

Section 1 – Statement of accounts

NORTH WEST FIRE AND RESCUE MANAGEMENT BOARD

In completing the boxes below please explain any significant variances on a separate sheet and send this to the external auditor together with a copy of your bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2008.

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2007 £	31 March 2008 £	
1 Balances brought forward *	142096	142485	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the body's financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2 (+) Income from taxation and/or levy	135832	227801	Total amount of tax and/or levy received in the year.
3 (+) Total other receipts	150933	35578	Total receipts or income as recorded in the cashbook less income from taxation and/or levy (line 2). Include any grants received here.
4 (-) Staff costs	—	—	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all body employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and related expenses.
5 (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	—	—	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the body's borrowings (if any).
6 (-) Total other* payments	142485 286366	192111 213753	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	—	—	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6)
8 Total cash and short term investments	—	—	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 and long term assets	—	—	The recorded book value at 31 March of all fixed assets owned by the body and any other long term assets e.g. loans to third parties.
10 Total borrowings	—	—	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

* Held by constituent Authorities on behalf of emB

I certify that the statement of accounts 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 2008.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer:



Date 23/06/08

I confirm that these accounts were approved by the body and recorded as minute reference:

3/2/08

Date 15/4/2008

Signed by Chair of meeting approving the accounts:



Date 24 06 2008

Section 2 – Annual governance statement

We acknowledge as the members of NORTH WEST FIRE + RESCUE MANAGEMENT BOARD our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the statement of accounts. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the body's statement of accounts for the year ended 31 March 2008, that:

	Agreed – Yes or No*	'Yes' means that the body:
1 we have approved the statement of accounts which has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.	Yes	prepared its statement of accounts in the way prescribed by law.
2 we have maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	Yes	made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
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 which could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the body to conduct its business or on its finances.	Yes	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.
4 we have provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	Yes	has during the year given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the body's accounts.
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.	No	considered the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly.
6 we have maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the body's accounting records and control systems and carried out a review of its effectiveness.	Yes	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 and reviewed the impact of this work.
7 we have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	Yes	has to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
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 in the statement of accounts.	Yes	disclosed everything it should have about its business during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.

This annual governance statement is approved by the body and recorded as minute reference

3/2/08 dated 15/04/2008

Signed on behalf of NORTH WEST FIRE + RESCUE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Signed by: Chair [Signature] Date 24/06/2008

Signed by: Clerk [Signature] Date 24/06/2008

***Note:** Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response that has been given; and describe what action is being taken to address the weaknesses identified.

Section 4 – Annual internal audit report to

NORTH WEST FIRE AND RESCUE MANAGEMENT BOARD

The body's internal audit, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2008.

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, opposite, are 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? Please choose from one of the following Yes/No*/Not covered**
A Appropriate books of account have been properly kept throughout the year.	YES
B The body's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	YES
C The body assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	NO*
D The annual taxation or levy requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	YES
E Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	YES
F Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	NOT APPLICABLE
G Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with body approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	NOT APPLICABLE
H Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	NOT APPLICABLE
I Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	YES
J Year-end accounts were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments/income and expenditure), agreed with cash book, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and, where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	YES

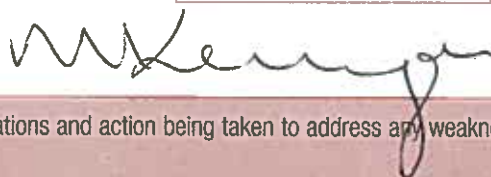
For any other risk areas identified by the body (list any other risk areas below or on separate sheets if needed) adequate controls existed:

* NWRMB are taking appropriate action to address this

Name of person who carried out the internal audit:

MKENYON

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit:



Date:

30/06/2008.

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

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

Guidance notes on completing the 2008 annual return

- 1 Please make sure that your annual return is complete (i.e. no empty red boxes), and is properly signed and dated. Avoid making any amendments to the completed return. But, if this is unavoidable, make sure the amendments are approved by the body, properly initialled and an explanation for them is provided to the auditor. Annual returns containing unapproved and/or unexplained amendments will be returned unaudited.
- 2 Use the checklist provided below. Use a second pair of eyes, perhaps internal audit or the Chair, to review your annual return for completeness before sending it off to the auditor.
- 3 Please do not send the auditor any information that you are not specifically asked for. Doing so is not helpful.
- 4 Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation which you send to your auditor with the annual return covers **all** your bank accounts. If your body holds any investments, please note their value on the bank reconciliation. The auditor should be able to agree your bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the Statement of Accounts. **You must provide an explanation for any difference between Box 7 and Box 8.** More help on bank reconciliations is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- 5 Please **explain fully** significant variances in the statement of accounts. Do not just send in a copy of your detailed accounts instead of this explanation. The auditor wants to know that **you** understand the reasons for the change. Please include a complete analysis to support your explanation. There are a number of examples provided in the *Practitioners' Guide** to assist you.
- 6 If the auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or you do not fully explain variances, this may incur additional costs for which the auditor will make a charge.
- 7 Please make sure that your statement of accounts adds up! Also please ensure that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2007) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2008).
- 8 **Do not complete section 3.** This section is reserved for the external auditor who will complete it at the conclusion of their audit.
- 9 Use the *Practitioners' Guide** for guidance. This publication is regularly updated and contains everything you should need to prepare successfully for your financial year-end and the subsequent audit. Both NALC and SLCC have helplines open should you wish to talk through any problem you may encounter.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Done?
All sections	All red boxes have been completed?	Yes
	All information requested by the external auditor has been sent with this annual return? Please refer to your notice of audit.	Yes
Section 1	Approval by the body confirmed by signature of Chair of meeting approving accounts?	Yes
	An explanation of significant variations from last year to this year is provided?	Yes
	Bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2008 agreed to Box 8?	No
	An explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 is provided?	Yes
Section 2	For any statement to which the response is 'no', an explanation is provided?	Yes
Section 4	All red boxes completed by internal audit and explanations provided?	

***Note:** *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in England – A Practitioners' Guide 2008 edition*, is available from your local NALC and SLCC representatives or *Governance and Accountability for Internal Drainage Boards in England – A Practitioners' Guide*, is available in draft on the ADA website www.ada.org.uk or from the ADA at The Association of Drainage Authorities, 12 Cranes Drive, Surbiton, Surrey, KT5 8AL.