

Community and Town Councils in Wales Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Accounting statements 2023-24 for:

Name of body: Marchwiel Community Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 (£)	31 March 2024 (£)	
Statement of income and expenditure/receipts and payments			
1. Balances brought forward	45748	12382	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	33152	35520	Total amount of income received/receivable in the year from local taxation (precept) or levy/contribution from principal bodies.
3. (+) Total other receipts	1529	3852	Total income or receipts recorded in the cashbook minus amounts included in line 2. Includes support, discretionary and revenue grants.
4. (-) Staff costs	27865	10616	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	1973	1973	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on external borrowing (if any).
6. (-) Total other payments	38209	18791	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	12382	20374	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6).
Statement of balances			
8. (+) Debtors	0	0	Income and expenditure accounts only: Enter the value of debts owed to the body at the year-end.
9. (+) Total cash and investments	12382	20374	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	0	0	Income and expenditure accounts only: Enter the value of monies owed by the body (except borrowing) at the year-end.
11. (=) Balances carried forward	12382	20374	Total balances should equal line 7 above: Enter the total of (8+9-10).
12. Total fixed assets and long-term assets	47894	53792	The asset and investment register value of all fixed assets and any other long-term assets held as at 31 March.
13. Total borrowing	5920	3947	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, 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 2024, that:

	Agreed?		'YES' means that the Council:	PG Ref	
	Yes	No*			
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 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 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 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 Council 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.	Yes	No	N/A	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

Marchwiel Community Council (MCC)
Annual Governance Statement
Explanations – FY 2023-24

AGS Assertions 1 - 9.

For the best part of 3 years MCC have had severe resource constraints as their single employed person was not able to undertake the full functions of Proper Officer/Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer. MCC appointed a Locum Clerk on 2nd February 2024 and a turnaround action plan was begun.

We have answered “No” to all 9 assertions on the Annual Governance Statement. As a Council we were not able to meet and our single employee was unfit for work for the most part.

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 2023-24 was £9.93 per elector.

In 2023-24, the Council made payments totalling £333.00 under section 137. These payments are included within 'Other payments' in the Accounting Statement.

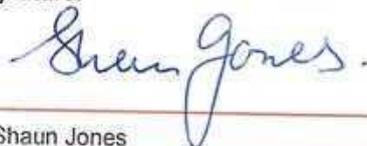
2.

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 approval and certification

The Council 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.

<p>Certification by the RFO</p> <p>I certify that the accounting statements contained in this Annual Return present fairly the financial position of the Council, and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be, for the year ended 31 March 2024.</p>	<p>Approval by the Council</p> <p>I confirm that these accounting statements and Annual Governance Statement were approved by the Council under minute reference:</p>
<p>RFO signature:</p> 	<p>Minute ref: 40.25/26</p> <p>Chair signature:</p> 
<p>Name: Shaun Jones</p>	<p>Name: Cim Francis</p>
<p>Date: 24th June 2025</p>	<p>Date: 30th June 2025</p>

Auditor General's report and audit opinion

I certify that I have completed the audit of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2024 of **Marchwiell Community Council**. My audit has been conducted on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales and in accordance with the requirements of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) and guidance issued by the Auditor General for Wales.

Audit opinion: Qualified

Except for the matters reported below in my Basis for Qualification, on the basis of my audit, in my opinion no matters have come to my attention to give 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 legislative 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 of Qualification

Accounting Statement

In my opinion, the Accounting Statement does not properly/fairly present the Council's receipts, payments and financial position:

- **Line 4 Staff costs**
The Clerk's contract provided to audit suggests during the period the clerk's salary should have been set at SCP21 under the 2023-24 Local Government Services Pay Agreement. The accounting records provided to audit suggests the clerk's was being paid at SCP23 during the period. Based on the information provided to audit the overpayment of the clerk's salary during 2023-24 is material. I am unable to conclude whether Line 4 is a complete and accurate record of the Council's staff costs.
- **Line 12 Total borrowing**
The Council reports a £3,947 borrowings balance at 31st March 2024 in the Annual Return, however a nil loan balance is reported by the Public Works Loan Board to Marchwiell Community Council. The Council have not provided evidence to support this balance in the Accounting Statement.

Arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in use of resources

I am unable to conclude whether or not the Council has proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources:

- 2023-24 meeting minutes not complete
Section 55 of the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru etc. Act 2013 requires the Council to publish the minutes of its meetings, and in so far as is reasonably practicable, any documents which are referred to in the minutes. The Council has not published the minutes of its 2023 meetings, nor were they included as part of the audit submission.
Therefore, I am unable to undertake sufficient audit work to enable me to draw a conclusion.

Other matters 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 Council.

Audit completion notice

The Council has not published the audit completion notice in respect of its most recently completed audit, 2021-22 financial year. The purpose of the audit completion notice is to inform electors of their rights under the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 in relation to the audited annual return.

We recommend the Council publish the audit completion notice when it received future external audit reports.

Burial records

The Council's burial records provided to audit were compiled from many different documents.

We recommend the Council prepare or update its existing central record of burials, to ensure it holds a complete and adequate record of burials.

Insured asset values

The total fixed assets value disclosed by the Council on Line 12 of the annual return agrees to the fixed asset register provided to audit, however the values per the asset register are not consistent with those included in the Council's insurance schedule.

We recommend that the Council review its fixed asset register and the declared value of its assets to its insurer, to ensure it has the appropriate level of coverage in place.

Annual Governance Statement

I draw attention to the negative responses provided by the Council in its Annual Governance Statement.

The Annual Governance Statement sets out the minimum standards of good governance expected of the Council.

- **Assertion 1 Financial management and accounts approval**
The Council has not approved its accounting statements prior to the 30th June deadline.
- **Assertion 3 Compliance with laws and regulations**
Section 55 of the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru etc. Act 2013 requires the Council to publish the minutes of its meetings. The minutes of its 2023 meetings are not published on the Council's website.

The Council has not put in place arrangements for the assessment and management of risk as required by Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.

The Council has not provided evidence that it submitted to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) a schedule of payments made to members. Although no payments were made the Council must submit a nil return to the IRPW confirming that no payments were made. In addition, the Council should seek to obtain written confirmation from individual members confirming that they do not want to accept their allowance.

The Council has not provided evidence that it calculated its 2023-24 budget requirement 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 income and level of reserves when setting its budget requirement.
- **Assertion 4 Electors' rights**
The Council did not meet the requirements set out in the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 to provide opportunity for public inspection of the accounts.
- **Assertion 8 Implementation of prior year audit recommendations**
The Council has not addressed the matters raised in the Auditor General's report on the 2021-22 annual returns, which identified the Council not maintaining an adequate system of internal control. The Council has provided a

negative response to Assertion 2 in 2023-24 that deals with the internal control environment.

We recommend that the Council addresses these issues in order to ensure that it can provide positive responses in future years

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

	Date: 27/02/2026
Richard Harries, Director, Audit Wales For and on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales	

Annual internal audit report to:

Name of body:

MARCHWIEL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The Council'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 2024.

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

	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.		✓			SEE ISSUE 3 IN INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT
2. Financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.		✓			SEE ISSUE 6 IN INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT
3. The body assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.		✓			SEE ISSUE 4 IN INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT
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 ISSUE 2 IN INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT
5. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked, and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓*				SUBJECT TO ISSUE 7 IN INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT
6. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			✓		NO PETTY CASH
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.	✓				

	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.	✓ ok				* EXCEPT FOR ISSUE 5 IN INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT
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 has met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓		

For any risk areas identified by the Council (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 are included in my detailed report to the Council dated 24/06/2025.] * 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 2022-23 and 2023-24. I also confirm that there are no conflicts of interest surrounding my appointment.

Name of person who carried out the internal audit:	JDK BUSINESS SERVICES LTD
Signature of person who carried out the internal audit:	JDK Business Services Ltd
Date:	24/06/2025