Section 1 – Annual governance statement 2015/16

We acknowledge as the members of:

Enter name of smaller authority here: Cowes Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2016, 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 and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE: 274

dated: 10/05/16

Signed by:

Chair: SIGNATURE REQUIRED

dated: 10/05/16

Signed by:

Clerk: SIGNATURE REQUIRED

dated: 10/05/16

*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 2015/16 for

Enter name of smaller authority here: Cowes Town Council

	Year ending 31 March 2015 £	Year ending 31 March 2016 £	Notes and guidance
			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.
1. Balances brought forward	219104	294482	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	169545	170781	Total amount of precept or (for IDBs) rates and levies received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	8667	24061	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	31235	21236	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	71848	115933	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	294482	352155	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	289907	333021	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	248196	262750	The original Asset and Investment Register value of all fixed assets, plus other long term assets owned by the smaller authority as at 31 March
10. Total borrowings			The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

	Yes	No	
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓	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 2016 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 REQUIRED D. Faulkner

Date 10/05/16

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

10/05/16

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE 7274

Signed by Chair of the meeting approving these accounting statements.

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date 10/05/16

Section 3 – External auditor certificate and report
2015/16 Certificate

We certify that we have completed our review of the annual return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2016 in respect of:

Enter name of smaller authority here: Cowes Town Council

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 2016; 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.

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 matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

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

Please see enclosed report

BDO LLP Southampton United Kingdom

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

External auditor signature: BDO LLP

External auditor name: BDO LLP Southampton United Kingdom

Date: 27/3/16

Note: The NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on 2015/16 accounts in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

BDO LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales (with registered number OC305127).

ISSUES ARISING REPORT FOR
Cowes Town Council
Audit for the year ended 31 March 2016

BDO

Introduction

The following matters have been raised to draw items to the attention of Cowes Town Council. These matters came to the attention of BDO LLP during the audit of the annual return for the year ended 31 March 2016. This report must be presented to a full meeting of the smaller authority for review.

The audit of the annual return may not disclose all shortcomings of the systems as some matters may not have come to the attention of the auditor. For this reason, the matters raised may not be the only ones that exist.

The matters listed below are explained in further detail on the page(s) that follow;

- Minor issues
- Fixed assets included at a valuation

The following issue(s) have been raised as there are minor errors on the annual return which we wish to draw to the attention of the council so they do not occur again in future years.

Minor issues

What is the issue?

The following issues have been raised as minor issues or omissions have been identified in the current year's Annual Return:

There are empty boxes in section 2 of the annual return. We do not believe there should be any figures in these boxes but they should include a nil or zero to confirm this.

The comparative figures disclosed in Section 2 of the Annual Return do not agree to the audited Annual Return for last year. We believe the figures have been input in error but the error does not affect the balance carried forward into the current year.

Why has this issue been raised?

This is to draw these minor errors to the attention of the smaller authority.

What do we recommend you do?

The smaller authority should ensure in future years that the above minor errors or omissions are not included in the Accounting Statements.

Further guidance on this matter can be obtained from the following source(s):

Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England - A Practitioners Guide, NALC/SLCC

The following issue(s) have been raised to assist the council. The council is recommended to take action on the following issue(s) to ensure that the council acts within its statutory and regulatory framework.

Fixed assets included at a valuation

What is the issue?

It has come to our attention that fixed assets have been included in box 9 at a valuation amount. All assets should be included at cost.

A smaller authority should not adjust assets disclosed on the annual return for revaluations, depreciation or impairment. The only movements on assets should be the cost of additions or the cost value of any disposals.

Why has this issue been raised?

The accounting treatment is not in compliance with proper practices.

What do we recommend you do?

The Practitioners Guide states that all assets should be held at cost. In future the smaller authority should review the current Practitioners Guide to ensure that the are accounting for assets correctly.

The cost value of assets is not expected to change unless an asset is ever disposed of or scrapped.

Further guidance on this matter can be obtained from the following source(s):

Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England - A Practitioners' Guide, NALC/SLCC

No other matters came to our attention.

For and on behalf of
BDO LLP

Date: 25 August 2016