

To: Salaries & Wages Officers
Human Resource Officers
Pensions Contacts
All Councils

Circular 12/2011
13 September 2011

Dear Colleagues

Annual Return Specification for Councillors

1. Purpose of this circular

The purpose of this circular is to advise councils of the correct format for Annual Returns required for councillors. **Please note a separate return is required for councillors.**

You will see that there are no specific changes to either the text file layout or the pre-populated spreadsheet however please note the comments in relation to the amounts required for the Actual Remuneration/Salary Rate and the Pensionable Remuneration. These remuneration figures should only include basic and special responsibility allowances.

2. Format of Annual Return

We are only able to accept the 2011/12 councillor annual return in one of three formats:

- A text file
- A pre-populated spreadsheet
- An alternative spreadsheet that conforms to our pre-populated format. The only format of spreadsheet that can be accepted is available for download from our website at <http://www.nilgosc.org.uk/AnnualReturns.htm> .

3. Text File

A text file is a sequence of characters set out in a pre-determined format. This is generated by a direct export from an employer's software system and removes the need for much of the manual intervention required in an annual return data submission.

The key advantages of remitting your annual return data by text file are:

- Being system generated less time is required for manual input.
- Less manual input increases the accuracy of your data submission.
- Increased accuracy of your data submission should reduce the number of annual return queries coming back to you.
- Quicker turn-around times for both you and NILGOSC.

The text file data submission is therefore the preferred choice of NILGOSC and many of our larger employers. However, I do appreciate that, due to software constraints, this method is not possible for all employers.

Appendix 1 sets out the specification for the format required.

If you have used this method in previous years and have questions on the format then please telephone our IT department on 0845 308 7345 or email annualreturns@nilgosc.org.uk for assistance.

If you have not submitted your annual return data by text file in previous years and you are now interested in using this method then please call or email our IT Department as above.

4. Pre-Populated Spreadsheet

A pre-populated spreadsheet is issued, upon request, by NILGOSC to employers and lists all of your councillors, including their relevant details, as held on our records.

Appendix 2 sets out the format of the pre-populated spreadsheet in terms of the data that will be supplied to you and the data that you are required to complete for each councillor.

The main advantage of this method is that it acts as a reconciliation tool thus requiring less time to complete the requested data than submitting your return by an alternative spreadsheet.

If you have not submitted your annual return data by this method in previous years and you are now interested in using this method then please email our IT department as above.

Things to remember about pre-populated spreadsheets:

- They will be password protected so you may need to check that your email system can accept encrypted attachments.
- You should receive your pre-populated spreadsheet within two weeks of the request date. Please contact our IT department if you do not receive your spreadsheet within two weeks.

5. Alternative Spreadsheet

The only alternative format acceptable is downloadable from our website at <http://www.nilgosc.org.uk/AnnualReturns.htm> . This spreadsheet takes the format of the pre-populated spreadsheet without the benefit of the data which NILGOSC holds for your councillors, being supplied.

6. Reconciliation Sheet

A reconciliation sheet is a spreadsheet used to ensure that the total monthly contributions sent to NILGOSC during the year match the total stated on the annual return submission. If these totals do not match then you must explain the reason in the comments box of the reconciliation sheet. This must be completed by all employing authorities irrespective of the method of submission of annual returns.

A blank reconciliation sheet is provided as an additional tab within both the pre-populated and alternative spreadsheets.

For those employers that submit their return by text file a copy of the reconciliation sheet is available for download at our website at:
<http://www.nilgosc.org.uk/AnnualReturns.htm> .

7. Summary and Deadlines

- Manual returns will NOT be accepted.
- There are only three options for the submission of the 2011/12 councillor annual return (text file, pre-populated spreadsheet or alternative spreadsheet).
- A copy of the alternative spreadsheet, guidance for the completion of the pre-populated spreadsheet and the text file layout are located on our website at <http://www.nilgosc.org.uk/AnnualReturns.htm> .
- All annual returns must be accompanied by a completed reconciliation sheet.
- All returns must be sent to annualreturns@nilgosc.org.uk by **31st May 2012**.
- As the returns contain personal data they should be sent to NILGOSC in a secure format to ensure that you meet your obligations under the Data Protection Act.
- Our IT department can be contacted on 0845 308 7345 or by email at annualreturns@nilgosc.org.uk for further assistance.

8. Reminder of Banded Contribution Rates

Band	Range 01.04.2011 – 31.03.2012	Contribution rates
1	£0 - £12,900	5.5%
2	£12,901-£15,100	5.8%
3	£15,101 -£19,400	5.9%
4	£19,401 -£32,400	6.5%
5	£32,401 -£43,300	6.8%
6	£43,301 -£81,100	7.2%
7	More than £81,100	7.5%

The above table is a reminder of the contribution rates applicable for the ranges of pay for the current year.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zena Kee". The letters are cursive and fluid, with the first letter of each name being capitalized and larger than the others.

Zena Kee

Pensions Manager

Appendix 1- Text File Specification

CHARACTERS						
FROM POSITION	TO	LENGTH	FIELD NAME	O Optional M	= = =	COMMENTS
1	1	1	Posting Type	M		Must be 'A'
2	13	12	N.I. Number	M		Text item
14	25	12	Nilgosc Member Number	M		Text item
26	50	25	Surname	M		
51	75	25	Forenames	M		
76	79	4	FILLER			Spaces
80		1	FILLER			Spaces
81	82	2	FILLER			Spaces
83	90	8	Date of Birth	M		Must be in the format DDMMYYYY
91	106	16	Filler			Spaces
107	114	8	Employer Start Date	M		Date the member commenced employment - Must be in the format DDMMYYYY
115	119	5	Employer	M		Your authority number assigned by NILGOSC
120	166	47	Filler			Spaces
167	167	1	Filler			Spaces
168	167	1	Filler			Spaces
169	169	1	Part-time Indicator	M		Blank if Full-Time
						Y if Part-Time
						C if Casual
						V if Variable
170	175	6	Contribution Rate 1	M		Enter current rate of basic contribution paid by the member. (For 7.50% enter as 000750). This should be the rate at the end of this financial year, for which this return is being submitted
176	183	8	Date Left Active Service	M		Date the member left pensionable service entered as DDMMYYYY
184	187	4	Filler			Spaces
188	189	2	Filler			Spaces

190	190	1	Filler		Spaces
191	202	12	Staff Number / Job Code	M	
203	214	12	Dept Number / Location Code	M	
215	239	25	Filler		Spaces
240	248	9	Filler		Spaces
249	608	360	Filler		Spaces
609	614	6	Member Contributions rate 2	O	Where the member has paid contributions at more than one rate this year, enter the rate paid in respect of the period starting in position 925 below. See additional notes at end
615	620	6	Member Contributions rate 3	O	Where the member has paid contributions at more than one rate this year, enter the rate paid in respect of the period starting in position 959 below. See additional notes at end
621	626	6	Member Contributions rate 4	O	Where the member has paid contributions at more than one rate this year, enter the rate paid in respect of the period starting in position 992 below. See additional notes at end
627	687	61	Filler		Spaces
688	698	11	Filler		Spaces
699	776	78	Filler		Spaces
777	784	8	Member Contributions Date 1	M	Scheme Contributions Period End date normally 3103yyyy
785	795	11	Member Contributions 1	M	Scheme (Basic) Contributions paid to period end date above
796	803	8	FILLER		Spaces
804	814	11	FILLER		Spaces
815	822	8	FILLER		Spaces
823	833	11	FILLER		Spaces
834	841	8	Date Applicable	M	Period End Date for Actual Remun/Salary Rate - normally 3103yyyy

842	852	11	Actual Remuneration/Salary Rate	M	Total of Basic Allowance & Special Responsibility Allowance
853	860	8	Date Applicable	M	Period End Date for Pensionable Remuneration - normally 3103yyyy
861	871	11	Pensionable Remuneration	M	Total of Basic Allowance & Special Responsibility Allowance
872	879	8	Filler		Spaces
880	890	11	Filler		Spaces
891	898	8	Add Contributions Date	O	Period end date for the additional contributions entered in the following field is applicable normally 3103yyyy
899	909	11	Add Contributions	O	Additional contributions. This must be the amount of additional LGPS(NI) contributions deducted from pensionable pay during the financial year. It does not include AVCS.
910	920	11	Filler		Spaces
921	924	4	Filler		Spaces

925	932	8	Member Contributions period end date 2	O	Enter the date to which the contributions shown below were paid at the former rate 2 shown in position 609. Entered as DDMMYYYY
933	943	11	Member Contributions paid 2	O	Enter the amount of contributions paid at the former rate 2 shown at Position 609
944	958	15	Filler		Spaces
959	966	8	Member Contributions period end date 3	O	Enter the date to which the contributions shown below were paid at the former rate 3 shown in position 615. Entered as DDMMYYYY
967	977	11	Member Contributions paid 3	O	Enter the amount of contributions paid at the former rate 3 shown at Position 615
978	991	14	Filler	O	Spaces
992	999	8	Member Contributions period end date 4	O	Enter the date to which the contributions shown below were paid at the former rate 4 shown in position 621. Entered as DDMMYYYY
1000	1010	11	Member Contributions paid 4	O	Enter the amount of contributions paid at the former rate 4 shown at position 621
1011	1016	6	New contribution rate	M	Enter the contribution rate to apply from the beginning of new financial year
1017	1024	8	Filler		Spaces

Notes

Cash items i.e. monetary values are right justified with leading zeroes (no decimal point)

Dates are in the format DDMMYYYY with a leading 0 for days 01-09 - MUST BE 8 CHARACTERS LONG

Text items i.e. those that are neither cash nor date items are left justified with trailing spaces.

Unused fields should be space filled

Multiple Contribution Rates Example

If a member changes contribution rates throughout the year, it must be recorded in chronological order with Contribution rate/date/amount 1 being the end of the current financial year (most recent) and Contribution rate/date/amount 4 being the oldest. See example below.

Contribution Date 1	31032012	date shown as ddmmyyyy	shown at position 777
Contribution Rate 1	000690	this is showing 6.9%	shown at position 170
Contribution Amount 1	00000101000	this is showing £1010.00	shown at position 785
Contribution Date 2	16012012	date shown as ddmmyyyy	shown at position 925
Contribution Rate 2	000680	this is showing 6.8%	shown at position 609
Contribution Amount 2	00000010508	this is showing £105.08	shown at position 933
Contribution Date 3	01092011	date shown as ddmmyyyy	shown at position 959
Contribution Rate 3	000670	this is showing 6.7%	shown at position 615
Contribution Amount 3	00000020450	this is showing £204.50	shown at position 967
Contribution Date 4	04062011	date shown as ddmmyyyy	shown at position 992
Contribution Rate 4	000660	this is showing 6.6%	shown at position 621
Contribution Amount 4	00000520839	this is showing £5208.39	shown at position 1000

Appendix 2 – Councillor Annual Return Pre-populated Spreadsheet

This is an annual return spreadsheet which has been partially completed by NILGOSC to list your councillors and their details.

In the majority of cases you will only need to enter your councillors' pay and contribution details.

This is a valuable tool to allow you to reconcile your employee records with those held by NILGOSC i.e. part-time records, variable hour employees etc.

Data provided by NILGOSC

All councillor members who have been active in your authority during the year are listed alphabetically and the following information from our records is displayed:

- National Insurance Number (read only)
- Member Number (NILGOSC reference number) (read only)
- Surname (read only)
- Forename (read only)
- Date of birth (read only)
- Location Start (date commenced with employer) (read only)
- Location Number (this is your employers reference number on our records (read only)
- Date left Pensionable Service. If we have been notified the councillor has left during the year the date of leaving will be shown here
- Employer's Pay No. (Staff number)
- Employer's Dept. Number/Location
- Current Part-time hours (read only)

If any of the **read only** details have changed, please enter the changes in the **comments** column.

Member data to completed by employer

Member Data to be completed	Summary
Actual Remuneration	This is the total of the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowance.
Pensionable Remuneration	This is the total of the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowance.
Additional Contributions	If the member is paying additional contributions to buy additional membership or additional pension, the amount deducted in the year should be shown here. DO NOT enter Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) here. They should be shown separately.
Employee Contributions	This is the amount of basic contributions deducted for the employee during the financial year. It must not include AVCs or Additional Contributions. Where the employee has had more than one contribution rate during the year, the different contribution rates and the dates applicable must be shown as well as the amount of employee contributions paid at each rate.
End of Year Contribution Rate 1	This should be the employee contribution rate at 31 March 2012. If the member has been on the same contribution rate for the whole year this will be the only column where you need to enter an employee contribution rate.
Contribution 1 Amount	This should be the amount of employee contributions paid at the rate which applied at the end of the year (31 March 2012). If the member has been on the same contribution rate for the whole year then this will be the total amount of employee contributions for the year.
Contributions 2 End Date	If the member changed contribution rates during the year you should enter the date that the first rate ceased here e.g. if it ceased on 30 th June enter 30062011.
Contributions 2 Amount	Enter the amount of contributions paid during the year at the earlier contribution rate e.g. If the member changed to a new rate on 01/07/2011 then this is the amount relating to the period 01/04/2011 to 30/06/2011.
Contribution 2 Rate	This should be the second rate of contributions that applied if the member changed rates during the year e.g. if changed to 5.8% you should enter 5.8. Any further contribution rates should be entered in the same way up to a maximum of four changes in rates
Next Year's Contribution Rate	This should be the contribution rate you have allocated to this member as at 01 April 2012.
Employer Rate	This should be the rate of employer's contributions paid during the last year e.g. if the rate is 18%, you should enter 18.0.
Employer Contributions	This the amount of employer pension contributions paid during the financial year.
Prudential AVCs	Any additional voluntary contributions paid to the Prudential during the financial year should be listed here.
Comments	Please enter any information in this column that will help to explain any changes to the member's record e.g. if they had periods of half pay, maternity, pay arrears etc.

New Records

If any councillor member is missing from your spreadsheet, please add his / her details to the bottom of the spreadsheet. Please also complete the new councillor spreadsheet for each of these entries.

Ceased Membership

If any of your councillors have left the scheme and you have yet to inform NILGOSC please complete a Leavers Form, LGS15, and input his / her leaving date in the "Date left Pen Serv." column.

Reconciliation Sheet

The reconciliation sheet must be completed and submitted with your annual return.

Sample Spreadsheet

A sample spreadsheet, showing some example members and their data, is available on our website at <http://www.nilgosc.org.uk/AnnualReturns.htm> .