

(NAME): WATTON TOWN COUNCIL

Notice of conclusion of the audit
Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2017

Section 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015

	Notes
1. The audit of accounts for the Council/ Meeting (a) for the year ended 31 March 2017 has been concluded.	(a) Delete as appropriate
2. The Annual Return is available for inspection by any local government elector of the area of the Council /Meeting (a) on application to:	
(b) <u>Jane Scarrott - Clerk</u> <u>WAYLAND HALL</u> <u>MIDDLE STREET</u> <u>WATTON</u>	(b) Insert name, position and address of the person to whom local government electors should apply to inspect the Annual Return
2. Copies will be provided to any local government elector on payment of £ <u>1.00</u> (c) for each copy of the Annual Return.	(c) Insert a reasonable sum for copying costs
Announcement made by: (d) <u>Jane Scarrott - Clerk</u>	(d) Insert name and position of person placing the notice
Date of announcement: (e) <u>11.8.17</u>	(e) Insert date of placing of the notice

Section 1 – Annual governance statement 2016/17

We acknowledge as the members of:

Enter name of
smaller authority here:

WATTON TOWN 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 accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2017, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this smaller 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 smaller authority to conduct its business or on 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 smaller authority and took 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 and has 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 smaller 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	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 this smaller authority on:

13.06.2017

and recorded as minute reference:

8.1

Signed by Chair at meeting where approval is given:

Clerk:

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

Section 3 – External auditor report and certificate

In respect of:

Enter name of
smaller authority here:

WATTON TOWN COUNCIL

1. Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This smaller authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The smaller authority prepares an annual return in accordance with proper practices which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2017; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review the annual 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. 2016/17 External auditor's report

Except for the matters reported below on the basis of our review of the annual return, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislative and regulatory requirements have not been met.

The Council has stated in Section 1, item 5, that it has carried out a risk assessment and taken appropriate action to manage those risks. However, no financial risk review has been carried out during 2016/17. We have however confirmed that the Council carried out a financial risk review in May 2017 during the 2017/18 financial year.

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

- The Council was unable to provide evidence that the notice of the period for the exercise of elector's rights was posted on the website in 2016. We have however confirmed that it was done for 2017 and the clerk believed it had been published similarly in prior years. In future, the Council should retain evidence that the notice of public rights was published on the website to assist them complete the following year's Annual Governance Statement.
- We were required to send the annual return back to amend the following:
 - Staff costs had been understated by £5,000 so the annual return did not initially add up.

In future, the Council should ensure the annual return is accurate and complete.

3. 2016/17 External auditor certificate

We certify that we have completed our review of the annual return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2017

External auditor signature:

Mazars LLP

External auditor name:

Mazars LLP, Durham, DH1 5TS

Date:

8 August 2017

Note: The NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on 2016/17 accounts in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

Annual internal audit report 2016/17 to

Enter name of
smaller authority here:

WATTON TOWN COUNCIL

This smaller authority'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 2017.

Internal audit has been carried out in accordance with this smaller 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 smaller authority.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose only one of the following		
	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been kept properly throughout the year.	✓		
B. This smaller authority met its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This smaller 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.	NOT APPLICABLE NONE HELD		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this smaller 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. (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 smaller authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas below or on separate sheets if needed)

Name of person who carried out the internal audit **STEPHEN CHRISTOPHER FOX AUDITING SOLUTIONS LTD**

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit *St. Christopher* Date **05/06/2017**

*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).