Y Grŵp Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Education and Public Services Group

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

To: Directors of Finance in Wales &
Clerks of Town and Community Councils in Wales
Copied to: WLGA, Audit Wales, One Voice Wales

6 April 2022

Dear colleagues

Preparation and Publication of Statutory Financial Accounts for 2021-22

I thought it may be helpful to write to confirm the Welsh Government's expectation for the timescales of the preparation and publication of statutory financial accounts for 2021-22. As the pandemic continues there is an ongoing impact on local authority staff resources and there may be additional work to finalise the accounts this year. Authorities may therefore wish to prepare their accounts to the extended timetable used since the preparation of the 2019-20 accounts.

The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 already make provision for an authority having to delay preparing and publishing their annual financial accounts. By virtue of regulation 10(4) authorities are able to include a note on websites to say why they haven't prepared or published their accounts within existing deadlines to comply with legislation. As such there has been no need for us to make amendments to the regulations to change the statutory deadlines as was required in England.

It remains important for all bodies to prepare their annual accounts on a timely basis. To provide some certainty and a framework for completion of the annual accounts, following the 2020-21 timetable will require preparation and certification of draft accounts by 31 August 2022 and publication of final audited accounts by 30 November 2022 for all local government bodies in Wales. As discussed in with Society of Welsh Treasurers Executive Group where councils are able it is good practice to approve as early as possible and helpful to engage with auditors to help manage overall pressure on Audit Wales. If working towards this later timetable, bodies will need to ensure they publish the required notices as set out in the Regulations.

In relation to the meetings needed to approve draft and final accounts, the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 makes provision for remote attendance at local authority meetings.

Yours sincerely

Deputy Director, Local Government Finance Policy and Workforce Partnerships Division