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CYNGOR SIR
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COUNTY COUNCIL

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Prif Weithredwr – Chief Executive

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RHYBUDD O GYFARFOD	NOTICE OF MEETING
CYD-BWYLLGOR ANGHENION ADDYSGOL ARBENNIG (MÔN A GWYNEDD)	SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS JOINT COMMITTEE
DYDD GWENER, 26 MEHEFIN, 2015 am 10:30 y bore	FRIDAY, 26 JUNE 2015 at 10.30 a.m.
YSTAFELL GLYDER FAWR, SWYDDFEYDD PENRALLT, CAERNARFON	GLYDER FAWR ROOM , PENRALLT OFFICES, CAERNARFON
Swyddog Pwyllgor	Ann Holmes 01248 752518 Committee Officer

AELODAU/MEMBERS:

Cynghorwyr/Councillors:

CYNGOR GWYNEDD COUNCIL

Annwen Hughes, Elin Walker Jones, Linda Ann Jones, Beth Lawton, Caerwyn Roberts
(*Cadeirydd/Chair*) Peter Read, Eirwyn Williams.

CYNGOR SIR YNYS MÔN/ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL

Derlwyn Hughes, Trefor Lloyd Hughes, Llinos M.Huws (*Is-Gadeirydd/Vice-Chair*),
Gwilym O.Jones, R.Meirion Jones, J.Arwel Roberts, Ieuan Williams

YR EGLWYS/THE CHURCH

Yr Eglwys yng Nghymru/The Church in Wales
Yr Eglwys Babyddol Rufeinig/The Roman Catholic Church
Mr Rheinallt Thomas (Eglwysi Rhyddion/Free Churches)

AGENDA

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

To receive any declaration of interest by any Member or Officer in respect of any item of business.

2 MINUTES 9TH JANUARY, 2015 MEETING (Pages 1 - 6)

To present the minutes of the previous meeting of the SEN Joint-Committee held on 9th January, 2015.

3 GWYNEDD COUNCIL STRATEGY FOR ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND INCLUSION

To receive a verbal update from Gwynedd Council Officers/Portfolio Member.

4 SEN PROVIDER UNIT (Pages 7 - 10)

To present a report on the work of the SEN Provider Unit during the Spring term, 2015.

5 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2014/15 (Pages 11 - 16)

To present the SEN Joint-Committee's Annual Governance Statement for 2014/15.

6 FINAL ACCOUNTS 2014/15 (Pages 17 - 28)

To present the Joint-Committee's final accounts for 2014/15.

7 BUDGET 2015/16

To present a report on the SEN Joint-Committee's budget for 2015/16.
(Report to Follow)

8 MEETINGS FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR

Friday, 18th September, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. (Llangefni)
Friday, 20th November, 2015 at 10:30 a.m. (Caernarfon)
Friday, 18th March, 2016 at 10:30 a.m. (Llangefni)

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS JOINT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2015

- PRESENT:** Cllr. E.Caerwyn Roberts (Gwynedd Council)(Chairman)
- Gwynedd Council**
- Cllrs. Annwen Hughes, Elin Walker Jones, Beth Lawton, Eirwyn Williams
- Isle of Anglesey County Council**
- Cllrs. Derlwyn Hughes, Gwilym O.Jones, R. Meirion Jones, Ieuan Williams
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr Gareth Payne (Principal Educational Psychologist)
Mr Iwan Trefor Jones (Corporate Director - Gwynedd Council)
Dr Gwynne Jones (Director of Lifelong Learning - Isle of Anglesey County Council)
Mrs Delyth Molyneux (Head of Learning - Isle of Anglesey County Council)
Mrs Orina Pritchard (Senior Delivery Officer for Transforming ALN Services and Inclusion - Gwynedd Council)(for item 7)
Mr Gareth Jackson (Education Officer - Gwynedd Council)
Mrs Kathy Bell (Senior Educational Accountant - Gwynedd Council)
Ann Holmes (Committee Officer - Isle of Anglesey County Council)
- APOLOGIES:** Cllr. Peter Read (Gwynedd Council), Cllrs. Llinos Medi Huws, J.Arwel Roberts (Isle of Anglesey County Council), Mr Rheinallt Thomas (Free Churches)
- ALSO PRESENT:** Cllr. Gareth Thomas (Portfolio Member for Education Gwynedd Council), Eleri Llewelyn Owen (Project Officer)(for item 7)
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1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest was received.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2014

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Special Educational Needs Joint Committee held on 19 September 2014 were submitted and confirmed as correct.

3. THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS PROVIDER UNIT

A report was submitted by the Principal Educational Psychologist outlining the situation in the SEN Provider Unit during the 2014 Summer term.

The Principal Educational Psychologist reported on the staff situation of the three teams within the Provider Unit – the Administrative Service, the Specialist Teachers Service and the Educational Psychology Service. He elaborated on the composition of the teams at the end of the term and clarified the impact of any gaps in services due to staff absences and particularly in the context of the Specialist Teachers Service and the actions taken to mitigate such absences, to strengthen the team and ensure seamless continuity of service for schools. The Officer noted that the Administrative team was working at full capacity at the end of the term, as was the Educational Psychology Team, with the

psychologists providing services for the schools and the assistant psychologists working on specific pieces of work as described in the report.

The Principal Educational Psychologist referred to the Provider Unit's operational model, namely that the educational psychologists work directly with the schools on a responsive basis whilst the specialist teachers engage with them in a less conspicuous manner. The administrative team manages the procedures in connection with children who receive additional support.

The Joint Committee considered the information submitted and whilst it acknowledged that the staff situation had stabilised and that it appreciates the additional input from staff to cover for absences where necessary, a comment was made that the Joint-Committee would have welcomed more narrative on the nature of the work undertaken with children, the output in terms of contributing to children's progress and the additional value it provides. It was enquired whether recruiting difficulties are hindering the provision for children who need additional support, and whether the staff situation in relation to language, speech and communication difficulties is able to address the growth in demand in this area. The Principal Educational Psychologist stated that he does not believe that the staff situation is hindering the ability to provide an exemplary service and that the staffing situation at the Provider Unit was nearly at full complement during the Summer term. The Head of Learning of the Isle of Anglesey County Council referred to the Authority's language difficulty units and that specialist teachers are working side by side with language therapists to meet the need in Anglesey.

It was resolved to accept the above information and note the situation in the Provider Unit during the 2014 Summer term.

ACTION POINT ARISING: The Principal Educational Psychologist to include information on the nature of the work undertaken with children in the next report.

4. THE FINANCIAL POSITION AND BUDGET CUTS

The Director of Lifelong Learning of the Isle of Anglesey County Council reported that it had been mentioned at the previous meeting that every service in the Council had been requested to identify savings up to the value of 10% as part of the Council's budget setting process for 2015/16. It was mentioned at the time that this could impact upon the Special Educational Needs Joint Committee in 2015/16. He stated that the financial pressures had not reduced and that he could therefore confirm that the Isle of Anglesey County Council will be implementing a cut of 10% in its contribution to the Joint Committee's budget for 2015/16. In relation to a question as to the areas in which the Joint Committee would be expected to make cuts, the Director of Lifelong Learning observed that that discussion had not taken place as yet. Efficiency savings would be identified initially before looking at individual services but that discussion has yet to take place.

The members of the Joint Committee expressed discomfort regarding the possible impact of cuts on a vulnerable cohort of children and it was suggested that cutting provision could have further implications in the form of higher costs when more timely and earlier intervention would have prevented that.

The Portfolio Holder for Education of Gwynedd Council reported that Gwynedd is currently reviewing additional learning needs in their entirety rather than cutting a percentage of the budget and that a draft strategy to that end had been included on the agenda for the meeting.

The Senior Education Accountant of Gwynedd Council observed that since the Joint Committee was established in 1996, the two Counties have been jointly funding the organisation and have been in agreement in terms of their approach to cuts. It may be necessary to review the provision if either of the counties deviates from the agreed procedures.

The Director of Lifelong Learning of Anglesey County Council reported that funding the Joint Committee had been the subject of debate for some time and that he understands that it is intended to move in the same direction. If Gwynedd Council's strategy is likely to mean the introduction of changes then it will need to be considered in the context of the Joint Committee, but it is unlikely that Anglesey's intentions in terms of implementing cuts will change.

It was enquired whether it was possible to use the Joint Committee's balances to make up for any financial deficit. The Senior Education Accountant of Gwynedd Council reported that there are already considerable commitments against the reserve funds.

It was resolved to note the information and the Isle of Anglesey County Council's current financial position.

NO ACTION POINT ARISING.

5. FINANCIAL REPORT – REVIEW OF 2014/15 ACCOUNTS

The Senior Educational Accountant Gwynedd Council circulated a report summarising the position in relation to the 2014/15 budget as follows:

- At the end of 2013/14, the balances of the SEN Joint Committee were £277,000. During 2014/15 staff changes had led to an overspend of approximately £68,000 against the 2014/15 staff budget.
- Compensation and legal costs of £25,000 had been paid to a former member of staff as a follow-up to bringing an equality case against the Joint Committee.
- There are training costs equivalent to £15,000 as part of the strategy to secure a supply of qualified staff for the future.
- There had been an increase of nearly £9,000 in service and rent costs following a review of the costs and use of the current offices. The Joint Committee will shortly be relocating to alternative offices in Caernarfon at a one-off cost of approximately £5,000. The element of the relocation cost in 2014/15 will be borne by Gwynedd Council. It is estimated that the whole year cost of the new offices will be approximately £20,000 higher than the Joint Committee's budget in 2015/16 and savings will have to be identified to fund them.
- An overspend on staff travel costs of approximately £5,000 was projected by the end of the year.
- An overspend of approximately £7,000 was projected on resource costs, advertising 2013/14 final accounts and postage costs.
- There is a deficit of approximately £7,000 on income generation mainly due to the staff situation and lack of capacity to deliver any training as has happened in the past.
- The impact of the changes and investments during the year means that approximately £143,000 of the Joint Committee's balances will need to be used in 2014/15 leaving approximately £134,000 by 31 March 2015.

It was confirmed that the Officers would be meeting to discuss the situation with regard to the 2015/16 budget.

It was resolved to accept the report and note the position.

NO FURTHER ACTION POINT ARISING

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was considered and resolved under the relevant legislation to exclude the press and the public from the meeting during the discussion on the item below for the reasons given in the public interest test submitted.

7. GWYNEDD COUNCIL STRATEGY FOR ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND INCLUSION

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director of Gwynedd Council incorporating the Council's draft Strategy for the transformation of additional learning needs in order to deliver the following outputs for children and young people who have additional learning needs:

- That children receive the correct type of support and intervention in early years.
- Children receive the best possible educational experiences and, as a result, are able to realize their potential and receive the best opportunities in life.
- That children receive a quality service from multi-disciplinary and multi-agency teams across Anglesey who work and plan together and who provide clear advice and information for the parents of every child.

- That children receive their education in a high quality learning environment (particularly children with complex and acute needs) and that the best possible use is made of the new ALN Excellence Centre.

The Educational Portfolio Holder for Gwynedd Council reported that the draft submitted was the culmination of a review of Additional Learning Needs generally. The Strategy will be the subject of consultation from 19 January until the end of February 2015 prior to its final submission to the Joint Committee and subsequently to the Cabinet of Gwynedd Council during April 2015. The Strategy was motivated by several factors including legislative changes; the desire to give more attention to children in their early years and earlier interventions; the programme for developing the Centre of Excellence in Gwynedd and the need to make optimal use of scarce resources. The desire is to bring all aspects of the ALN provision together in an integrated team.

The Corporate Director of Gwynedd Council endorsed the above comments and elaborated on the reasons for the review and the desired outcome of creating a more efficient and effective service which responds appropriately and in a timely fashion to the needs of children and young people in Gwynedd.

The Senior Delivery Officer for Transforming ALN Services and Inclusion at Gwynedd Council gave a visual presentation elaborating on the individual actions to be taken to realise the four key objectives/outcomes noted above.

The Joint Committee's Principal Educational Psychologist declared that he was disappointed with the proposal in the Strategy to decommission the Special Educational Needs Joint Committee particularly in terms of ensuring clarity in relation to responsibilities and accountability; he felt that this was possible within the structure of the Joint Committee and that it already operates as a specialist centre for both counties.

Anglesey's representatives also expressed their disappointment that an opportunity had not been afforded to shape the Strategy on the basis of joint planning as partners. It was noted that the Williams Report encourages collaboration between Authorities on a wider scale, which is what the Joint Committee has been undertaking constructively since its establishment. It was suggested that the partnership is now being weakened in that Gwynedd Council is setting out its own vision for the provision within that county specifically.

The Director of Lifelong Learning of Anglesey County Council observed that the Strategy includes initial ideas that need to be considered in terms of their impact on Anglesey and in order to perceive a way forward. The principles espoused by both counties for the service are similar in the sense that both counties are anxious to ensure the best experiences and outcomes for children with additional learning needs. Anglesey's viewpoint was highlighted at the previous meeting, namely that it did not wish to see the Joint Committee being disbanded but rather to see its work being consolidated through the medium of a more robust and detailed Service Level Agreement. Although this continues to be the opinion, there is a desire to examine the proposals in Gwynedd Council's draft Strategy to look for common ground for moving forward. The Joint Committee was established in 1996 as a mechanism for collaboration on a broad level and in order to share scarce bilingual expertise in the area of additional learning needs. Separating the link would lead to a risk that both authorities would be competing for the same staff. In terms of Anglesey, there is a continuing commitment to collaborate but to a purpose. To that end, it was agreed to convene a further meeting to ascertain which elements of the Strategy's vision both counties share and how that benefits Anglesey.

In the ensuing discussion the following general points were raised:

- There was an acceptance of the underlying principles of the Strategy, namely to secure the best outcomes for children with additional learning needs and to do so in an effective and efficient manner. However, reservations were expressed with regard to the cost of implementing the Strategy, particularly in light of the commitment made in the document e.g. investment in strengthening provision in the early years and upskilling staff. It was noted that there was no clear evidence of where savings could be found.

- The document was not clear in terms of the governance arrangements of the new system and whether it would be happening on the basis of both counties separately.
- That there was concern that both Authorities could find themselves in a situation of competing for specialist staff leading to the disintegration of the current team and the specialisms therein.
- Whilst Gwynedd welcomed the concept of having one central point, concern was expressed that there would be additional pressure on schools and greater expectations on the nursery provision without sufficient investment in the provision. This would, in turn, make it difficult to identify children with additional learning needs at an earlier stage as desired in the Strategy.
- It was enquired whether the new arrangement would improve the relationship with the Health Service and ensure earlier input from them.

The Corporate Director of Gwynedd Council clarified that the Strategy was in no way a criticism of the effectiveness of the Joint Committee but was rather an attempt to build on the strengths of that entity by establishing a multi-agency and a multi-disciplinary central team. The review is a systematic and dedicated review of the whole subject and has been carefully planned. It was acknowledged that some of the proposals had associated costs but Gwynedd Council wishes to invest on a one-off basis in order to implement elements of the strategy e.g. training staff and upskilling the workforce. Some of the proposals also entail changing and adapting how resources are used so that they better reflect the Council's priorities such as by targeting early years. It is projected that implementing the proposals in the strategy will lead to annual permanent savings of £1.1m by 2021/22 and an element of those savings will be derived from Gwynedd Council's contribution to the Joint Committee. The Officer explained that there was an opportunity to present further comments on the document during the consultation period if so desired.

It was resolved to note Gwynedd Council's draft Strategy for Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion and to also note that further discussions will be held between both counties thereon.

NO ACTION POINT ARISING

8. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Joint Committee would be held at 10.30am on Friday, 13 March 2015 in Llangefni.

**Cllr. E.Caerwyn Roberts
Chairman**

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Agenda Item 4

COMMITTEE: Special Educational Needs Joint Committee

DATE: 26th June 2015

TEITL YR ADRODDIAD: Report of the SEN Provider Unit

ACTION: Consider the report

BACKGROUND: Description of the work of the SEN Joint Committee Provider Unit during the spring term 2015.

Report of the SEN Provider Unit

1.0 Administration of Assessment and Review Processes

At the beginning of the term, one of the Administrative Assistants had left his work, and it was decided that this post would not be filled.

Therefore, the administration team was working at less than its full capacity, with the Senior Administrative Officer, two Statementing Officers, and the equivalent of 2.8 full-time Administrative Assistants, operating the Statutory Assessment system and providing Statements of Special Educational Needs. The other system, of arranging support on more informal terms, known as 3*, has now been discontinued.

Towards the end of the term, the Senior Administrative Officer left the Joint Committee, returning to her original post at the end of the period of secondment.

We have advertised for a Service Manager in her place, and have interviewed two candidates, but at present the post remains vacant. We have re-advertised the post and there is one applicant.

2.0 Specialist Teachers Service

We have a strong team of specialist teachers at present, including experienced teachers, teachers who have been appointed to the team to be able to take over the duties of staff who will soon be of retirement age, and specialist assistants, who can do specific aspects of the work and therefore enable teachers to undertake other duties.

In the hearing service, we have three qualified and experienced teachers, one intending to retire before long, and one new teacher who is currently training. This service also has an assistant for one day a week who is highly skilled in sign-language.

In the visual service, we have one full-time qualified specialist teacher, and one new teacher who is currently training. Since this is demanding on the specialist teacher, there are two other qualified teachers who are working temporarily for one day a week each, to support her. There are also two assistants, one full-time and one 0.6, who are highly skilled in Braille.

In the language and communication, and autism, service, we have three qualified teachers, one of whom is working 0.6 who has expertise in Pathological Demand Avoidance and one who is working 0.5 who intends to retire, and, once again, another teacher who is training. Also there is an assistant working part-time for the service who has a specialism in autism.

In the physical and medical difficulties service, we have two teachers, one of whom is working 0.5 and is of an age where she might retire.

3.0 **Educational Psychology Service**

In the educational psychology service we are working with fewer staff than we normally have, since two part-time psychologists have left the service and we are supporting two trainee psychologists on the professional course in Cardiff.

We are pleased to congratulate our psychologist who was learning Welsh, for reaching a good level of practical Welsh, and who is now therefore working as a full member of the team.

We continue to operate a system where each school has its allocated psychologist, and we also have an assistant psychologist, who has been particularly useful taking part in training, and working with schools regarding individual children and other situations, although she is not able to take responsibility for a group of schools directly.

At present, one of our senior psychologists has been seconded to Gwynedd to help them with developing their systems for arranging and providing for Special Educational Needs.

One of our psychologists has recently completed a Diploma course in Brief Therapy, a particular approach to working with individual children, that can be adapted to a number of different situations.

We have distributed a questionnaire to schools once again, in order to obtain their opinion on the service they have received, and any changes they would like to see.

4.0 Additional Information

The tables below show the number of final statements that were produced within the statutory timetable of 26 weeks during the academic year 2013-2014. (Statutory Performance Indicators)

It can be seen from the table below that the administrative team have succeeded during the year in completing most statements of Special Educational Needs within time limits, and that they have produced considerably more statements than they did during 2012, 73% increase in Gwynedd, and 64% increase in Ynys Môn.

26 week Performance Indicators Gwynedd Academic Year 2013 - 2014		figures 2012
Total of new final statements completed	85	49
Number of final statements within 26 weeks with exceptions	33	25
Number of final statements within 26 weeks without exceptions i.e. within time limits and no exceptions noted	18	18
Number of final statements over 26 weeks with exceptions i.e. over the time limit because of, or partly because of, external factors.	33	6
Number of final statements over 26 weeks without exceptions i.e. beyond the time limit and no exceptions noted (no-one late providing advice from external agencies and no factors that were beyond the control of the education authority and/or the SEN Joint committee.)	1	0
Performance Indicator 15a: From the total of cases during the year, the percentage within the 26 weeks, exceptions or not.	60%	87.8%
Performance Indicator 15b: From the cases where there were no exceptions, the percentage that were completed within 26 weeks	95%	100%

26 week Performance Indicators Ynys Môn Academic Year 2013 - 2014		figures 2012
Total of new final statements completed	36	22
Number of final statements within 26 weeks with exceptions	13	12
Number of final statements within 26 weeks without exceptions i.e. within time limits and no exceptions noted	8	6
Number of final statements over 26 weeks with exceptions i.e. over the time limit because of, or partly because of, external factors.	14	4
Number of final statements over 26 weeks without exceptions i.e. beyond the time limit and no exceptions noted (no-one late providing advice from external agencies and no factors that were beyond the control of the education authority and/or the SEN Joint committee.)	1	0
Performance Indicator 15a: From the total of cases during the year, the percentage within the 26 weeks, exceptions or not.	58%	81.8%
Performance Indicator 15b: From the cases where there were no exceptions, the percentage that were completed within 26 weeks	89%	100%

COMMITTEE :	Special Educational Needs Joint-Committee
DATE:	26 June 2015
TITLE OF REPORT:	Annual Governance Statement
ACTION:	To accept the Annual Governance Statement

Background:

The Accounts and Audit Regulations (Wales) 2014 require every Joint-Committee to produce a Statement of Internal Control and to this end, an Annual Governance Statement has been prepared.

The Joint-Committee is asked to accept the statement which is intended will be combined with the Joint-Committee's accounts to form one composite document to be presented to the Joint-Committee for approval at the end of September 2015.

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

This statement meets the requirement to produce a Statement of Internal Control pursuant to Regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulation 2014.

Part 1: SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Special Educational Needs Joint Committee was established by Gwynedd Council and Isle of Anglesey County Council in 1996 for the purpose of providing a special educational needs service by discharging the functions detailed in a service level agreement between the Joint Committee and the authorities.

The Special Educational Needs Joint Committee is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Special Educational Needs Joint Committee is also responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk and adequate and effective financial management.

Part 2: THE PURPOSE OF THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the Special Educational Needs Joint Committee is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the authorities that are part of the Special Educational Needs Joint Committee to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost effective services.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Special Educational Needs Joint Committee's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The governance framework described above has been in place at the Special Educational Needs Joint Committee for the year ended 31 March 2015 and up to the date of approval of the statement of accounts.

Part 3: THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

3.1 Membership

The Special Educational Needs Joint Committee has been established in accordance with requirements set out in the Local Government Act 1972 under section 101, section 102(1) (b) (power for two or more authorities to appoint a joint committee), section 103 (expenses incurred by a joint committee defrayed between the authorities), section 104 (disqualification for membership of a joint committee as per normal local authority rules) and section 105 (disability for voting on account of interests in contracts etc.).

Membership of the Joint Committee consists of 7 elected members of Gwynedd Council and 7 elected members of Isle of Anglesey County Council. Members are appointed by the Authority in accordance with the rules of political balance relevant to that Authority. In addition, membership of the Joint Committee will include 1 member nominated by the Bangor Diocesan Board of Finance with a right to vote, 1 member nominated by the Catholic Church with a right to vote, and one member nominated by the free churches with no right to vote.

The term of Membership, as well as arrangements for the appointment of a Chair and Vice Chair, are defined within the Constitution.

The Joint Committee is a permanent arrangement, and in accordance with the Constitution, if either authority desires to withdraw from the Joint Committee twelve months' notice must be given terminating at the end of the financial year.

3.2 Functions

The Special Educational Needs Joint Committee fulfils the following on behalf of Gwynedd Council and Isle of Anglesey County Council:

- Providing a special educational needs service by discharging the functions detailed in a service level agreement between the Joint Committee and the authorities.

3.3 Structure, Roles and Responsibilities

A Constitution is in place for the Joint Committee, dated 30 January 2004. The Constitution outlines the following roles:

- All activities of the Joint Committee are in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules of Isle of Anglesey County Council.
- Administrative and secretarial facilities shall be provided by Director of Legal Services for Isle of Anglesey County Council; the cost being shared between the two authorities.
- Staff are jointly employed by the two authorities for the purposes of discharging the functions delegated to the Joint Committee. Staff are employed in accordance with the conditions of service of Isle of Anglesey County Council together with any additional conditions imposed by the Joint Committee. The Constitution defines the Joint Committee's power to act in relation to all matters regarding staff employment.
- A personnel service is provided for the Joint Committee by Isle of Anglesey County Council; the cost being shared between the two authorities.

- The financial rules of Gwynedd Council are relevant to all of the joint committee's financial activity. The Joint Committee must report to the two authorities annually upon its financial position.
- All financial services are provided to the Joint Committee by the Head of Finance of Gwynedd Council; the cost being shared between the two authorities.
- The Joint Committee has the right to establish one or more sub-panels and to delegate some of its functions to the Sub-panel(s) provided that that delegation does not prevent the Joint Committee's own ability to exercise those functions.

Part 4: EFFECTIVENESS OF THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The Special Educational Needs Joint Committee has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the executive managers who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, any reference within the head of internal audit's annual report, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

- In accordance with the Constitution of the Joint Committee, all of its activities are in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules of Isle of Anglesey County Council. As a result, therefore, reviews of the effectiveness of the Local Code of Governance, the Constitution and the system of internal control of that authority will also incorporate the basis of the Joint Committee's governance.

We have been advised on the implications of the result of the **review of the effectiveness of the governance framework** by the Special Educational Needs Joint Committee, and that the arrangements **continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework**.

Part 5: SIGNIFICANT GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The processes outlined in previous sections of this statement describe the methods used by the Council to identify the most significant governance issues that need to be addressed.

The Special Educational Needs Joint Committee does not believe that any such issues have arisen during the assessment of its governance arrangements that warrant attention in this Annual Governance Statement.

Part 6: OPINION

We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the above matters to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

ARWYN THOMAS
Head of Education, Gwynedd Council

Date: _____

Councillor CAERWYN ROBERTS
SEN Joint-Committee Chairman

Date: _____

DELYTH MOLYNEUX
Head of Learning, Anglesey County Council

Date: _____

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MEETING	Special Educational Needs Joint Committee (Isle of Anglesey County Council and Gwynedd Council)
DATE	26 June 2015
TITLE	The Joint Committee's Final Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2015
PURPOSE	To submit – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Revenue Income and Expenditure Account Report for 2014/15, and • The Official Annual Return on the Accounts, duly certified, but pre-Audit.
RECOMMENDATION	To receive and approve the accounts
AUTHOR	William E Jones, Senior Finance Manager, Gwynedd Council

1. STATUTORY FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- 1.1 As reported in previous years, there are specific accounting and audit reporting requirements for Joint Committees.
- 1.2 Section 12 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 states that a joint committee of two or more (local) authorities is a local government body, and Section 13 of the Act requires such bodies to maintain accounts subject to audit by an external auditor approved by the Auditor General for Wales.
- 1.3 Although they are not independent legal entities, for the purposes of keeping accounts and being audited, a joint committee is separately subject to the same regulations as other local councils.
- 1.4 Gwynedd Council is the 'lead' Council responsible for meeting the accounting and financial reporting responsibilities of Anglesey and Gwynedd's Special Educational Needs Joint Committee.
- 1.5 The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 require all Joint Committees to prepare year-end accounts. Where the turnover is less than £2.5m the joint committee is deemed to be a "small joint committee" and an annual return must be prepared in accordance with proper practices as stipulated by legislation.
- 1.6 That Annual Return will be subject to a separate audit by the Wales Audit Office.

2. ACCOUNTS FOR 2014/15

- 2.1 **The Revenue Income and Expenditure Account for 2014/15 is submitted herewith as Appendix A**, as well as commentary on the major variances between the budget and actual expenditure for information “as usual”, in “outturn” format which, I trust, is more understandable for members acting as a “management board”.
- 2.2 **The Official Annual Return for 2014/15 (prior to audit) is submitted herewith as Appendix B, duly completed and certified by the Responsible Financial Officer**, namely Gwynedd Council’s Head of Finance (Dafydd L Edwards) as the Statutory Finance Officer for the Joint Committee.
- 2.3 These will be subject to imminent audit by the Wales Audit Office, on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales. Should any amendments be necessary then a revised version will be presented to the relevant Joint Committee meeting in September before being certified by the Auditor prior to 30 September.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 **The Special Educational Needs Joint Committee is asked to receive and approve the information in the appendices, i.e. –**
- Revenue Income and Expenditure Account for 2014/15 – Appendix A
 - Official Annual Return for 2014/15 (pre-audit) – Appendix B

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS JOINT COMMITTEE
(GWYNEDD AND ANGLESEY COUNCILS)
REVENUE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT 2014/2015

	staffing structure 2014/15 (FTE)	Budget 2014/2015 £	Final Accounts 2014/15 £	Variance Over/(Under)spend £
Expenditure				
Employees				
Salaries				
- Psychologists	(8.1)	524,240	511,111	(13,129)
- Support Teachers	(7.6)	382,304	468,048	85,744
- Administration	(6.4)	191,233	186,615	(4,618)
Training		9,520	25,159	15,639
Advertising for staff		0	1,632	1,632
Liability Insurance		3,090	2,881	(209)
Building				
Rates		4,850	4,848	(2)
Rent and Services		11,290	19,716	8,426
Relocation Costs		0	1,560	1,560
Transport				
Travelling Expenses		50,780	59,379	8,599
Supplies and Services				
Resources / Office Supplies		17,480	28,027	10,547
Advertising of the Accounts		0	1,051	1,051
Audit Fee		0	920	920
Legal Costs		0	2,115	2,115
Telephone		8,780	11,417	2,637
Post		1,840	3,966	2,126
Central Charges Anglesey		1,630	1,630	0
Central Charges Gwynedd		4,910	4,910	0
Total Expenditure		1,211,947	1,334,985	123,038
Income				
External Income		(9,160)	(4,087)	5,073
Interest on balances		0	(1,485)	(1,485)
Gwynedd Council Contribution		(738,150)	(738,150)	0
Anglesey County Council Contribution		(464,637)	(464,637)	0
Total Income		(1,211,947)	(1,208,359)	3,588
Application of Balances		0	126,626	126,626
				£
				SEN Joint Committee Reserve Balance 31/03/2014 (277,156)
				Application of balances 2014/15 126,626
				SEN Joint Committee Reserve Balance 31/03/2015 (150,530)

Final Accounts 2014/15 - Main variances

The accounts show £126,626 of the Joint-Committee's balances were applied in 2014/15 and the following table summarises the main variances.

Expenditure Heading	Net Over / (Under) spend	
	(£)	(£)
Employees -		
Psychologists - temporary posts and training	(13,129)	
Support Teachers - various	85,744	
Administration - vacant posts/turnover	(4,618)	
Training - qualified staff strategy	<u>15,639</u>	
Overspend - Employees		83,636
Supplies -		
Premises - revision of charges and use Plas Llanwnda	9,986	
Travel Costs	8,599	
Resources / Office Supplies	<u>10,547</u>	
Overspend - Supplies		29,132
Overspend - Other (balance)		13,858
Application of Balances 2014/15		126,626

SEN Joint Committee reserve Balances

	Reserve Balance (£)	% of budget
Movement in reserve		
SEN Joint Committee Reserve Balance 31 March 2014	(277,156)	23.0
Application of Balances 2014/15	126,626	10.5
SEN Joint Committee Reserve Balance 31 March 2015	(150,530)	12.5

Small Local Government Bodies in Wales Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2015

Section 12 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 requires local government bodies in Wales to make up accounts each year to 31 March and to have those accounts audited by the Auditor General for Wales. Regulation 14 of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 states that smaller local government bodies (ie, those with annual income and expenditure below £2.5 million) must prepare their accounts in accordance with proper practices.

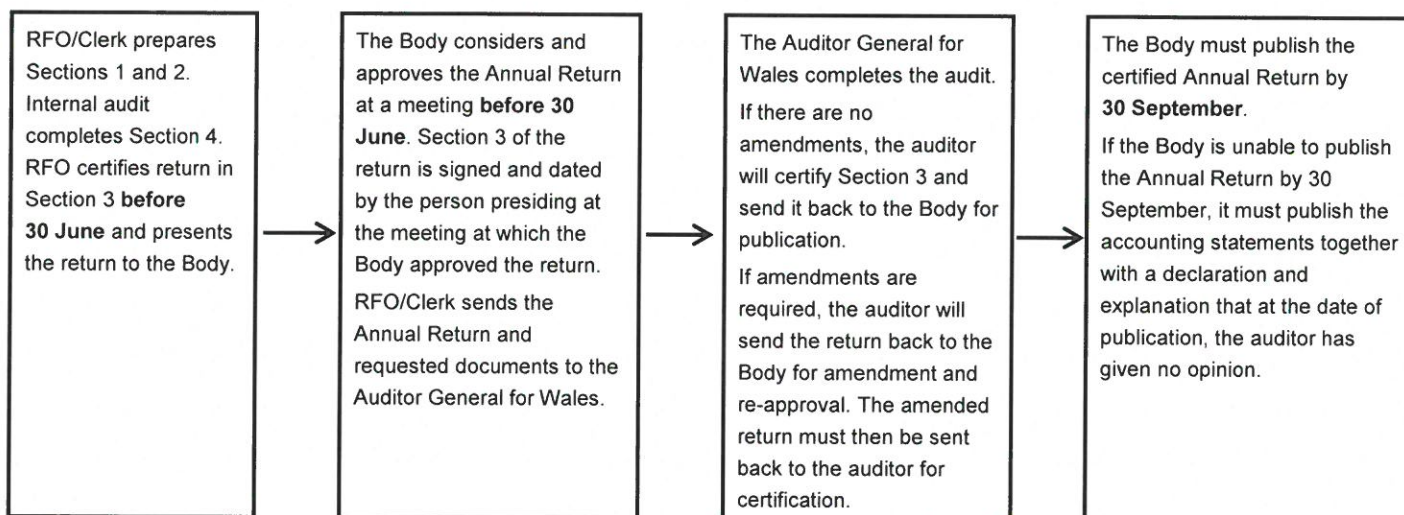
The following legislation defines proper practices as the One Voice Wales/SLCC Guidance publication *Governance and accountability for local councils in Wales – A Practitioners' Guide (2011)* (the Practitioners' Guide):

- Port health authorities: Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, Regulation 4(b)
- Small joint committees: Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Wales) Regulations 2003, Regulation 25(1)

The Practitioners' Guide requires that smaller bodies prepare their accounts in the form of an annual return. This Annual Return meets the requirements of the Practitioners' Guide.

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 Section 2 which includes references to where the Practitioners' Guide has further information.

Under the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, the Body must formally approve the return and certify Section 3 before the return is sent to the auditor. The Body must approve the Annual Return by 30 June. Unless the Annual Return needs to be amended, the auditor will certify the return and send it back to the Body for publication with no further approval by the Body required. The accounts approval and audit arrangements follow the process as set out below.



Your external audit team will advise you what additional information is needed for the audit.

Please send the original Annual Return (ie, not a photocopy), together with any additional information requested, to your external auditor by the date specified by the auditor. Unless requested, please do not send any original financial records to the external auditor.

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

Section 1 – Accounting statements for: Special Educational Needs Joint Committee (Gwynedd and Anglesey Councils)

	Year ending			Notes and guidance for compilers			
	31 March 2014 (£)	31 March 2015 (£)	Please round all figures to nearest £. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or nil balances. All figures must agree to the Body's underlying financial records for the relevant year.				
1. Balances brought forward	166,351	277,156	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. (+) Income from local taxation and/or levy	1,190,940	1,202,787	Total amount of local taxation, rates and/or levy received or receivable in the year including funding from a sponsoring body.				
3. (+) Total other receipts	8,258	5,572	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less income from local taxation and/or levy (Line 2). Include any grants received here.				
4. (-) Staff costs	-962,993	-1,195,445	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	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the Body's borrowing (if any).				
6. (-) Total other payments	-125,400	-139,540	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	277,156	150,530	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6).				
8. (+) Debtors and stock balances	70	456	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	310,658	219,455	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	-33,572	-69,381	Income and expenditure accounts only: Enter the value of monies owed by the Body (except borrowing) at the year-end.				
11. (=) Balances carried forward	277,156	150,530	Total balances should equal Line 7 above: Enter the total of (8+9-10).				
12. Total fixed assets and long-term assets	0	0	The original Asset and Investment Register value of all fixed assets, plus other long-term assets owned by the Body as at 31 March.				
13. Total borrowing	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).				
14. Trust funds disclosure note	Yes	No	N/A	Yes	No	N/A	The Body 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 Body, 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 Body's accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2015, that:

	Agreed?		'YES' means that the Body:	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 2014 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 Body 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 2014.	✓		Has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the Body's accounts.	6, 23	
5. We have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the Body 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 Body and has dealt with them properly.	6, 9	
6. We have maintained an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Body'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 Body.	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 Body 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	
9. Trust funds – in our capacity as trustee, we have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s) including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit. 	Yes	No	N/A	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

Approval and certification of the accounts and annual governance statement

The Body is responsible for the preparation of the accounting statements in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 and for the preparation of an Annual Return which:

- summarises the Body's accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2015; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are important to the external auditor's responsibilities.

<p>Certification by the RFO</p> <p>Certificate under Regulation 15(1) Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014</p> <p>I certify that the accounting statements contained in this Annual Return presents fairly the financial position of the Body, and its income and expenditure, or properly presents receipts and payments, as the case may be, for the year ended 31 March 2015.</p>	<p>Approval by the Body</p> <p>Approval of accounting statements under Regulation 15(2) Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Annual Governance Statement</p> <p>I confirm that these accounting statements and Annual Governance Statement were approved by the Body under body minute reference:</p>
<p>RFO signature: </p> <p>Name: Dafydd L Edwards Statutory Finance Officer Gwynedd Council</p> <p>Date: 19/06/15</p>	<p>Chair signature:</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Date:</p>

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 2015 of:

Special Educational Needs Joint Committee (Gwynedd and Anglesey Councils)

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 Body/meeting are included in our report to the Body dated _____.]

(* Delete as appropriate)

External auditor's signature:
For and on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales

External auditor's name:

Date:

Section 4 – Annual internal audit report to: SENJC (Gwynedd and Anglesey Councils)

The Body'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 2015.

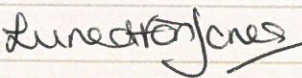
The internal audit has been carried out in accordance with the Body's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and the internal audit conclusions on 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 Body.

	Agreed?			
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**
1. Appropriate books of account have been properly kept throughout the year.	✓			
2. The Body's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓			
3. The Body assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.				✓ An Internal Audit of the Joint Committee will be carried out following completion of the Strategic Review. This work has been planned for 2016/17.
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 Body 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 Body has met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓	

For any risk areas identified by the Body (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: LUNED FON JONES
Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: 
Date: 15 June, 2015

Section 5 – Guidance notes on completing the 2015 Annual Return

- Please note the changes to the accounts approval and audit process for this year. These are described on the front cover of this Annual Return.**
- 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.
- The Wales Audit Office Good Practice Exchange (www.wao.gov.uk/good-practice/finance/community-council-money) provides further information on the accounts and audit process along with guidance on governance matters.**
- Please make sure that all sections are completed (ie, no empty pink boxes) by the appropriate person and the certificates in Section 3 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.
- 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.
- 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 Body 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*.
- 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.
- 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.
- Please make sure that Section 1 adds up! Also please ensure that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Line 7 of 2014) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Line 1 of 2015).
- Do not complete the External Audit Certificate in Section 3.** The external auditor completes this after the external audit work has been completed.
- 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 Body.

Completion checklist – ‘No’ answers mean that you may not have met requirements		Done?	
On submission to the external auditor		Yes	No
Accounts	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 2015 agree to Line 9?		
Approval	Has the RFO certified Section 3 (Regulation 15 (1)) no later than 30 June 2015?		
	Has the Body approved the accounting statements before 30 June 2015 and has Section 3 been signed and dated by the person presiding at the meeting at which approval was given?		
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.		
If accounts are amended after receipt of external auditor’s report on matters arising		Yes	No
Accounts	Have the amended accounting statements been approved and Section 3 re-signed and re-dated as evidence of the Body’s approval of the amendments before re-submission to the auditor?		

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