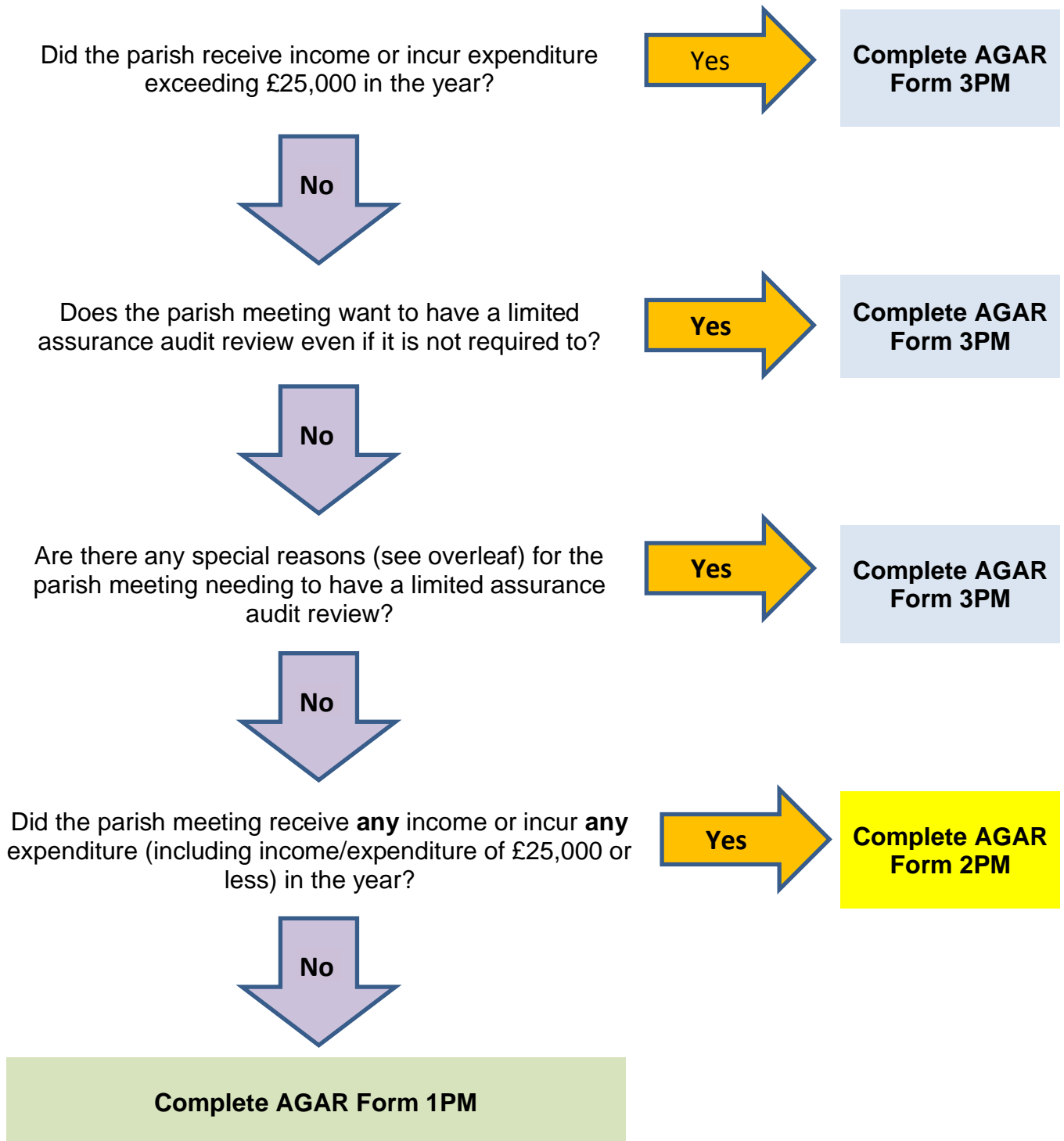


# ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN

## B. Parish meetings (where there is no parish council)



Please note that where a parish meeting chooses or is required to complete AGAR Form 3PM a fee will be payable

## **SPECIAL REASONS**

**If any of these statements is true the parish meeting must complete AGAR Form 3PM**

1. The financial year is one of the first 3 years of the parish's existence;
2. In relation to the previous financial year, the external auditor:
  - a) has issued a public interest report in respect of the parish meeting or any entity connected with it;
  - b) has made a statutory recommendation to the parish meeting, relating to the parish or any entity connected with it;
  - c) has issued an advisory notice under paragraph 1(1) of Schedule 8 to the Audit and Accountability Act 2014 ("the Act") (other than a notice that has subsequently been withdrawn);
  - d) has commenced judicial review proceedings under section 31(1) of the Act; or
  - e) has made an application under section 28(1) of the Act for a declaration that an item of account is unlawful (other than an application that has been withdrawn or in respect of which the court has refused to make the declaration); or
3. In relation to the previous financial year, the court has declared an item of account unlawful after a person made an appeal under section 28(3) of the Act.

## **AGAR Form 1PM for parish meetings with no income or expenditure**

Before 1 July the Chair of the parish meeting must:

- 1) complete the certificate of exemption and declaration of no accounts (Part 1, page 2), including:
  - a) a confirmation that no income was received nor expenditure incurred in the year;
  - b) a statement of annual gross income in the year (0);
  - c) a statement of annual gross expenditure in the year (0);
  - d) a statement of balances held as at 31 March;
  - e) the Chair's signature;
  - f) the date on which the certificate of exemption was signed;
  - g) the Chair's name, address, telephone number and email address; and
  - h) the name and address of the external auditor;
- 2) send the completed certificate of exemption to the external auditor; and
- 3) ensure that a copy of the completed certificate of exemption is published on an appropriate website or placed on public display in the local area for a period of at least 14 days.

## **AGAR Form 2PM for parish meetings with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000**

Before 1 July the Chair of the parish meeting must ensure that:

- 1) the certificate of exemption (page 3) is completed and includes:
  - a) a statement of annual gross income in the year;
  - b) a statement of annual gross expenditure in the year;
  - c) the signature of the Chair;
  - d) the date on which the certificate of exemption was signed;
  - e) the date on which the certificate of exemption was approved (with minute reference); and
  - f) the telephone number and email address of the Chair;
- 2) the completed certificate of exemption is sent to the external auditor;
- 3) the internal audit report for the year (page 4) is completed, signed and dated by the internal auditor;
- 4) the annual governance statement (page 5: Section 1) is:
  - a) completed;
  - b) formally approved at a parish meeting, with date and minute reference inserted; and
  - c) signed by the Chair;
- 5) summary accounting statements (page 6: Section 2) are
  - a) completed;
  - b) signed and dated by the Chair as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) prior to being presented for approval;
  - c) formally approved at a parish meeting with date and minute reference inserted; and
  - d) signed by the Chair to certify that they have been approved; and
- 6) copies of:
  - a) the completed certificate of exemption;
  - b) the completed, signed and dated annual internal audit report;
  - c) the completed, approved, dated and signed annual governance statement;
  - d) the completed, approved, dated and signed summary accounting statements;
  - e) an analysis of variances
  - f) a bank reconciliation;
  - g) notice of the period for the exercise of public rights; and
  - h) other information required by Regulation 15 (2) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 are published on an appropriate website or placed on public display in the local area for a period of at least 14 days.

## **AGAR Form 3PM for parish meetings not seeking or not eligible for exemption from audit**

The Chair of the parish meeting must ensure that, before 1 July:

- 1) the internal audit report for the year (page 3) is completed, signed and dated by the internal auditor;
- 2) the annual governance statement (page 4: Section 1) is:
  - a) completed, with an explanation of any 'No' responses and a description of how the authority will address the weaknesses identified;
  - b) formally approved at a parish meeting, with date and minute reference inserted; and
  - c) signed by the Chair;
- 3) the accounting statements (page 5: Section 2) are
  - a) completed;
  - b) signed and dated by the Chair as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO);
  - c) subsequently approved at a meeting of the authority with date and minute reference inserted; and
  - d) signed by the Chair to certify that they have been approved; and
- 4) the name of the parish meeting is entered in the box at the head of the External Auditor Report and Certificate (page 6: Section 3);
- 5) the Chair as RFO has set a date for the commencement of the period for the exercise of public rights;
- 6) copies of:
  - a) the completed annual governance statement (Section 1), signed by the Chair;
  - b) the accounting statements (Section 2) signed by the Chair as RFO and certified by the Chair as having been approved;
  - c) the External Auditor Report and Certificate (Section 3) showing the name of the authority only;
  - d) a bank reconciliation as at 31 March;
  - e) an explanation of any significant year-on-year variances in the accounting statements;
  - f) notification of the period for the exercise of public rights;
  - g) the Annual Internal Audit Report; and
  - h) any other documents requested by the auditorare sent to the external auditor.
- 7) copies of:
  - a) the completed annual governance statement (Section 1), signed by the Chair; and
  - b) the accounting statements (Section 2) signed and dated by the Chair as RFO and certified by the Chair as having been approvedare published or placed on public display in the local area for a period of at least 14 days, together with:
  - c) notice of the period for the exercise of public rights; and
  - d) a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited.

Once the external auditor has completed and is able to give an opinion on the limited assurance review, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return including a completed Section 3 will be returned to the Chair of the parish meeting.

The Chair must then ensure that, not later than 30 September, the complete Annual Governance and Accountability Return, comprising Sections 1, 2 and 3, including notice of the conclusion of audit and any amendments made to the accounting statements as a result of the limited assurance review, is published on an appropriate website or placed on public display in the local area for a period of at least 14 days.

Publication of the Internal Audit Report is also recommended.