

1.6 PUBLICATION

1.6.1 The Statement of Accounts should be prepared promptly by authorities in a form which fulfils the purpose outlined above in accordance with the statutory timetable and CIPFA's *Standard of Professional Practice on Financial Reporting*. The accounts must be prepared by 30 June. In England, each authority is required to prepare and approve its accounts by 30 June and to publish them by 30 September. In Wales, each authority is required to prepare its accounts by 30 June and to approve and publish them by 30 September. In Scotland, the proper officer is required to submit the unaudited accounts to the authority and the Controller of Audit by 30 June. The audited accounts must be laid before a meeting of the authority and published within two months of receipt of the audit certificate. In Northern Ireland, the requirement is to prepare and approve accounts by 30 June and to publish them by 31 October.

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3.8 EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD

3.8.2 Accounting Requirements

Authorised for issue

3.8.2.2 The financial statements of an authority are authorised for issue in accordance with the relevant legislation:

- the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (England)
- the Accounts and Audit Regulations (Wales) 2005
- the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006
- the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 1985.

3.8.2.3 Regulations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland require authorities to prepare a Statement of Accounts before 30 June following the reporting date. In Scotland, regulations require a Statement of Accounts to be presented to the auditor by 30 June following the reporting date. The responsible financial officer (proper officer in Scotland/chief financial officer in Northern Ireland) shall certify that the accounts give a true and fair view of the authority's financial position and financial performance. The Statement of Accounts shall reflect events after the reporting period up to the date the accounts were certified by the responsible financial officer, proper officer or chief financial officer. Except in Wales (see paragraph 3.8.2.4), regulations require this Statement of Accounts to be approved by

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members and signed by the chair of the relevant approving body.

3.8.2.4 Regulations require an authority to publish its audited Statement of Accounts by 30 September (31 October in Northern Ireland) following the reporting period. Where the audit has not been completed by this date, the authority shall publish its unaudited Statement of Accounts by this date and its audited Statement of Accounts as soon as practicable thereafter. In Wales, regulations require the Statement of Accounts published by 30 September (and any subsequent Statement of Accounts issued following the conclusion of the audit) to be approved by a committee or local government body and signed by the chair of the relevant approving body.

3.8.2.5 The published Statements of Accounts shall reflect events after the reporting period up to the date the accounts were authorised for issue. The date the accounts were authorised for issue shall be:

- Unaudited accounts – the date on which the responsible financial officer (proper officer in Scotland/chief financial officer in Northern Ireland) certifies that the accounts give a true and fair view of the authority's financial position and financial performance in advance of approval (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or issue (Scotland).
- Audited accounts (where opinion issued in advance of conclusion of audit (England, Wales and Northern Ireland only)) – the date on which the responsible financial officer (chief financial officer in Northern Ireland) re-certifies that the accounts give a true and fair view of the authority's financial position and financial performance. This re-certification shall include a statement on the face of the Balance Sheet regarding the status of the accounts; examples are *“These financial statements replace the unaudited financial statements approved at the meeting of [insert committee name or body] on [insert date]”*; *“These financial statements replace the unaudited financial statements certified by [responsible financial officer] on [insert date]”*, or *“The unaudited accounts were issued on [insert date] and the audited accounts were authorised for issue on [insert date]”*.
- Audited accounts (where no opinion issued prior to the conclusion of audit) – the date on which the responsible financial officer (proper officer in Scotland/chief financial officer in Northern Ireland) re-certifies that the accounts give a true and fair view of the authority's financial position and financial performance. This re-certification shall include a statement on the face of the Balance Sheet regarding the status of the accounts; examples are *“These financial statements replace the unaudited financial statements approved at the meeting of [insert committee name or body] on [insert date]”* (England and Northern Ireland); *“These financial statements replace the unaudited financial statements certified by [responsible financial officer] on [insert date]”* (Wales); *“These financial*

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statements replace the unaudited financial statements issued on [insert date]” (Scotland); or “The unaudited accounts were issued on [insert date] and the audited accounts were authorised for issue on [insert date]”.

- Audited accounts (where opinion previously issued prior to the conclusion of audit (England, Wales and Northern Ireland only)) – the date on which the **responsible financial** officer (chief financial officer in Northern Ireland) re-certifies that the accounts give a true and fair view of the authority’s financial position and financial performance. This re-certification shall include a statement on the face of the Balance Sheet that *“These financial statements replace the financial statements certified by me on [insert date]”.*

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3.8.6 Changes since **the 2010/11 Code**

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3.8.6.1 As a result of changes to the Accounts and Audit Regulations in Wales issued since the publication of the 2010/11 Code, approval of the Statement of Accounts by a committee or local government body in Wales is required prior to the Statement of Accounts being published by 30 September. Approval is also required where any subsequent Statement of Accounts are issued following the conclusion of the audit. Previously a committee or local government body in Wales was required to approve the Statement of Accounts by 30 June. The 2011/12 Code incorporates these amendments for the first time; however the revised regulations apply from 1 April 2009.

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