

Community and Town Councils in Wales

Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

Accounting statements 2022-23 for:

Name of body: Coedpoeth Community Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance for compilers
	31 March 2022 (£)	31 March 2023 (£)	
Statement of income and expenditure/receipts and payments			
1. Balances brought forward	92,057	107,511	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/levy	191,500	207,382	Total amount of income received/receivable in the year from local taxation (precept) or levy/contribution from principal bodies.
3. (+) Total other receipts	55,625	52,574	Total income or receipts recorded in the cashbook minus amounts included in line 2. Includes support, discretionary and revenue grants.
4. (-) Staff costs	116,394	120,776	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, taxable allowances, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and termination costs. Exclude reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on external borrowing (if any).
6. (-) Total other payments	115,277	163,752	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	107,511	82,939	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal $(1+2+3) - (4+5+6)$.
Statement of balances			
8. (+) Debtors	7,162	12,227	Income and expenditure accounts only: Enter the value of debts owed to the body at the year-end.
9. (+) Total cash and investments	105,531	105,636	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	5,182	34,924	Income and expenditure accounts only: Enter the value of monies owed by the body (except borrowing) at the year-end.
11. (=) Balances carried forward	107,511	82,939	Total balances should equal line 7 above: Enter the total of $(8+9-10)$.
12. Total fixed assets and long-term assets	1,660,395	1,662,818	The asset and investment register value of all fixed assets and any other long-term assets held 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).

Annual Governance Statement

We acknowledge as the members of the Council/Board/Committee, 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 2023, that:

	Agreed?			'YES' means that the Council/Board/Committee:	PG Ref
	Yes	No*	N/A		
1. We have put in place arrangements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective financial management during the year; and the preparation and approval of the accounting statements. 	✓			Properly sets its budget and manages its money and prepares and approves its accounting statements as 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 Council/Board/ Committee 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 the body's accounts as set out in the notice of audit.	6, 23
5. We have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the Council/Board/Committee 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 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 considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the Council/Board/Committee 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
8. We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in previous reports from internal and external audit.		✓		Considered and taken appropriate action to address issues/weaknesses brought to its attention by both the internal and external auditors.	6, 8, 23
9. Trust funds – The body acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing trust fund(s)/assets. We exclude transactions related to these trusts from the Accounting Statement. In our capacity as trustee, we have discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s) including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.			✓	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.

Additional disclosure notes*

The following information is provided to assist the reader to understand the accounting statement and/or the Annual Governance Statement

1. Expenditure under S137 Local Government Act 1972 and S2 Local Government Act 2000

Section 137(1) of the 1972 Act permits the Council to spend on activities for which it has no other specific powers if the Council considers that the expenditure is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, the area or any part of it, or all or some of its inhabitants, providing that the benefit is commensurate with the expenditure. Section 137(3) also permits the Council to incur expenditure for certain charitable and other purposes. The maximum expenditure that can be incurred under both section 137(1) and (3) for the financial year 2022-23 was £8.82 per elector.

In 2022-23, the Council made payments totalling £_____ under section 137. These payments are included within 'Other payments' in the Accounting Statement.

2.

3.

* Include here any additional disclosures the Council considers necessary to aid the reader's understanding of the accounting statement and/or the annual governance statement.

Council/Committee approval and certification

The Council/Committee is responsible for the preparation of the accounting statements and the annual governance statement in accordance with the requirements of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the Act) and the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.

Certification by the RFO

I certify that the accounting statements contained in this Annual Return present fairly the financial position of the Council/Board/Committee, and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

RFO signature:



Name: VICTORIA JANE BOLTON

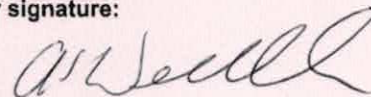
Date: 30 / 6 / 2023

Approval by the Council/Board/Committee

I confirm that these accounting statements and Annual Governance Statement were approved by the Council/Board/Committee under minute reference:

Minute ref: 2023 PM 78

Chair signature:



Name: ANTHONY SEAN WEDLAKE

Date: 30 / 6 / 2023

Auditor General for Wales' Audit Certificate and report

I report in respect of my audit of the accounts under section 13 of the Act, whether any matters that come to my attention give cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. My audit has been conducted in accordance with guidance issued by the Auditor General for Wales.

I certify that I have completed the audit of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2023 of:

Coedpoeth Community Council

Auditor General's report

Audit opinion – Qualified

Except for the matters reported below in my Basis for Qualification, on the basis of my review and subject to the matters and recommendations identified below, in my opinion no matters have come to my attention giving cause for concern that in any material respect, the information reported in this Annual Return:

- has not been prepared in accordance with proper practices;
- that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met;
- is not consistent with the Council's governance arrangements; and
- that the Council does not have proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Basis for Qualification

Accounting Statement

I am unable to conclude whether or not the Accounting Statement properly presents the Council's income and expenditure and financial position for the year:

- The Council has not been able to provide complete, appropriate and adequate account records regarding staff costs as the Council did not maintain contracts of employment for staff.
- The Council has been unable to provide an adequate explanation regarding various income transactions recorded in the year. The Council has been unable to provide an adequate explanation as to the controls for cash income received. We been able to verify multiple income transactions to supporting documentation.
- The Council's accruals are understated by transactions that were made in year but had not been invoiced until after year end. The Council should seek to ensure all material accruals are included within the respective expenditure and creditor balances at year end.

Annual Governance Statement

In my opinion, the Annual Governance Statement is inconsistent with the Council's governance arrangements for the year:

- In preparing its Annual Governance Statement, the Council has disregarded the findings of its internal auditor. The internal auditor's report clearly identifies that the Council does not have in place an adequate and effective system of internal control.
- Assertion 1 – preparation and approval of accounting statements. The Council did not maintain adequate accounting records.
- Assertion 2 – adequate system of internal control. The Council does not receive adequate information regarding the approval of payments.
- Assertion 3 – noncompliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice. The Council has not provided evidence that a budget for the 2023/24 financial year has been set in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act (1992) and that the precept has been set in line with the budget. The Act requires the Council to take into account its level of reserves when setting its budget requirement. As such the Council's budget for 2023/24 financial year has not separately accounted for capital receipts it expects to receive and how the Council will use those capital receipts. We recommend that the Council sets a budget in accordance with the relevant regulations and codes of practice.
- Assertion 3 – noncompliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice. The Council has not published information it is required to publish electronically by the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013.
- Assertion 3 – noncompliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice. The Council does not operate PAYE as it is required to do under the Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003 for payments made to members. Failure to operate PAYE exposes the Council to the risk of fines and/or penalty charges being imposed by HM Revenue and Customs.
- Assertion 4 – exercise of electors' rights. The Council approved the annual return after the commencement date for the exercise of electors' rights. The Council should approve the annual return prior to the commencement of the inspection period and in accordance with statutory deadlines. Furthermore, the Council did not provide sufficient notice of the public inspection period as required by the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.

- Assertion 8 – response to audit recommendations. The Council's internal auditor has not provided assurance over its controls relating to its petty cash. It is recommended that the Council seeks assurance over its petty cash arrangements.

Other matters arising and recommendations

I draw the Council's attention to the following matters and recommendations which do not affect my audit opinion but should be addressed by the body.

Insurance

In our view the Council does not have sufficient insurance coverage regarding Fidelity Guarantee insurance. We recommend that the level of cover should be reviewed to ensure that the level of cover is at least the balance carried forward plus precept for the next financial year.

Negative responses in the Annual Governance Statement

The Annual Governance Statement sets out the expected minimum standards for local councils. We draw your attention to the Annual Governance Statement whereby the Council has stated a negative response to multiple assertions. We recommend that the Council makes the necessary improvements to its arrangements to address the deficiencies it has identified, when the Council has stated a negative to response within the Annual Governance Statement the Council must make appropriate disclosures within the annual return as to why it has made the negative assertions.

Allowance payment not reported to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

An allowance was paid within the year but was not included within the submissions sent to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

Overtime payments

The Council should seek to improve its authorisation process of all overtime worked and paid for. There appears to be no explicit approval of the actual hours worked by the Clerk. The Council approved an arrangement which allows the Clerk to be paid up to 5 hours a week overtime however there is no further authorisation as to when the Clerk makes use of this arrangement. We also note that the Council retrospectively approved overtime payments for the Clerk prior to this arrangement.

Appropriateness of Accruals

The Council pays its staff on an arrears basis on the 15th of every month. The Council has not accrued for the two weeks of staff costs for March 2023, similarly, the Council would be required to restate the accounts to include a staff cost accrual as at 31 March 2022. The overall effect on the closing balances would be immaterial.

Petty Cash Float

The Council's petty cash float exceeds that approved within the financial regulations by £100.

Fixed asset register

The fixed asset register has not been updated for the year-end adjustments recorded within the Council's accounting system.

Approval of settings fees and charges

The Council has not reviewed its fees and charges in the 2022/23 financial year. The Council should formally confirm on an annual basis all fees and charges set by the Council.

There are no further matters that I wish to draw to the Council's attention



Richard Harries, Director, Audit Wales
For and on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales

Date: 19/12/2023

Annual internal audit report to:

Name of body:

COEDPOETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The Council/Board/Committee'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 2023.

The internal audit has been carried out in accordance with the Council/Board/Committee'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 Council/Board/Committee.

	Agreed?				Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body)
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**	
1. Appropriate books of account have been properly kept throughout the year.	✓				
2. Financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.		✓			} see interim and year end internal audit reports
3. The body assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.		✓			
4. The annual precept/levy/resource demand requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored, and reserves were appropriate.		✓			} see issues 2.) 3.) and 5.) in year end internal audit report.
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.			✓		} subject to issues in internal audit report re. serial records.
7. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with minuted approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓				
8. Asset and investment registers were complete, accurate, and properly maintained.		✓			} except for issue 6.) in year end internal audit report and issue 2.) in interim internal audit report.

	Agreed?				Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body)
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**	
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 Council/Board/Committee has met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓		

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

	Agreed?				Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body)
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**	
12.					
13.					
14.					

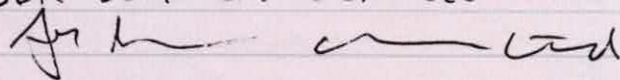
* If the response is 'no', please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

** 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.

[My detailed findings and recommendations which I draw to the attention of the Council/Board/Committee are included in my detailed report to the Council/Board/Committee dated 22/06/2023.] * Delete if no report prepared.

Internal audit confirmation

I/we confirm that as the Council's internal auditor, I/we have not been involved in a management or administrative role within the body (including preparation of the accounts) or as a member of the body during the financial years 2021-22 and 2022-23. I also confirm that there are no conflicts of interest surrounding my appointment.

Name of person who carried out the internal audit:	JDH BUSINESS SERVICES LTD
Signature of person who carried out the internal audit:	
Date:	22/06/2023