

## **DONYATT PARISH COUNCIL**

Dear Councillors, you are summoned to an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council on  
Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June @ 6.30pm in the David Willis Room, Donyatt Village Hall.



Clerk & RFO to the Council

15/06/2025

### **AGENDA**

- 1 TO RECEIVE ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2 To note the Internal Auditors Report for financial years 2024/5**
- 3 To note the AGAR report, Form 2, Page 4.**
- 4 To note the public access dates as Tuesday 3 June – Monday 14 July 2025.**
- 5 To instruct the Clerk to submit the relevant documents to the External Auditor.**

# Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

## Donyatt Parish Council

<https://donyattpc.co.uk/>

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			✓
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")	✓		
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

12/06/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

Paul Russell

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

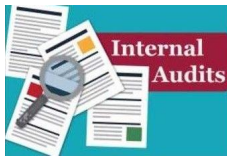


Date

12/06/2025

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

\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).



Zannette Bougourd  
Parish Clerk  
Donyatt Parish Council

12<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Dear Zannette,

**Donyatt Parish Council End of Year Audit June 2025**

Parish & Town Auditing Services have been appointed to undertake the internal audit for Donyatt Parish Council. The End of Year audit was completed on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

I can confirm that I am independent of the Parish Council.

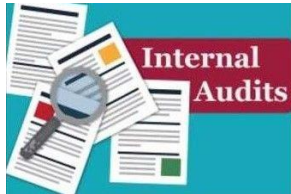
As stated in the Letter of Engagement letter, the scope of our work is limited to completing the audit testing and enquiries we deem necessary to complete Section 4 of the Annual Report for Local Councils in England. We do not provide assurance over or accept responsibility for areas of work not included in this scope, unless specifically agreed with the Council during the financial year. In providing internal audit services we are not conducting a financial statement audit in accordance with standards and guidelines issued by the Audit Practices Board and our procedures are not designed to provide assurance over the reliability and quality of your financial statements. This will be undertaken by the Council's appointed External Auditor.

We are required by the Annual Internal Audit Report included in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to review controls in place at the Council against predefined control assertions. These controls are included in the following report.

Thank you for all the information you have provided. I would be grateful if you could present this report at the next available meeting of Full Council.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Russell, Internal Auditor



**A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.**

The Council maintains its financial records using a spreadsheet.

Income and expenditure balances to the cashbook and is reconciled to the bank statements on a regular basis.

There is an audit trail from the accounts to supporting documentation such as invoices.

The Council is provided with monthly financial updates and these are minuted.

The opening balances in the cashbook agreed back to 2023/24.

A sample of invoices have been inspected against the accounts for payment. No material differences were identified.

The accuracy of the year-end bank reconciliation details has been verified and accurate disclosure of the combined cash and bank balances have been stated in the AGAR, section 2, line 8. (£7,690 though this should have been stated at £7,689).

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.**

The Financial Regulations are based on the latest versions of the NALC templates and have been reviewed.

Standing Orders are based on an older version of the NALC model. The limits between the two documents do not match.

**Recommended that Standing Orders be reviewed during this financial year to reflect the changes implemented as part of the Procurement Act 2023.**

Please note that from 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025, both above and below threshold notices for new UK procurements will need to be published on Find a Tender: [Find a Tender](#)

All other payments under Box 6 of the AGAR have increased from £7,678 to £11,732. An explanation of the variance has been provided.

Invoices are recorded on the spreadsheet and list of payments are presented to Full Council at each meeting for approval.

A sample test has been undertaken and the following is confirmed:

- Payment agreed to the invoice.



- A sample of Payments have been checked against the bank statements to verify accuracy.
- Expenditure is appropriate.

The Council does not currently have a debit or credit card in place.

The Council is not registered for VAT and submits a VAT claim normally on an annual basis to HMRC. A VAT claim of £805.47 has been submitted for the previous 2 years from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

**The Council has met the requirements of this control objective.**

**C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these**

The Council has a Risk Register in place and this was updated on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

The Council was originally insured through Clear Councils on a standard local council package for employer liability and public liability. Council is now insured with Zurich on a sector specific package. Adequate cover is provided and the policy was in date at time of audit.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored and reserves were appropriate**

Council had initial balances of £7,690 at the beginning of the year and these have decreased to £7,251 according to the AGAR. This is overstated by £1 caused by an overstatement at the beginning of the year when it should have been £7,689.

End of year bank balances are as follows:

ACCOUNT	AMOUNT
Unity Trust Current	£3,543.03
Unity Trust Reserve	£3,706.78
	<b>£7,249.81</b>

The Council has Earmarked Reserves in place and these have been reviewed.

The 2024/24 precept was approved on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Please note that the minutes of this meeting have not been uploaded, only the agenda and the precept form.

The 2025/26 precept (£19,990) was approved on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025 (minute 25/08.e).

Budget Monitoring reports are presented to Council on a regular basis alongside bank reconciliations. These are also available on the website.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked and VAT was appropriately accounted for.**

Precept as stated in box 2 is £14,463. This has been agreed to third party documentation provided by central government.

Income per box 3 to the accounts was £1,120. Other income received in 2023/24 was £610. An explanation of variance has been provided.

A sample has been tested during the year from the cashbook. The transactions were selected randomly and included items from each month of the 2024/25 financial year. No material differences were identified.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**F – Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.**

The Council does not operate a petty cash account. **Not covered.**

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**G - Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.**

Staff costs per box 4 to the accounts were £4,290 compared to the previous year of £3,963.

Payroll is undertaken through the HMRC payroll software. Pay slips have been provided and were reviewed. An addendum to the Clerk's contract has also been provided increasing the hours of work to 26.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**H - Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.**

The asset register has been reviewed and updated to include purchases during the year. The Fixed Assets box 9 is stated as £5,534 for 2024/25.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**I – Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.**

The Council has no outstanding loans.

Bank accounts need to be reconciled on a regular basis. Bank reconciliations have been provided to Full Council and minuted.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**J - Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.**

Donyatt Parish Council prepares its annual accounts on a receipts and payments basis as required as it has a turnover of less than £200,000 per annum.

An adequate audit trail is in place with appropriate records provided.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**K: If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick “not covered”).**

The Council certified itself as exempt. This was minuted at the meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024 (Minute 24/45.a)

Council has also certified itself exempt in 2024/25. Note that one of the dates is dated 2005 and not 2025 on the exemption certificate.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**L: The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation**

Smaller authorities should publish:

- All items of expenditure above £100 (published as part of minutes);
- End of year accounts (published)
- Annual governance statement (published)
- Internal audit report (published)
- List of councillor or member responsibilities (published)
- Details of public land and building assets (published)
- Minutes, agendas and meeting papers of formal meetings (published)

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**M – In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to**

**the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).**

The Council published Sections 1 & 2 of the AGAR and the internal audit report.

The Public Notice is published on the Council's website. Dates were from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July to 9<sup>th</sup> August 2024. This meets the 30 statutory days notice requirement. Dates were not minuted. **It is recommended that the public notice dates be included in the Council minutes.**

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**N: The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)**

The Council has published AGAR documentation from 2018/19 and meets the 5 year publication requirement.

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2024 authorities must publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited (published);
- Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24, approved and signed (published)
- Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2023/24, approved and signed (published)

Not later than 30 September 2024 authorities must publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit (published)
- Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate (published)
- Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. (published)

Noted that the current website ([Parish Council](#)) is not WCAG compliant. A new website is being commissioned by the Clerk.

**The Council has met this control objective.**

**O – (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.**

The Council is not a sole trustee. **Not applicable.**



## WHAT SMALLER AUTHORITIES NEED TO DO TO ADVERTISE THE PERIOD DURING WHICH ELECTORS AND INTERESTED PERSONS MAY EXERCISE RIGHTS RELATING TO THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The [Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014](#) and the [Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015](#) require that:

- 1) The accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested, during a period of 30 working days set by the smaller authority and including the first 10 working days of July.
- 2) The period referred to in paragraph (1) starts with the day on which the period for the exercise of public rights is treated as having been commenced i.e. the day following the day on which all of the obligations in paragraph (3) below have been fulfilled.
- 3) The responsible financial officer for a relevant authority must, on behalf of that authority, publish (**which must include publication on the authority's website**):
  - a) the Accounting Statements (i.e. Section 2 of either Form 2 or 3, whichever is relevant, of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)), accompanied by:
    - i) a declaration, signed by that officer to the effect that the status of the Accounting Statements are unaudited and that the Accounting Statements as published may be subject to change;
    - ii) the Annual Governance Statement (i.e. Section 1 of either Form 2 or Form 3, whichever is relevant, of the AGAR); and
  - b) a statement that sets out—
    - i) the period for the exercise of public rights;
    - ii) details of the manner in which notice should be given of an intention to inspect the accounting records and other documents;
    - iii) the name and address of the local auditor;
    - iv) the provisions contained in section 26 (inspection of documents etc.) and section 27 (right to make objections at audit) of the Act, as they have effect in relation to the authority in question;

## HOW DO YOU DO IT?

- 1) You will meet statutory requirements if you fully and accurately complete the notice of public rights pro forma in this document, and publish (**including publication on the smaller authority's website**) the following documents, the day before the public rights period commences:
  - a) the approved Sections 1 and 2 of either Form 2 or 3, whichever is relevant to your smaller authority, of the AGAR; and
  - b) the completed Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return. Please note that we have pre-completed it with the following suggested dates: Tuesday 3 June – Monday 14 July 2025. (The latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements are Tuesday 1 July – Monday 11 August 2025); and
  - c) the notes which accompany the Notice (Local authority accounts: a summary of your rights).

Where the authority has answered 'No' to any assertions on Section 1, as stated on the face of Section 1 of the AGAR, a sufficiently detailed explanation of the reasons must be published with the AGAR on the authority's website.

Smaller authority name: **DONYATT PARISH COUNCIL**

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS AND PUBLICATION  
OF UNAUDITED ANNUAL GOVERNANCE &  
ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN**

**ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 Sections 26 and 27  
The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)**

NOTICE	NOTES
<p><b>1. Date of announcement 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025(a)</b></p> <p><b>2. Each year the smaller authority's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) needs to be reviewed by an external auditor appointed by Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd. The unaudited AGAR has been published with this notice. As it has yet to be reviewed by the appointed auditor, it is subject to change as a result of that review.</b></p> <p><b>Any person interested has the right to inspect and make copies of the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records must be made available for inspection by any person interested. For the year ended 31 March 2025, these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:</b></p> <p>(b) Mrs Z Bougourd 9 Redgate Park Crewkerne. TA18 7NL</p> <p>commencing on (c) <u>Tuesday 3 June 2025</u></p> <p>and ending on (d) <u>Monday 14 July 2025</u></p> <p><b>3. Local government electors and their representatives also have:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The opportunity to question the appointed auditor about the accounting records; and</li><li>• The right to make an objection which concerns a matter in respect of which the appointed auditor could either make a public interest report or apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the smaller authority.</li></ul> <p>The appointed auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose between the above dates only.</p> <p><b>4. The smaller authority's AGAR is subject to review by the appointed auditor under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the NAO's Code of Audit Practice 2015. The appointed auditor is:</b></p> <p><b>PKF Littlejohn LLP (Ref: SBA Team)</b> <b>15 Westferry Circus</b> <b>Canary Wharf</b> <b>London E14 4HD</b> <a href="mailto:sba@pkf-l.com">(sba@pkf-l.com)</a></p> <p><b>5. This announcement is made by (e) Zannette Bougourd RFO</b></p>	<p>(a) Insert date of placing of the notice which must be not less than 1 day before the date in (c) below</p> <p>(b) Insert name, position and address/telephone number/ email address, as appropriate, of the Clerk or other person to which any person may apply to inspect the accounts</p> <p>(c) Insert date, which must be at least 1 day after the date of announcement in (a) above and at least 30 working days before the date appointed in (d) below</p> <p>(d) The inspection period between (c) and (d) must be 30 working days inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July.</p> <p>(e) Insert name and position of person placing the notice – this person must be the responsible financial officer for the smaller authority</p>

## LOCAL AUTHORITY ACCOUNTS: A SUMMARY OF YOUR RIGHTS

**Please note that this summary applies to all relevant smaller authorities, including local councils, internal drainage boards and 'other' smaller authorities.**

### **The basic position**

The [Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014](#) (the Act) governs the work of auditors appointed to smaller authorities. This summary explains the provisions contained in Sections 26 and 27 of the Act. The Act and the [Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015](#) also cover the duties, responsibilities and rights of smaller authorities, other organisations and the public concerning the accounts being audited.

As a local elector, or an interested person, you have certain legal rights in respect of the accounting records of smaller authorities. As an interested person you can inspect accounting records and related documents. If you are a local government elector for the area to which the accounts relate you can also ask questions about the accounts and object to them. You do not have to pay directly for exercising your rights. However, any resulting costs incurred by the smaller authority form part of its running costs. Therefore, indirectly, local residents pay for the cost of you exercising your rights through their council tax.

### **The right to inspect the accounting records**

Any interested person can inspect the accounting records, which includes but is not limited to local electors. You can inspect the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records. You can copy all, or part, of these records or documents. Your inspection must be about the accounts, or relate to an item in the accounts. You cannot, for example, inspect or copy documents unrelated to the accounts, or that include personal information (Section 26 (6) – (10) of the Act explains what is meant by personal information). You cannot inspect information which is protected by commercial confidentiality. This is information which would prejudice commercial confidentiality if it was released to the public and there is not, set against this, a very strong reason in the public interest why it should nevertheless be disclosed.

When smaller authorities have finished preparing accounts for the financial year and approved them, they must publish them (including on a website). There must be a 30 working day period, called the 'period for the exercise of public rights', during which you can exercise your statutory right to inspect the accounting records. Smaller authorities must tell the public, including advertising this on their website, that the accounting records and related documents are available to inspect. By arrangement you will then have 30 working days to inspect and make copies of the accounting records. You may have to pay a copying charge. The 30 working day period must include a common period of inspection during which all smaller authorities' accounting records are available to inspect. This will be 1-14 July 2025 for 2024/25 accounts. The advertisement must set out the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights, how you can communicate to the smaller authority that you wish to inspect the accounting records and related documents, the name and address of the auditor, and the relevant legislation that governs the inspection of accounts and objections.

### **The right to ask the auditor questions about the accounting records**

**You should first ask your smaller authority** about the accounting records, since they hold all the details. If you are a local elector, your right to ask questions of the external auditor is enshrined in law. However, while the auditor will answer your questions where possible, they are not always obliged to do so. For example, the question might be better answered by another organisation, require investigation beyond the auditor's remit, or involve disproportionate cost (which is borne by the local taxpayer). Give your smaller authority the opportunity first to explain anything in the accounting records that you are unsure about. If you are not satisfied with their explanation, you can question the external auditor about the accounting records.

The law limits the time available for you formally to ask questions. This must be done in the period for the exercise of public rights, so let the external auditor know your concern as soon as possible. The

advertisement or notice that tells you the accounting records are available to inspect will also give the period for the exercise of public rights during which you may ask the auditor questions, which here means formally asking questions under the Act. You can ask someone to represent you when asking the external auditor questions.

Before you ask the external auditor any questions, inspect the accounting records fully, so you know what they contain. Please remember that you cannot formally ask questions, under the Act, after the end of the period for the exercise of public rights. You may ask your smaller authority other questions about their accounts for any year, at any time. But these are not questions under the Act.

You can ask the external auditor questions about an item in the accounting records for the financial year being audited. However, your right to ask the external auditor questions is limited. The external auditor can only answer 'what' questions, not 'why' questions. The external auditor cannot answer questions about policies, finances, procedures or anything else unless it is directly relevant to an item in the accounting records. Remember that your questions must always be about facts, not opinions. To avoid misunderstanding, we recommend that you always put your questions in writing.

### **The right to make objections at audit**

You have inspected the accounting records and asked your questions of the smaller authority. Now you may wish to object to the accounts on the basis that an item in them is in your view unlawful or there are matters of wider concern arising from the smaller authority's finances. A local government elector can ask the external auditor to apply to the High Court for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, or to issue a report on matters which are in the public interest. You must tell the external auditor which specific item in the accounts you object to and why you think the item is unlawful, or why you think that a public interest report should be made about it. You must provide the external auditor with the evidence you have to support your objection. Disagreeing with income or spending does not make it unlawful. To object to the accounts you must write to the external auditor stating you want to make an objection, including the information and evidence below and you must send a copy to the smaller authority. The notice must include:

- confirmation that you are an elector in the smaller authority's area;
- why you are objecting to the accounts and the facts on which you rely;
- details of any item in the accounts that you think is unlawful; and
- details of any matter about which you think the external auditor should make a public interest report.

Other than it must be in writing, there is no set format for objecting. You can only ask the external auditor to act within the powers available under the [Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014](#).

### **A final word**

You may not use this 'right to object' to make a personal complaint or claim against your smaller authority. You should take such complaints to your local Citizens' Advice Bureau, local Law Centre or to your solicitor. Smaller authorities, and so local taxpayers, meet the costs of dealing with questions and objections. In deciding whether to take your objection forward, one of a series of factors the auditor must take into account is the cost that will be involved, they will only continue with the objection if it is in the public interest to do so. They may also decide not to consider an objection if they think that it is frivolous or vexatious, or if it repeats an objection already considered. If you appeal to the courts against an auditor's decision not to apply to the courts for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful, you will have to pay for the action yourself.

For more detailed guidance on public rights and the special powers of auditors, copies of the publication [Local authority accounts: A guide to your rights](#) are available from the NAO website.

If you wish to contact your authority's appointed external auditor please write to the address in paragraph 4 of the *Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return*.