



# COMMUNITY ACCOUNTANT NATIONAL NETWORK

## **What reports should you receive?**

Any group should receive a regular finance report – every three months should be sufficient for most committees, but monthly reports might be needed in some situations. You should time your committee meetings to fit in with the financial reporting periods so the information is fresh.

The report should be prepared by whoever is responsible for making the financial decisions. That might not be the treasurer, it might well be a senior employee. It should be prepared by the person who decided to spend the money, or who 'failed' to earn the cash!

Reports can be too complicated or too simple. Do not accept a verbal report from someone in a smart suit saying – 'don't worry everything is fine'. Equally, you should not accept pages and pages of numbers in very small print which look very complicated.

All organisations will have different requirements. Some may be OK with simple cash based reports with a list of what you owe and what is owed to you. Some may want a full balance sheet with accounts on an accruals basis (adjusted for things like debtors and creditors and other complex accounting items).

Remember, if you are on a committee you are supposed to understand these, so ask for support and training!

Here is a simplified version of a report. Your committee should be receiving something like this. You can see that if the committee only received the actual figures then it looks quite good, but compared to the budget, it's not so promising. The aim is to look beyond the numbers - what are they telling you about the activity?

Finance Report : April - June 20XX

In	Actual	Budget	Diff.	Notes
Grants	5000	5000	-	
Donations	1000	3000	(2000)	1
	<b>6000</b>	<b>8000</b>	<b>(2000)</b>	
Out				
Volunteers' Exp.	2500	4000	1500	2
Publicity	1500	4000	2500	3
	<b>4000</b>	<b>8000</b>	<b>4000</b>	
Surplus/(Deficit)	<b>2000</b>	-	<b>2000</b>	

**Notes**

1. There is no explanation for this, we simply received less than we hoped for. However, at the time of writing the report we have received a large donation of £5000 so we are OK for donations.
2. Claim forms (expected to total about £500) have not been received from some volunteers despite reminders. Even if these had come in we will have 'underspent'
3. We have not advertised our services as much as we planned.

*In general, although we have a surplus for the period, the figures give us cause for concern. They show that our level of activity is well below our target. We should consider ways to increase our activity and make better use of our income.*