

Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities in England

Annual return for the year ended 31 March 2017

Every smaller authority in England with an annual turnover of £6.5 million or less must complete an annual return at the end of each financial year in accordance with proper practices summarising its activities. In this annual return the term 'smaller authority'* includes a Parish Meeting, a Parish Council, a Town Council and an Internal Drainage Board.

The annual return on pages 2 to 4 is made up of three sections:

- Sections 1 and 2 are completed by the smaller authority. **Smaller authorities must approve Section 1 before Section 2.**
- Section 3 is completed by the external auditor.

In addition, the **internal audit report** is completed by the smaller authority's internal audit provider.

Each smaller authority must approve Section 1 and Section 2 in order and in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

Completing your annual return

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

Complete all highlighted sections. Do not leave any highlighted box blank. Incomplete or incorrect returns require additional external auditor work and may incur additional costs.

Send the annual return, together with the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2017, an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements, **your notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights** and any additional information requested, to your external auditor by the due date.

Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed for their work. Unless requested, do not send any original financial records to the external auditor.

Once the external auditor has completed their work, certified annual returns will be returned to the smaller authority for publication and public display of Sections 1, 2 and 3. You must publish and display the annual return, including the external auditor's report, by 30 September 2017.

It should not be necessary for you to contact the external auditor for guidance.

More guidance on completing this annual return is available in the Practitioners' Guide that can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.slcc.co.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

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

Section 1 – Annual governance statement 2016/17

We acknowledge as the members of:

Enter name of smaller authority here:

STOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL LCS238

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	NA
			✓
			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:

09/05/2017

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE 14 d

Signed by Chair at meeting where approval is given:

[Signature]

Clerk:

[Signature]

*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 2 – Accounting statements 2016/17 for

Enter name of smaller authority here:

STOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL LCS 238

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2016 £	31 March 2017 £	
1. Balances brought forward	16738 16738	16796	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	* 7560	7700	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs, rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	* 1832	1703	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	2360	2346	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	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the smaller authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	6974	10512	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	16796	13341	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	16796	13341	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	136426	139807	This cell shows the value of all the property the authority owns. It is made up of its fixed assets and long-term investments.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	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)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The Council 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.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2017 the accounting statements in this annual return present fairly the financial position of this smaller authority and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer:

[Signature]

Date 09/05/2017

I confirm that these accounting statements were approved by this smaller authority on:

09/05/2017

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE 146 REFERENCE

Signed by Chair at meeting where approval is given:

[Signature]

Section 3 – External auditor report and certificate

In respect of:

Enter name of
smaller authority here:

STOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL LCS 238

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 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. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

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

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3. 2016/17 External auditor certificate

We certify/do not 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.

* We do not certify completion because:

External auditor signature

External auditor name

Date

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:

STOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL
LCS 238

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.			✓
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 WILLIAM RICHMOND ACIB

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit SIGNATURE REQUIRED
William Richmond Date 19 05 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).

Guidance notes on completing the 2016/17 annual return

1. You must apply proper practices for preparing this annual return. Proper practices are found in the Practitioners' Guide* which is updated from time to time and contains everything you should need to prepare successfully for your financial year-end and the subsequent work by the auditor. NALC, SLCC and ADA have helplines if you want to talk through any problem you encounter.
2. Make sure that your annual return is complete (i.e. no empty highlighted boxes), and is properly signed and dated. Avoid making amendments to the completed return. Any amendments must be approved by the smaller authority, properly initialled and explanation provided. Annual returns containing unexplained or unapproved amendments may be returned and incur additional costs.
3. **Smaller authorities must approve Section 1 on page 2 before approving Section 2 on page 3.**
4. Use the checklist provided below. Use a second pair of eyes, perhaps a Councillor or Board Member, to review the annual return for completeness and accuracy before sending it to the external auditor.
5. Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically asked for. Doing so is not helpful. However, you must tell the external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Finance Officer or Chair.
6. Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation which you send to your external auditor with the annual return covers all your bank accounts. If your smaller authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree your bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (Section 2 on page 3). You must provide an explanation for any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the Practitioners' Guide*.
7. Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on page 3. Do not just send in a copy of your detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include a complete numerical and narrative analysis to support your explanation. There are a number of examples provided in the Practitioners' Guide* to assist you.
8. If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or you do not fully explain variances, this may incur additional costs for which the auditor will make a charge.
9. **You must inform the external auditor of the date set for the commencement of the period for the exercise of public rights.**
10. Make sure that your accounting statements add up and the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2016) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2017).
11. Do not complete Section 3 which is reserved for the external auditor.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Done?
All sections	All highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓
	All additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , has been provided for the external auditor?	✓
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', an explanation is provided?	✓
Section 2	Smaller authority approval of the accounting statements is confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?	✓
	An explanation of significant variations from last year to this year is provided?	✓
	Bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2017 agreed to Box 8?	✓
	An explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 is provided?	✓
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – all disclosures made if a Council is a sole managing trustee? NB: Do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	✓
Internal Audit report	All highlighted boxes completed by internal audit and explanations provided?	✓

*Note: The Practitioners' Guide is available from your local NALC, SLCC or ADA representatives or from www.nalc.gov.uk or www.slcc.co.uk or www.ada.org.uk.

Schedules for submission to external auditor

Key contact details

Schedule A

Please complete this form and send it back to us with the Annual Return to ensure we have the correct details for your authority – please print to ensure we can read it clearly

Authority name and reference	STOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL LCS 238
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	Clerk/ Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) – if Clerk and RFO are different please supply details on separate sheet
Name	TOM GROZDOSKI
Address	5 BERRY CLOSE GREAT BOWDEN LE16 7ES
Telephone no.	07821 677942
Email address	clerk@stoughtonpc.org.uk

	Chair
Name	ROBERT BATTEY
Address	3 THE BYWAYS GAULBY LANE STOUGHTON, LEIC. LE2 2FL
Telephone no.	0116 271 4947
Email address	robertbattey979@btinternet.com

	Person carrying out the independent internal audit
Name	WILLIAM RICHMOND
Address	34 STOUGHTON LANE STOUGHTON, LEIC. LE2 2FH
Telephone no.	0116 271 5713
Email address	bill.richmond34@googlemail.com

If there are any subsequent changes to the above please send us an updated form or e-mail the new details to angela.j.ellison@uk.gt.com

Schedules for submission to external auditor

Bank reconciliation template

Schedule B

The model can be applied for reconciliations carried out at any time of the year. Please complete all green cells.

BANK RECONCILIATION		FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2017	
Authority name and reference	STOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL LCS 238		
Prepared by: Name	TOM GROZDOSKI	Date:	9/5/17
Role (Clerk/RFO etc)	CLERK/RFO		
Approved by: Name	ROBERT BATTEY	Date:	9/5/17
Role (RFO/Chair etc)	CHAIR		
Balance per bank statements as at 31 March 2017	£	TOTAL £	
List balances on all bank accounts plus petty cash floats at 31 March 2017:			
CURRENT A/C	7686		
SAVINGS A/C	6058		
	13744		13744
Less: any un-presented cheques at 31 March 2017: (normally only current account. List date, cheque number & value. Use separate list if needed)			
22.3.17 CHQ 653	126		
22.3.17 CHQ 654	136		
31.3.17 CHQ 655	141		
	403		403
Add any unbanked cash at 31 March 2017: (List date & amount received)			
			NIL
TOTAL - NET BANK BALANCES AS AT 31 MARCH 2017			13341 Type equation here.

The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book for the year, as follows:	
CASH BOOK (receipts and payments/income & expenditure schedules)	£
Opening Balance:	16796
Add: Receipts in the year:	9403
Less: Payments in the year:	12858
CLOSING BALANCE PER CASH BOOK @ 31 MARCH 2017	13341
Must equal total net bank balances above and Section 2, Box 8	

Please complete all shaded boxes and send this form with your Annual Return to:
 Angela Ellison, Grant Thornton UK LLP, Royal Liver Building, LIVERPOOL L3 1PS
 or email to angela.j.ellison@uk.gt.com



Schedule C1

Identifying which variances require explanation

Positive and negative variances must be explained

Authority name and reference	STOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL LCS238				
Box on Section 2 Accounting Statements	RESTATED (a) * 2016 £	(b) 2017 £	(c) Variance Increase(+) or decrease(-) (b - a) £	(d) Variance divided by 2016 figure times 100 (c / a *100) %	Explanation required? Less than £250 and 15%? - NO More than 15%? - YES
Box 2 -Precept or Rates and Levies	7560*	7700	140	1.8	NO
Box 3 -Total other receipts	1832*	1703	-129	-7.0	NO
Box 4 -Staff costs	2360	2346	-14	-0.6	NO
Box 5 -Loan interest/ capital repayments	0	0	0	0	NO
Box 6 -All other payments	6974	10512	3538	51	YES
Box 9 -Total fixed assets plus long-term investments and assets	136 426	139807	3381	2.5	NO
Box 10 - Total borrowings	0	0	0	0	NO

Suggested layout for explanations of individual variances

One sheet to be prepared for each variance that requires explanation.

Authority name and reference	STOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL LCS238	
BOX NO	6	£
(b) Figure in 2017 column		10 512
(a) Figure in 2016 column		6 974
(d) Total variance: 2017 figure less 2016 figure: (b - a) A positive figure is an increase (+) a negative figure is a decrease (-)		3 538

Reasons (as many as are applicable)	Amount £
Reason 1 IN 2017 THERE WAS EXPENDITURE ON A DEFIBALLATOR WHILST THIS ITEM WAS NOT PURCHASED IN YEAR 2016	2 604
Reason 2 IN 2017 THERE WAS EXPENDITURE ON A WOODEN GATE WHILST THIS ITEM WAS NOT PURCHASED IN YEAR 2016	1 160
Reason 3	
(e) TOTAL AMOUNT £ EXPLAINED (total of reasons above)	3 764
(f) Unexplained amount £ of total variance at (d - e)	- 226
Unexplained as % of 2016 figure (f / a *100) (must be below 15%)	- 3.2%
Confirm unexplained amount is less than 15% of 2016 figure YES – satisfactorily explained NO – provide further explanations	YES

'No' or 'Not covered' on the Annual Internal Audit Report

Authority name and reference	STOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL	LCS 238
Person carrying out the internal audit	WILLIAM RICHMOND A.C.I.B	

Internal Audit Objective Conclusion (A to K)	Explanation for 'No' and what the Authority is doing to address the weakness - or explanation for why 'Not covered'*
F	PETTY CASH - NOT COVERED & NOT REQUIRED AS STOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL DOES NOT HAVE A PETTY CASH A/c - ALL PAYMENTS ARE MADE BY CHEQUE
K	TRUST FUNDS - NOT APPLICABLE AS THE COUNCIL DOES NOT ACT AS TRUSTEE FOR ANY FUNDS OR TRUSTS

* Note: if the relevant objective is **applicable but has not been covered**, the person carrying out the internal audit must provide the Authority and the external auditor with details of:

- o why the objective has not been covered
- o when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and
- o when it is next planned

Schedules for submission to external auditor

Schedule E

Analysis of earmarked reserves

Authority name and reference	STOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL LCS238
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Purpose and nature of reserve	Held as short-term or long-term investment?*	Amount £
MANAGEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY GARDENS	SHORT TERM	664
(a) TOTAL		664

Note: * short-term investments would be included in Box 8 of the Accounting Statements in the Annual return; long-term investments would be in Box 9.

Please provide an explanation for any high level of general reserves if over 3 times (or less than 0.1) of the precept/rates and levies.

	£
(b) Precept/rates and levies (Accounting Statements Box 2)	7700
(c) Balance carried forward (Accounting Statements Box 7)	13341
(d) Amount of balances less total earmarked reserves (c - a)	12677
Ratio of balances less earmarked reserves to Precept/rates and levies (d / b)	1.64
Reason if over 3 times or less than 0.1	

Schedules for submission to external auditor


Schedule F1

Notification of the date for the commencement of public rights

Authority name and reference	STOUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL LCS 238
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I confirm that the dates set for the period of exercise of public rights are as follows:

	Date
Announcement	9/06/2017
Commencement	11/06/2017
Ending on	24/07/2017

Signed by Clerk/RFO	
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OR – send us a copy of your completed 'Notice' (Schedule F2 enclosed as public rights pack)