				
Totals Carried to Annual Return	512,222	77,437	589,659	331,085	42,134	287,048	660,267

Leominster Town Council

Balance Sheet (Unaudited)

as at 31 March 2020

2019		2020
£		£
	Current Assets	
12,639	Stock	12,353
9,424	Debtors	30,270
477,630	Cash at Bank and In-hand	406,908
<u>499,693</u>		<u>449,530</u>
	Current Liabilities	
17,783	Creditors and accrued expenses	38,228
<u>481,910</u>	Net Current Assets	<u>411,302</u>
	Financed by:	
	Reserves available to the Council	
122,025	Earmarked Reserves	127,525
245,488	Capital Receipts Reserve	178,104
114,397	General Reserve	105,673
<u>481,910</u>		<u>411,302</u>

Leominster Town Council
Analytical Review 31 March 2020

	2019	2020	Variance £	Variance %	Explanation	
Box 2	484,632	512,222	27,590	5.69%	Under 15% No Explanation required	
					Reduction in Income due to loan advance in previous year	-200,000
					Reduction in Grants received	-37,514
					Reduction in TIC Income	-7,722
					Net Movement over all other Income Headings	1,455
Box 3	321,218	77,437	-243,781	-75.89%		-243,781
					Increase in Cost due to duplication of Town Clerk salary covering 3 month hand over period..	
					Sub-contractor taken on to payroll during the year	
					Increase in Grounds Maintenance staff due to additional devolved responsibilities	
Box 4	241,186	331,065	89,879	37.27%		89,879
Box 5	27,971	42,134	14,163	50.63%	Loan repayments increased due to full years repayment of loan advanced in 2018/2019	14,163
					Decrease in Play Area Investment	-46,987
					Decrease in Grounds Maintenance Materials	-38,397
					Increase in Property improvement Costs	25,767
					Increase in Vehicle Running Costs	5,837
					Net Movement across all other expenditure Costs	1,624
Box 6	339,204	287,048	-52,156	-15.38%		-52,156
Box 9	828,074	859,520	31,446	3.80%	Under 15% no explanation required	
						0
Box 10	658,333	630,642	-27,691	-4.21%	Under 15% no explanation required	

Leominster Town Council
 F earmarked Reserves 31 March 2021

	Balance 1st April 2020	Added During Year	Spent During Year		Balance 31st March 2021
Elections	16,150				16,150
CCTV	4,500				4,500
Town Centre Enhancement	20,000				20,000
Equipment Rolling Programme	20,725				20,725
Play Equipment	6,000				6,000
Public Convenience	51,800				51,800
Grants	0				0
Youth Projects	8,350				8,350
Capital Receipts Reserve	27,638				27,638
Unspent Loans	150,466				150,466
	305,629	0	0	0	305,629