Government financial reporting review: Best practice examples from 2019-20
Contents

Chapter 1  Introduction  3
Chapter 2  Performance Reporting  5
Chapter 3  Accountability  32
Chapter 4  Financial Statements  51
Chapter 5  Further Links  62
Chapter 1 - Introduction

Why this publication?

• In April 2019 HM Treasury published the Government Financial Reporting Review.

• This included several examples of best practice in reporting taken from the 2017-18 central government annual reports and accounts (ARAs). A further report providing examples from 2018-19 best practice was also published.

• HM Treasury is committed to continue supporting ongoing improvements in financial reporting and this report outlines further examples of best practice, taken from the 2019-20 ARAs.

• The expectation is that these examples will be considered by those preparing ARAs across government.

Further guidance

The best practice examples outlined in this report have been chosen because they display some or all of these characteristics, including: increased transparency, increased accountability, accessibility, clear presentation (e.g. use of formatting/graphics) etc.

If you would like to suggest further examples of best practice in government ARAs to be considered then please contact HM Treasury (Resource.Accounts@hmtreasury.gov.uk).

Structure of publication

➢ This report is divided into three sections that broadly follow the structure of a departmental ARA required by the Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) as follows;
  • Performance reporting
  • Accountability information
  • Financial information
Chapter 1 - Introduction

Why is narrative reporting important?

- The narrative elements of government financial reports are crucial for meeting the needs of users.
- Narrative provides context and essential information to explain financial outcomes and performance against objectives.

What should accounts preparers consider in narrative reporting?

- Information should be presented in a way that tells the story of an organisation in a fair, balanced and understandable way.
- It is important to provide context, using several years of trend data where possible.
- The layout and design choices can influence how a reader understands a report, and the use of infographics and diagrams can be helpful in communicating important messages.
- Clear and simple language makes reports easier for a wide range of users to understand.
- It should be straightforward and accessible for users.

2019-20 ARAs challenges:

2019-20 was a challenging year for reporting due to the impact of the pandemic and that the timeliness of publication suffered for some ARAs. Due to the significance of it on reporting, we have specifically looked at this as an area in relation to: performance, risk and financial reporting.
What is required within the performance report?

- The performance report is required to have **two sections**: a ‘performance overview’ and a ‘performance analysis’.

- **The performance overview** is a short summary of the full story of an organisation and its performance over the period covered by the report.

- **The performance analysis** provides a detailed view.


This chapter highlights some examples of best practice in performance reporting from departmental ARA’s.
The performance section must include a statement of the purposes and activities of an organisation in a clear and concise manner. This is important to the user, as it allows them to easily understand the entity’s strategic objectives.

Example and why this is best practice
The example on this slide from the Cabinet Office Annual Report and Accounts:
✓ provides a high-level overview of the strategic objectives of the department;
✓ Uses clear number formatting;
✓ Uses graphics and concise plain English to increase usability and makes the section more visually appealing.
**Example and why this is best practice**

Similar to the previous slide, the example on this slide from the Department for Work and Pensions Annual Report and Account:

✓ provides a high-level overview of the strategic objectives of the department;
✓ Uses clear numbered formatting; and
✓ Uses graphics and concise plain English to increase usability and makes the section more visually appealing;
✓ Uses the same colour code when stating how they worked towards the objective.

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**Strategic Objectives**

1. Build a more prosperous society by supporting people to enter into, and progress in, work.

2. Improve outcomes and ensure financial security for disabled people and people with health conditions, so they view the benefits system and the Department as an ally.

3. Ensure financial security for current and future pensioners and make Britain the best place in the world to retire.

4. Support the most disadvantaged and enhance social mobility by designing and delivering inclusive policies for all, supporting families and providing effective housing support.

5. Transform our services and work with the devolved administrations to deliver an effective welfare system for citizens when they need it while reducing costs, and achieving value for money for taxpayers.

6. Ensure DWP’s policies, operations and arm’s length bodies continue to operate effectively after exiting the EU.
The Government Financial Reporting Review also emphasised the importance of reporting the annual performance highlights of an organisation. Providing an overview of performance over the course of a year increases the understandability and usability.

Example and why this is best practice

The example on this slide from the Department for Education Annual Report and Accounts:

- Provides a clear overview of the department’s activities throughout the year;
- Uses clear summary data, allowing users to easily understand performance outcomes;
- Uses a variety of graphics, making this section more visually appealing.
Example and why this is best practice

Similar to the previous slide, this example from the Ministry of Justice Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Provides a clear overview of the department’s activities throughout the year;

✓ Has a clear focus on summary data, allowing users to easily understand performance outcomes;

✓ Uses a variety of graphics, making this section more visually appealing.
Reporting Issue

Entities should seek to tie in the performance analysis to other parts of the annual reports and accounts including the financial statements to reflect a holistic assessment of performance.

For example, linking the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply (SOPS) and the financial statements so as to provide a cohesive and consistent understanding of performance across the entire annual report and accounts.

Example and why this is best practice

The example on the next slide from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Annual Reports and Accounts:

✓ Outlines high level financial information in an engaging way with clear links to the financial statements;
✓ Differs the size of the bubbles to reflect the level of expenditure within the different areas, in comparison to the whole;
✓ Colour codes the expenditure according to whether it is within the core department, an executive agency or a partner organisation.
Figure 5 – Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Where we spent our money in 2019-20

£14,066m
Refer to Figure 6 from the Welsh Government for the next two additional best practice examples of presenting high level financial information.

Example and why this is best practice

Similar to the previous slide, this example from the Welsh Government Annual Reports and Accounts:

✓ Outlines high level financial information in an engaging way with clear links to the financial statements;
✓ Uses two different diagrams to show the revenue budget expenditure in comparison to capital budget expenditure;
✓ Includes various graphics to visualise the type of expenditure, which also eases the users understanding.
The Welsh Government’s top 10 revenue budget expenditure areas

- **NHS**
  - Core NHS Allocations: £6,983m (49%)
- Local Government General Revenue Funding: £3,272m (23%)
- Further Education Provision: £443m (3%)
- Student Support Grants: £398m (3%)
- Other Direct NHS Allocations: £284m (2%)
- Health Education and Improvement Wales: £211m (1%)
- Staff Costs: £208m (1%)
- Transport for Wales: £175m (1%)
- Children and Communities Grant: £138m (1%)
- HE/DFW Programme Expenditure: £155m (1%)

Top 10 Total: **£12bn**

85% of the revenue budget

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The Welsh Government’s top 10 capital budget expenditure areas

- **NHS**
  - Core NHS Allocations: £380m (20%)
- Education Infrastructure: £230m (12%)
- Research and Development: £42m (2%)
- Network Operations (React): £91m (5%)
- National Transport Infrastructure: £74m (4%)
- Major Repairs Allowance (Housing): £104m (5%)
- Social Housing Grants (SMG): £202m (11%)
- Local Government General Capital Funding: £213m (11%)
- Regulation: £44m (2%)
- Transport for Wales: £116m (6%)

Top 10 Total: **£1bn**

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**Figure 6 – Welsh Government**
Example and why this is best practice

Similar to the previous slide, this example from the Department for Transport Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Outlines high level financial information in an engaging way with clear links to the financial statements;

✓ Includes various graphics for ease of understanding;

✓ Includes a colour scheme according to the area of expenditure.

Figure 7 – Department for Transport
The FReM mandates that the performance analysis section of ARAs must include a prior year comparator for data presented, as this adds context for users. Data for years earlier than the prior year should also be included where available and where this provides relevant context. There is an expectation that trend data will build up over time as it becomes available.

Example and why this is best practice

The example on this slide from HM Revenues & Customs Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Includes multiple-year trend data in the form of a colour coded bar chart on a specific performance metric;
✓ Provides detailed commentary in relation to the figures presented;
✓ Repeats this method of presenting data throughout the ARA for consistency to help the user.
Example and why this is best practice

Similar to the previous slide, the Food Standards Agency Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Includes multiple-year trend data in the form of a colour coded bar chart;

✓ Has a link to the strategic priority of ‘Food Hyper-Sensitivity’, as it clearly shows what they have implemented to increase safety and how much they have spent;

✓ Adds context with both narrative and numbers, which gives users the best possible support to understand the story;

✓ Uses a variety of graphics, making this section more visually appealing.

Figure 9 – Food Standards Agency

Best Practice Examples 2019-20
Example and why this is best practice
Similar to the previous slide, the example on this slide from Whole of Government Accounts Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Includes multiple-year trend data in the form of a bar chart on a specific performance metric;

✓ Pension liabilities is a key area of interest for the user of WGA and a significant liability for government, so more information has been provided specifically to show context for the user.

Please note that this example has been taken from the 2018-19 accounts, due to the timing of preparing the WGA.
Balanced reporting examples (1)

Reporting Issue

Departments are expected to report the status of progress against their Single Departmental Plan (SDPs) objectives in a fair, balanced and understandable way. [Note for 2020-21 departments are required to report against their strategic objectives].

Example and why this is best practice

The example on this slide from HM Revenues & Customs Annual Report and Accounts:

- Shows clearly performance against its public commitments, including where progress was not on track or where there was a risk to delivery;
- Uses a helpful RAG system to visually show status of each commitment at the year end;
- Gives a balanced and honest reflection, which provides trust and increases the value of the report to the user.

How we performed against our public commitments

In the Single Departmental Plan we set out commitments to further improve the way we collect the revenues due and bear down on avoidance and evasion. In financial year 2019 to 2020 we made 11 public commitments on improvements to make in this area. The table below outlines the status of each one at the end of 2019 to 2020.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Build on our success in collecting £62.79 billion in total revenues over 2018 to 2019 and maintaining the overall long term downward trend in the tax gap over the past decade.</td>
<td>on track or complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver compliance revenues of £34.5 billion in 2019 to 2020 through our compliance activity.</td>
<td>on track or complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to identify and prevent losses in the tax credits system so that error and fraud remains no more than 5% as we support the transition to Universal Credit.</td>
<td>on track or complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As we no longer accept new claims to tax credits (with limited minor exceptions), our work to restrict error and fraud now focuses on existing awards. We continue to refine and deliver our error and fraud strategy, including by supplementing traditional compliance interventions with an increasing range of proactive measures to educate and remind tax credits customers of their reporting responsibilities. The continuing need to divert compliance staff to support other governmental pressures means we expect not to meet the 5% maximum target for 2019 to 2020.</td>
<td>on track or complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help customers to claim their full tax credits entitlement so that underpayments through error are no more than 0.7%.</td>
<td>on track or complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimise the debt balance; reducing the amounts that become debt and making them as easy as possible for customers to pay what they owe.</td>
<td>on track or complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due to the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak, the end of year HMRC debt balance for March 2020 is £25.3 billion higher than forecast, coming in at £2.24 billion, significantly over the forecast of £19.3 billion. This is compared to a debt balance of £191 billion in March 2019. It is anticipated that the economic impact of COVID-19 will continue into financial year 2020 to 2021 as customers find it increasingly difficult to fulfil their tax obligations.</td>
<td>not on track</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example and why this is best practice

Similar to the previous slide, the example on this slide from HM Courts and Tribunal Services Annual Reports and Accounts:

✓ Breaks down the overall strategic priority of ‘systems, processes and technology’ into smaller business plan priorities with the use of colour, to clearly show users what elements have been achieved and what has not;

✓ Uses a table to show the progress the department has made against each Business plan priority;

✓ Builds transparency into reporting, which provides trust and increases the value of the report to the user.
Reporting Issue
Organisations should produce forward looking information as it increases the value of the narrative surrounding the current year’s performance including why decisions have been taken and how they contribute to future ambitions.

Example and why this is best practice
The example on this slide from the Government Internal Audit Agency Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Clearly articulates the progress it has already made against the department’s vision and outlines the next steps for the years ahead;

✓ Uses plain English and visuals to map the stages involved.

Figure 13 – Government internal audit agency

2019-20 was a year of consolidation and focused action. As well as continuing to deliver a high-quality service to our customers, we have developed a strategy implementation programme that will continue to guide our activity over the next year as we work to deliver our vision. Putting us on a firm footing, this year we have introduced our new values, which we are working to embed across the Agency. We have defined our customer offer, having developed a service catalogue which presents our range of services. To better develop our people, we have progressed our workforce strategy, beginning work on developing our skills framework and learning passport, as well as work on harmonising legacy terms and conditions brought across to the Agency by teams when they joined from different departments.

To improve the quality of our service to customers, we have identified indicators which allow us to baseline what we mean by quality. This has been harnessed, along with results of the Function Quality Survey, to develop a strategy to strengthen our relationships with our partners. In addition, we progressed our aim to deliver deeper, more relevant insights on a cross-government level. Through undertaking a pilot engagement exercise, we have set our approach to introduce more cross-government insight during 2020-21.

2020-21 will build on the progress we made in 2019-20, with many of our programmes seeing continued development. We will further develop our cross-government insight strategy by testing our offer with customers to demonstrate how these services are adding value. Our workforce strategy will produce a pipeline of talent through furthering our apprenticeship scheme and interchange opportunities across government, as well as raising professional standards by developing our current workforce through embedding our skills framework and learning passport. We will begin to implement our long-term innovation strategy, developing our data analytics abilities to use within our audit and counter fraud work. Our people will feel fully part of delivering our vision and our customers will feel the benefits. Diversity & inclusion will be at the heart of our people offer, with practical action to unleash the talent of everyone in GIAA.

2021-22 will see us move closer to delivering our vision. Our work in the previous two years will allow us to implement in full our cross-government assurance and insight strategy, ensuring our work is targeted at the full range of customer needs. We will further raise our people’s skills through continuous development and training, to deliver high-quality engagements and ensuring our customers feel an increasingly positive impact year on year. Having worked hard to innovate and raise quality, we will further develop our expertise in all sources of assurance in government. We will also continue to make our internal processes more efficient and effective. We will be considered as an organisation that is exceeding expectations with exemplary supporting frameworks. Our people will be proud of the work they do, and the organisation they represent.
Future plans (2)

Example and why this is best practice

Similarly, the example on this slide from the Food Standards Agency Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Uses clear formatting to highlight each element involved in meeting the overall target;

✓ Sets out the planned period for the model to be developed within;

✓ Includes a range of graphics, making this section more visually appealing to users;

✓ The drivers for change that resulted in this model all link back to the department’s 4 strategic priorities.

Figure 14 – Food Standards Agency
Reporting Issue

Annual reports and accounts should report progress against the objectives set out in Single Departmental Plans [note for 2020-21 entities are required to report against their strategic objectives]. It is important that reporting is fair and balanced, showing instances where performance has been below expectation and goals previously set.

Example and why this is best practice

The example on this slide from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Provides quantitative data by using prior year comparators – both figures and percentages;

✓ Details the department’s overall aim and provides a clear explanation on the progress it has made.

2. Make the vision of a place you call home a reality

We continue to make progress with helping the most vulnerable and making access to the housing market fairer. We have set out proposals for the reform of the leasehold housing market, ending unfair practices in the sector. We are introducing a better deal for renters, through the Renters Reform Bill including abolishing no fault evictions and introducing a new lifetime deposit to make moving easier. We have seen good progress in tackling homelessness and rough sleeping and will be providing further support to local authorities through additional funding over the coming year.

What we achieved in 2019-20:

Helping vulnerable people

• A continued reduction in the number of people sleeping rough on a single night down 411 people (9%) in Autumn 2019 compared to the previous year (Figure 3), with a 32% reduction in areas receiving the Rough Sleeping Initiative funding.

• 36,460 households secured accommodation in October to December 2019 through the new prevention or relief duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act and there was a 37% reduction in the number of families in Bed & Breakfast accommodation for longer than 6 weeks.

Figure 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of rough sleepers</th>
<th>% change from previous year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>4,266</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>4,677</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>4,751</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>4,134</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example and why this is best practice

Similarly, the example on this slide from the Department for International trade Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Provides a visual summary and an explanation on the key metrics used to monitor the departments performance against some of their SDPs;

✓ Used prior year comparators to show users the percentage changes (provides both increases and decreases, which builds transparency);
Reporting activity by projects and key policies example (1)

Example and why this is best practice

The example on this slide from High Speed Two (HS2) Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Uses a table to clearly outline the assessment of progress to date. This involved the contract, standard, and ratings of the different infrastructure projects;

✓ Provides a clear summary of the project supplemented with more detailed commentary elsewhere in the report.

Reporting Issue

As a key area of public interest, in order to effectively tell their story, entities should report on the performance of major projects they have responsibility for.
Sustainability reporting examples (1)

Reporting Issue
Entities are expected to provide information on environmental matters, including the impact of the entity’s business on the environment. Departments shall report performance against sustainability targets, as set out in the Sustainability Reporting Guidance and provide a description of progress within the financial year.

Example and why this is best practice
The example on this slide from the Department for International Development Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Uses individual graphs to clearly show how progress is being made against each Greening Government Commitment (GGC);

✓ Incorporates a RAG system to visually show to users what is on track and what is below target.

Figure 18 – Department for International Development
Example and why this is best practice

Similar to the previous slide, this example from the Food Standards Agency Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Uses multi-year trend data to show both the amount of energy used by the department and the related expenditure;

✓ Builds transparency by providing users with data on the energy consumption by location;

✓ Provides commentary on the reason for the increase in energy use and plans to reduce it going forward.

Figure 19 – Food Standards Agency
Disclosures on the impact of COVID-19 examples (1)

Additional reporting requirement
The government has undertaken a major programme of work to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and entities are required to provide a balanced narrative of the impact of COVID-19 on activities and outcomes for 2020-21.

Therefore, they must reflect this in their performance reports, drawing on the full range of information they hold to offer insight into the use of public funds in the response, future objectives and risks and where these are expected to be significantly different in future reporting periods.

Example and why this is best practice
The example on this slide from HM Revenues & Customs Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Shows a clear focus on summary spend in response to the pandemic;
✓ Uses concise plain English to provide further detail on these support measures.
Disclosure on Covid-19 (2)

Example and why this is best practice

HMRC continues to detail the impact of the pandemic on its operations both as part of its immediate response and into the next reporting period. This summary:

✓ Uses a diagram to set out a clear timeline of events since the pandemic started in March 2020;

✓ Incorporates a colour scheme to provide users with a visual representation on the different areas of support measures that have been introduced.

✓ Goes beyond the minimum requirements by providing additional information after the end of the financial year, which recognises the importance of this data for users.

Figure 21 – HM Revenues & Customs

Timeline of key events in HM Revenue & Customs’ (HMRC’s) response to COVID-19:

- 1 Jul: Employers can make their first claims under the extended Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme with 30 November being the final date for submitting claims.
- 8 Jul: A Plan for Jobs 2020 announced, outlining how government will boost job creation in the UK with $160 billion.
- 13 Jul: Self-Employment Income Support Scheme first grant online service claim deadline date.
- 31 Jul: End date for submitting claims under the Initial Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of government announcements.
Disclosure on Covid-19 (3)

Example and why this is best practice

Similar to the previous slide, the example on this slide from The Water Services Regulation Authority Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Uses an infographic to map the different responses made across the UK in relation to the pandemic;

✓ This is a visually appealing way of presenting the departments response, therefore increasing user engagement.

Further examples on the impact of Covid-19:

• Risk reporting
• Financial reporting

Figure 22 – The Water Services Regulation Authority

How companies responded to the pandemic

- Companies, including Portsmouth Water, South West Water, Thames Water, Northumbrian Water and Dŵr Cymru, provided free online educational resources for children.
- United Utilities created a £3.5 million fund for customers in need.
- A community fund from Hafren Dyfrdwy helped local businesses.
- South Stafford Water gave customers extra financial support, including payment breaks.
- Severn Trent Water gave £1 million away to charities and projects helping local communities.
- Bristol Water employees helped to get NHS Nightingale Bristol up and running.
- Yorkshire Water celebrated community heroes with a ‘Big Thank You’ campaign.
- Anglian Water, Thames Water, Affinity Water, SES Water, Southern Water and South East Water collaborated to provide community funds to those in need.
- Thames Water’s £1 million fund gave more people access to debt advice and counselling.
- Affinity Water helped 1,400 struggling customers and partnered with National Deline.
Disclosure on EU exit examples (1)

Additional reporting requirement
The government has undertaken major programmes of work to prepare for and deliver the UK’s exit from the EU. Entities must therefore reflect this in their performance reports, drawing on the full range of information they hold to provide a balanced narrative between performance, future objectives and risks, where details are known and expected to be significantly different in future reporting periods.

Example and why this is best practice
In this example the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Annual Reports and Accounts:

✓ Has highlighted its major programmes to show users how it has responded to the UK leaving the EU;

✓ Provided detailed information on what mitigating activities were undertaken, in order to reduce identified risks;

✓ Uses Icons within the table to map the risk to the relevant departmental objective(s), which have already been highlighted earlier on in the report.

Figure 23 – Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Prepared businesses for EU Exit by creating a £1.5 million Business Readiness Fund for business groups and trade associations to help firms prepare and running the Brexit Business Readiness Roadshow with more than 30 events over five weeks spanning the breadth of the UK.

Created new legislation to lay the groundwork for our future outside the EU, covering areas such as product safety and metrology, employment rights, carbon emissions and renewable energy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Closed or deescalated risks</th>
<th>Mitigating activities</th>
<th>Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failure to prepare for EU Exit</td>
<td>We have continuously assessed delivery requirements and developed a prioritisation strategy to manage EU Exit work.</td>
<td>The changing nature of the challenges of Brexit and the impact of external factors resulted in this risk remaining high through most of the financial year with an improved picture towards the point when the risk was closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We have redeployed and mobilised staff to priority EU Exit areas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We have worked with other government departments to ensure a coherent cross-Whitehall governance structure for negotiations and identify and resolve strategic trade-offs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We have engaged with HM Treasury to develop a strong evidence base, based on a sectoral analysis of impacts, to refine alignment scenario planning and refine BEIS’s flexible business support package.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We have led broad engagement with businesses, in coordination with other government departments, to deliver readiness messaging, as well as developing materials, including online checklists and a self-certification tool for businesses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Disclosure on EU exit (2)

Example and why this is best practice

Similar to the previous slide, the example on this slide from HM Revenue & Customs Annual Report and Accounts:

- Highlights the response the department has made in relation to preparing for the EU exit;
- Uses clear and simple language, which makes this section easier for a wide range of people to read;
- Provides a clear focus on summary data, which capture users attention.

Figure 24 – HM Revenue & Customs

We have played a central role in preparing for UK transition following our exit from the EU, and in building the systems and infrastructure that our UK traders and border need for the future.

We were allocated £557.6 million to support preparations for UK transition in financial year 2019 to 2020. We spent this predominantly on staffing and IT costs to make sure HMRC could respond to a number of scenarios, while continuing to perform our core functions. By the end of 2019 to 2020, we had spent £516.9 million. These figures include HMRC and the cross-government Border and Protocol Delivery Group (BPDG).

We continued to prepare for a no-deal EU exit, from April to December. We re-planned our delivery following the series of extensions, while making critical improvements to the no-deal model. This work included:

- improving functionality of our IT systems, including increasing the volume of declarations that can be processed
- carrying out extensive targeted communications and engagement with businesses and other stakeholders to help them prepare and increase their readiness
- providing grants to help customs intermediaries prepare for increased declarations
- preparing transit sites to help enable traders to move goods
- setting up an EU exit import and export helpline providing information to traders
- supporting negotiations and advising ministers on the policy, legal, IT and operational implications of leaving the EU under the revised deal.
What is required within the Accountability Report?

- The accountability report is made up of three sections: A Corporate Governance Report; a Remuneration and Staff Report, and a Parliamentary Accountability and Audit Report.

- Entities should provide an overview of these sections and explain how they contribute to an entity’s accountability.

Further information can be found on this within the 20-21 FReM (Government Financial Reporting Manual).

What should accounts preparers consider in Accountability Reporting?

- Meet key accountability requirements to Parliament, being the primary user of annual report and accounts.

- Disclosures should be presented in a way that meets the needs of users.

- Ensure all disclosure requirements are met within the report.

This chapter highlights some examples of best practice in accountability reporting in departmental ARA’s.
**Reporting Issue**

Risk reporting appears in both the performance and accountability reports in ARAs. The performance report should provide information on the risk profile of the organisation – the risks it faces, how risks have affected the organisation in achieving its objectives, how they have been mitigated and managed throughout the period and how this may affect future plans and performance.

**Example and why this is best practice**

The example on this slide from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Annual Reports and Accounts:

- Presents the risks facing the organisation, alongside the risk direction (how the risk has developed throughout the year), severity and the mitigating activities being undertaken;
- Uses Icons within the table to map the risk to the relevant departmental objective(s), which have been highlighted earlier on in their annual report.

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**Risk**

- Sensitive information is lost or compromised through cyber-attack, theft, mistakes or leaks, or a security incident at work harms BEIS ministers, staff or visitors.
- Failure to attract, develop and retain sufficiently skilled staff and support their wellbeing.

**Mitigating activities**

- We continue to develop a culture of security through staff awareness campaigns to reinforce simple security behaviours – technical and physical defences are not enough on their own.
- We continue to maintain strong and tested cyber defences.
- We are building a more coherent approach to personnel security to mitigate the insider threat and minimise the security vulnerabilities caused by staff mistakes.
- We maintain a risk-adjusted and systematic approach to monitoring and assuring security in BEIS and its Partner Organisations.
- We are working with other government departments to realise the benefits of security centralisation and professionalism across government.
- We have ensured senior leaders maintain oversight of teams, tracking that leave is taken, hours worked are proportionate and flexible working options are considered.
- We carried out extensive workforce planning to develop resourcing plans, ensure the correct mix of grades in each profession, and review strategy and international capability.
- We actively monitor the results of our People survey to improve staff retention with new learning and development packages and the appointment of Wellbeing Champions.
- We carry out an annual Wellbeing survey and act on the results.

**Risk severity and direction of risk trend**

- BEIS is satisfied that all possible avenues are in place to mitigate this risk, however, the rating remains high due to the increasing nature of cyber-attacks and reflecting the importance of staff safety.

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**Figure 25 – Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**
Example and why this is best practice

This example from the **Department for Education Annual Report and Accounts**:

- Presents the risks facing the organisation;
- Graphically shows the risk direction and severity (how the risk has developed throughout the year);
- Sets out who owns each risk, and the mitigating activities being undertaken;
- Provides detail on the resulting risk from the mitigations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Mitigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We fail to have in place enough critical resource to deliver Corporate Services Reform Programme (CSRP) activities.</td>
<td>CSRP is a key transformation programme delivering change across the Department’s corporate services including HR, financial, and commercial systems. This risk was escalated during Q3 2019-20 and relates to specialist resource to support delivery go-live during Q1 2020-21. Key roles have now been identified and recruitment is in progress including knowledge retention plans. This risk is expected to be relatively short term and reduce in severity over the next period. Risk will be closed when the programme is completed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk owned by Operations Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We are unable to deliver timely and accurate 2020/21 allocations to the education and skills sectors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk owned by ESFA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Figure 26 – Department for Education**
**Risk reporting and Governance (3)**

**Reporting Issue**

The accountability report should explain the responsibilities for risk management and internal control systems and the ongoing process and structures used to identify, evaluate and manage the principal and emerging risks faced.

**Example and why this is best practice**

The example on this slide from the Ministry of Defence Annual Report and Accounts:

- Effectively represents the Board using a clear organogram;
- Uses a colour scheme, allowing users to easily identify each committee to provide additional context.

---

**Figure 27 – Ministry of Defence**

---

**Best Practice Examples 2019-20**
Example and why this is best practice

The slide continues the example from the MoD:

✓ Gives a brief description on the different responsibilities across the board;
✓ Includes detail on the discussions made throughout the year;
✓ Includes information on the frequency of meetings;
✓ Uses the same colour scheme as the organogram for ease of reference.

Figure 27a – Ministry of Defence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defence Council</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Created by Letters Patent in 1061 and is essential to the legal functioning of the MoD. Via powers of prerogative, it gives the Secretary of State the ability to administer and command the Armed Forces by the Service Boards.</td>
<td>As requested by the Secretary of State</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Membership**
- Chaired by SoS, attended by Defence Ministers, Perm Sec, CDS, VCDS, DG Fin, 4 NEDs.

**Summary of discussions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defence Board</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides top-level strategic leadership of the Department, focusing on strategy and plans for generating military forces, including financial planning, performance against those plans, and risk.</td>
<td>Normally 6-8 times per year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Membership**
- Chaired by SoS, attended by Defence Ministers, Perm Sec, CDS, VCDS, DG Fin, Lead NED and 3 NEDs.

**Summary of discussions**
- Refreshed its view of strategic risks at the start of the year and received regular reports, combined with risk profile and the shorter-term delivery risks to the current Defence Plan. Visibility of the key risks being managed by the TLP Holders and Defence Task owners. There was a reduced number of meetings this year, largely due to the suspension of Parliament for the election. The meeting scheduled to take place in March 2020 was cancelled due to the Coronavirus pandemic.
Risk reporting in relation to Covid-19 examples (1)

Additional reporting requirement
Departments should go beyond the minimum level of reporting wherever possible. To support parliamentary accountability, it is important that the ARAs demonstrate what departments have achieved with the resources made available to them.

Example and why this is best practice
The example on this slide from the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Identifies the key risk factor(s) from the COVID-19 pandemic;
✓ Links the risks to the departments strategic priorities through coloured pie segments.

Figure 28 – United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY RISKS FROM COVID-19</th>
<th>STRATEGIC PRIORITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuing impact of COVID-19 causes milestone slippage, loss of fusion progress and funding.</td>
<td>![Blue pie chart]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced working efficiency, due to the move to remote working, impacts short term delivery.</td>
<td>![Green pie chart]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to embed new ways of working and take our people with us on the journey impacts long term delivery.</td>
<td>![Red pie chart]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVID-19 damages development of UK fusion supply chain.</td>
<td>![Yellow pie chart]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging economic landscape exposes UKAEA to the risk of supply chain failure.</td>
<td>![Orange pie chart]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delays to construction impact major building project timescales, causing potential shift of spend and delivery.</td>
<td>![Purple pie chart]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example and why this is best practice

The example on this slide from HM Prison and Probation Service Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Identifies the key risk factor from the COVID-19 pandemic;
✓ Links the risk to the departments strategic principles;
✓ Provides a detailed explanation on the risk and the key mitigations they have undertaken;
✓ Graphically shows the impact on risk.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HMPPS strategic principles:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Enable people to be their best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) An open, learning culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Transform through partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Modernise our estates and technology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific operational issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic: COVID-19 – principles 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The impact of COVID-19 on the business created the potential risk of the inability to provide a functioning service, resulting from any or all of the following: population exceeding available capacity and headroom required to compartmentalise prisoners effectively; disorder and instability; explosive COVID-19 outbreaks leading to hospitalisations and deaths; insufficient Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and testing; and loss of staff confidence risking walk-outs. Measures taken mean these risks have been mitigated to reduce their impact or avoided to date.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key mitigations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Effective partnership with Public Health England (PHE)/Public Health Wales (PHW) to manage health risks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Effective partnership and planning to purchase PPE ahead of forecasted 14-day and 28-day demand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Effective partnership and planning to provide testing to symptomatic prison and probation staff and prisoners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing headroom to around 5,500 by June 2020 through additional temporary accommodation and increased early release.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Boosting staffing resilience at the frontline through pay incentives, redeployment of HQ staff and offers to former staff to return on temporary contracts; delivering exceptional regime management plans that prioritise: meals, medication and health services; prisoner safety and welfare; and family contact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong support for staff and trade union engagement locally and nationally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 29 – HM Prison and Probation Service
Example and why this is best practice

Similarly, the example on this slide from Network Rail Annual Report and Accounts:

- Clearly outlining strategies that have been implemented as a result of the pandemic;
- Providing detail on how each objective is managed/who is managing it;
- Using a variety of graphics, making this section more visually appealing.

Further examples on the impact of Covid-19:
- Performance reporting
- Financial reporting

Figure 30 – Network Rail

The strategic objectives and key actions of the SCMT are as follows:

1. Strategic Crisis Action Team
2. National Action Coordination Group

- Keep the network open
- Look after our people
- Maintain infrastructure integrity
- Deliver capital investment
- Ensure business continuity

- SCMT
- MAG/CP
- Freight
- System operator
- Industrial relations
- Coronavirus testing
- Medical
- HR
- Internal communications
- Engineering
- Maintenance
- Stations
- Monitoring trains
- Capital delivery
- Easter and May 2020 bank holidays
- Supply chain
- Business services
- Finance
- Legal
- External communications

The following activities have been initiated by the SCMT:
- Published emergency standards for safe on-track works to minimise the risk of exposure to Coronavirus.
- Recruited further professional signallers to help the railway keep those who need to travel and freight moving.
- Review and amendment of the timetable to maintain safe operations.
- Moving to immediate payments for suppliers to strengthen the supply chain for thousands of British firms.
- Membership of the Joint Executive Oversight Team to advise on and clarify industry-wide strategy.
Remuneration disclosures examples (1)

Reporting Issue
The remuneration and staff report sets out the entity’s remuneration policy for directors, reports on how that policy has been implemented and sets out the amounts awarded to directors and where relevant, the link between performance and remuneration. In addition, the report provides details on remuneration and staff that Parliament and other users see as key to accountability.

Example and why this is best practice
The example on this slide from the Department for International trade Annual Report and Accounts:
✓ Provides information including a breakdown by headcount and detailed breakdown of spend category (Civil Servants, Ministers etc) in a clear format;
✓ Uses a prior year comparator to show changes.

Figure 31 – Department for International Trade

Staff costs
The cost of people engaged in delivering DIT’s objectives is disclosed in the table below. DIT is charged the full costs of all FCO staff overseas and at DIT headquarters who spend more than 50 per cent of their role on DIT objectives. This table has been subject to audit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Civil Servants £000</th>
<th>Other Staff £000</th>
<th>Ministers £000</th>
<th>Special Advisors 2 £000</th>
<th>UK based Civil Servants working overseas £000</th>
<th>Local Staff £000</th>
<th>Total 2018-19 £000</th>
<th>Total 2019-20 £000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wages and salaries</td>
<td>90,505</td>
<td>9,585</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>13,490</td>
<td>46,965</td>
<td>160,417</td>
<td>133,894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social security costs</td>
<td>10,150</td>
<td>1,202</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11,691</td>
<td>9,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other pension costs</td>
<td>23,369</td>
<td>2,794</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2,243</td>
<td>4,970</td>
<td>33,389</td>
<td>25,369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency and temporary staff</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33,273</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33,273</td>
<td>25,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Exit Scheme</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory exits</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other departures</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recoveries from outward secondments</td>
<td>(382)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(382)</td>
<td>(264)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total staff costs</td>
<td>123,713</td>
<td>46,854</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>16,049</td>
<td>51,808</td>
<td>238,682</td>
<td>195,721</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Remuneration disclosures (1a)

Example and why this is best practice
The example follows on from the previous slide, from the Department for International Trade (DIT):
✓ Provides information including a breakdown by headcount and detailed breakdown of spend category (Civil Servants, Ministers etc) in a clear format;
✓ Uses a prior year comparator to show changes.
Reporting Issue

The Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply (SOPS) is unique to the public sector and shows the year end outturn against the Supply voted earlier in the year by Parliament. It is a key accountability statement, showing whether entities have operated within the limits (also termed control totals) which Parliament has provided statutory approval for. As part of the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply. It is important that variances between the Estimates and the actual spend of a department are explained clearly and effectively, and are linked to data elsewhere in the report to reflect a cohesive picture of performance.

Example and why this is best practice

The example on the next slide from the Department for Education Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Includes a breakdown by budget type to show a clear comparison between the planned spend and the actual outturn of each estimate line;

✓ Provides a brief and understandable explanation for the variance within each Estimate line;

✓ Includes a graph to visually show the ‘year on year’ variance.
Statement of Outturn Against Parliamentary Supply (1a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of spend</th>
<th>Budget 2019-20</th>
<th>Outturn 2019-20</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Budget 2018-19</th>
<th>Outturn 2018-19</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Expenditure Limit</td>
<td>£85,853</td>
<td>£84,274</td>
<td>£1,579</td>
<td>£83,501</td>
<td>£73,302</td>
<td>£10,199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource</td>
<td>£80,941</td>
<td>£79,410</td>
<td>£1,531</td>
<td>£77,977</td>
<td>£77,900</td>
<td>£707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of which cash</td>
<td>£63,989</td>
<td>£63,559</td>
<td>£450</td>
<td>£62,504</td>
<td>£61,623</td>
<td>£671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of which non-cash</td>
<td>£16,952</td>
<td>£15,871</td>
<td>£1,081</td>
<td>£15,633</td>
<td>£15,277</td>
<td>£9,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>£4,012</td>
<td>£4,864</td>
<td>£842</td>
<td>£5,924</td>
<td>£5,402</td>
<td>£122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annually Managed Expenditure</td>
<td>£21,650</td>
<td>£19,243</td>
<td>£2,407</td>
<td>£21,412</td>
<td>£14,602</td>
<td>£6,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource</td>
<td>£889</td>
<td>£1,736</td>
<td>£847</td>
<td>£1,341</td>
<td>£1,029</td>
<td>£312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>£22,639</td>
<td>£20,982</td>
<td>£657</td>
<td>£22,753</td>
<td>£15,631</td>
<td>£7,122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Managed Expenditure</td>
<td>£107,503</td>
<td>£103,517</td>
<td>£3,986</td>
<td>£104,913</td>
<td>£87,904</td>
<td>£17,009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Resource DEL cash
The underspend of £450 million is primarily driven by unused budget cover set aside at Supplementary Estimates to cover volatility in demand-led programmes such as apprenticeships and higher education.

Resource DEL non-cash
The non-cash underspend of £1.1 billion reflects unused budget cover set aside for potential variability of student loan book impairment (which is still applied for budgetary purposes even though not for accounting).

The movement in impomar is dependent on the year end student loan carrying value, which is itself dependent upon the Office for Budget Responsibility’s (OBR’s) macroeconomic forecasts, including earnings, RPI and the Bank of England base rate. All of these year end valuation inputs are published after Supplementary Estimates are finalised.

Capital DEL
The underspend of £48 million is primarily due to a combination of lower than anticipated capital spend on demand driven activities.

Capital AME
The underspend of £1.6 billion is a result of unused budget cover set aside at Supplementary Estimates to cover the volatility in student loan outlay, capitalised interest and repayments. These year end balances are dependent on macroeconomic forecasts, published by the OBR after Supplementary Estimates are finalised.

The increase is primarily due to the following factors:
- RDEL programme: the increase of £11.5 billion since 2018-19 is primarily driven by an increase in the non-cash expenditure driven by one-off capital grants to schools made in 2018-19 which did not reoccur in 2019-20
- Resource AME: the reduction of £710 million is due to an increase in both resource AME income offset by an increase in expenditure. This is mainly due to the volatility of effective interest applied to student loans and the impacts of changes in macroeconomic forecasts
- Capital AME: the increase of £5.4 billion is mainly driven by the impact in 2018-19 of the second student loan sale, in addition to an increase in capitalised interest, and a slight increase in student loan outlay
Entities are encouraged to include details and narrative of their diversity and inclusion policies, initiatives and longer-term ambitions in the staff report.

**Example and why this is best practice**

The example on the slide from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Annual Report and Accounts details a significant volume of data in one simple table:

- Uses trend data to clearly show the percentage change on each indicator over a period of time;
- Provides commentary based on the trends and targets;
- Incorporates a RAG system to visually show to users what is on track and what is not meeting targets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>2018–19</th>
<th>2019–20</th>
<th>Trends and targets</th>
<th>Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAME staff</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Trends" /></td>
<td>There has been a small increase in the representation rate in 2019–20. We encourage staff to participate in programmes and projects such as Positive Action Pathways and Project Race initiatives. A new approved Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for 2020–24 is designed to take a unified approach across the core department and ALBs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender balance within the Senior Civil Service (SCS)</td>
<td>46% female</td>
<td>47.4% female</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Female Senior Civil Servants" /></td>
<td>This has remained fairly constant in 2019–20 but has improved by 7.7 percent since March 2017. The Defra SCS Civil Service is 49 percent a reduction of 2 percent since March 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability declaration rates</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Disability declaration rates" /></td>
<td>The increase in declarations is the result of a simplification of the declaration page on Defra’s HR IT system. The Civil Service average declaration rate is 72 percent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example and why this is best practice

Similar to the previous slide, the example on this slide from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Gives a visual overview of recruitment for the year;

✓ Provides the percentage recruited from each category of protected characteristics in a clear and visually appealing way;

✓ Uses clear formatting, allowing users to easily compare between the different recruitments.

Figure 34 – Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Example and why this is best practice

In this example, the Department for Work and Pensions Annual Report and Account:

✔ Uses multiple-year trend data to clearly show the percentage change of the participation in all pensions by each ethnic group over a period of time;

✔ The chart allows users to easily compare between the data.

Figure 35 – Department for Work and Pensions

“Ethnicity analysis used a three year rolling average in order to account for volatility in single year results which are caused by small sample sizes and clustering effects.”
Example and why this is best practice

Similarly, the example on this slide from Department for Work and Pensions Annual Report and Account:

✓ Uses multiple-year trend data to clearly show the increase in working-age disabled people over time;

✓ Provides brief, but sufficient commentary in relation to the figures the graph presents.

Figure 36 – Department for Work and Pensions

The UK employment rate of working-age disabled people during January to March 2020 was 53.8%. This has increased by 9.5 percentage points over the last six years, from 44.2% in January to March 2014, the earliest comparable figure.

Over this period the number of disabled people in employment has increased by 1.4 million to a total of 4.3 million people.

This indicator is measured using data from the Labour Force Survey published each quarter by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The data is not seasonally adjusted so only year-on-year comparisons between equivalent quarters should be made.
Staff turnover disclosures example (1)

Reporting Issue
Parliament has shown particular interest in the level of staff turnover within government organisations. In response, entities will be required to disclose this information (on a comply or explain basis) from 2020-21 however, some organisations are already doing so. Where it is provided, information should give sufficient explanation and context.

Example and why this is best practice
The example on the slide from the Ministry of Justice Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Includes the staff turnover percentage with a prior year comparator;
✓ Goes beyond the minimum requirements and includes the ‘Departmental turnover’ as well;
✓ Provides a brief, but sufficient explanation in regards to the data.

Figure 37 – Ministry of Justice
**Reporting Issue**

The staff report must include sickness absence information for all entities. It is important that the staff report disclosures are presented in a way that meets the needs of users.

**Example and why this is best practice**

The example on the slide from the *Health and Safety Executive Annual Report and Accounts*:

- Uses multi-year trend data on a line graph, to clearly show the average working days lost;
- Provides a brief, but sufficient explanation in regards to the data shown.
Reporting Issue
Different users of the annual reports and accounts have different accessibility requirements. Best practice is to provide both print friendly reports and web friendly reports online. Some users of government ARAs wish to extract and analyse the data that is contained within the report. All departments must publish the data from their core tables in Excel or an equivalent format to make it easier to collect and compare.

Example and why this is best practice
The example on the slide from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office Annual Report and Accounts:
✓ Provides both ‘web accessible’ and ‘print ready’ formats of the ARA;
✓ Has published their core tables alongside their reports.
Chapter 4 – Financial Information

What should accounts preparers consider in Financial Reporting?

Good financial information should be understandable, relevant, reliable and comparable.

The front half the departmental accounts should be consistent with the information provided within the financial statements.

Ensure it is cohesive and provides a holistic view of performance against objectives.

Why is Financial information so important?

• The inclusion of financial information is key as it links reporting within the performance and accountability sections with the information reported in the financial statements.

• Financial information is reported throughout the annual report and accounts and should not be exclusive to the financial statements section of the report.

Further information can be found on this within the 20-21 FReM (Government Financial Reporting Manual).

This chapter sets out some best practice examples on the inclusion of financial information within departmental annual report and accounts.
Reporting Issue

Departments are encouraged to include key information from the financial statements in the performance report, including clear narrative and comparisons where appropriate.

Example and why this is best practice

The example on the slide from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Uses a graph to clearly present the Statement of Financial Position of the department;
✓ Provides users with the exact figure on each area of asset and liability;
✓ Gives useful explanations for each spend.

Figure 40 - Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government

- Fair Value Financial Assets £15.2 billion
  - Mainsly comprised of the value of government’s share of houses purchased under the Help to Buy scheme.
- Cash and cash equivalents -£2.6 billion
  - There was a negative cash balance with the Government Banking Service at year end because urgent COVID-19 payments were made to Local Authorities in March before a contingency fund advance was received in April.
- Trade and other payables -£1.6 billion
  - The largest payables relate to deferred income – amounts received in advance from the EU.
- Provisions -£115 million
  - Liabilities reflecting payments to be made in the future that have some uncertainty attached to them.
- Financial Guarantees -£95 million
  - Valuation of housing guarantees based on government’s expected losses on defaults of the debt being guaranteed.
- Pensions -£37 million
  - Audit Commission Pension Fund and ALB pension fund deficits.
Financial reporting in relation to Covid-19 examples (1)

Additional reporting requirement

Departments must ensure that an analysis of COVID-19 related expenditure for 2019-20 is included within ARA’s, with details of the spend disaggregated by area and funding type. Departments should include an explanation on how funds were spent, what they were spent on, and the outcome achieved. This information will also be required in 2020-21.

Example and why this is best practice

The example on the slide from HM Treasury Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Uses a table to summarise the support measures introduced;
✓ Includes the different costings for the interventions;
✓ Disaggregates the different areas of funding out, depending on their purpose.

Figure 41 – HM Treasury

Table B: Costings for further policy interventions underpinning the ‘Plan for Jobs’ announced at the Summer Economic Update on 8 July 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>£ billion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Retention Bonus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Retention Bonus(^{14})</td>
<td>Up to 9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kickstart Scheme(^{15})</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boosting worksearch, skills and apprenticeships(^{16})</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced rate of VAT for hospitality, accommodation and attractions(^{17})</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat Out to Help Out(^{18})</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure package(^{19})</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public sector and social housing decarbonisation</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Homes Grant(^{20})</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stamp Duty Land Tax temporary cut(^{21})</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total support announced(^{22})</strong></td>
<td>Up to 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Financial reporting in relation to Covid-19 (2)

Example and why this is best practice

The example on the slide from the Department for Transport Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Uses a table to summarise the support measures introduced for each transport mode, with clear explanations;

✓ Includes the different costings for the measures;

✓ Includes the period of support, which provides users with a clearer insight.

Further examples on the impact of Covid-19:

• Performance reporting
• Risk reporting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transport Mode</th>
<th>Description of support measure</th>
<th>Period of support in 2020</th>
<th>Value of support measure announced to date (£m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rail</td>
<td>The Department put in place Emergency Measures Agreements with Train Operating Companies to support rail services from March 2020 for an initial period of 6 months (see Notes 10.3 and 28). The Department has statutory obligations to ensure the ongoing provision of rail services. The arrangements for continuing to meet these obligations beyond 20 September are currently under commercial negotiation.</td>
<td>1 March – 20 September</td>
<td>£600-700 per 4 week rail period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport for London (TfL)</td>
<td>The Government granted TfL up to £1,095m via the Department and a loan of up to £905m via the Public Works Loan Board, which must be drawn pro rata to any grant taken, assuming a total funding shortfall of £1.88m. The package covers the TfL rail periods 1–7 ending 17 October.</td>
<td>1 April – 17 October</td>
<td>1,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buses</td>
<td>The Department established a grant to support operators and maintain commercially viable appropriate levels of service.</td>
<td>24 March – 3 October</td>
<td>639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Rail</td>
<td>Similar to buses, the Department established grants to support services and maintain commercially viable appropriate levels of service. Services included: Greater Manchester, Sheffield, Nottingham, West Midlands and Tyne and Wear.</td>
<td>17 March – 31 October</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferries</td>
<td>The Department established grants to support specific lifeline services and maintain certain commercially viable minimum service levels.</td>
<td>Varies according to route: from April to July 2020 or March 2021</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maritime Freight</td>
<td>The Department established grants to support services and maintain commercially viable minimum service levels to ensure the vital supply of freight and medicines.</td>
<td>11 May – 19 July</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Aviation Authority</td>
<td>HM Treasury has permitted the Department to provide support of up to £2.1m to the CAA to ensure service continuity.</td>
<td>1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The use of infographics enhances the look and feel of annual reports and accounts. The use of these infographics is an effective way of communicating complicated information, and this is particularly true when presenting financial information.

Example and why this is best practice

The example on the slide from the Food Standards Agency Annual Report and Accounts:

- Displays financial information in an engaging and informative way;
- Uses clear formatting and a range of graphics, increasing usability and makes the section more visually appealing.

Net cost of FSA in 2019/20: £112.6m

Activity and performance across England, Wales and Northern Ireland:

- Estimated foodborne disease-related cases: 2.4 million in the UK
- Estimated societal cost of foodborne illness: £9.1bn
- EU Exit: £19m additional ring-fenced funding secured to support FSA preparations
- Food hypersensitivity: £4.6m funding for key activities in 2019/20 and 2020/21
- More businesses supplying food directly to consumers achieved a food hygiene rating of 5 (“Very good”): 72.0%
- Most food business operators: 97.9% rated ‘satisfactory’ or above for compliance
- Public trust: Of those aware of the FSA, 73% trusted the FSA to do its job (Public attitudes tracker)
- Register a food business: 152 out of 384 local authorities connected to improved online service
**Example and why this is best practice**

Similar to the previous slide, the example on this slide from the *Ministry of Justice Annual Report and Accounts*:

- Displays financial information in an engaging and informative way;
- Allows users to easily compare the different expenditure across the departmental groups by using colour codes;
- Sums up information in a way that can better communicate messages and increase user engagement.

*Figure 2: Departmental expenditure*

Note: HMPPS - HM Prison and Probation Service; HMCTS - HM Courts & Tribunals Service; LAA, OPG & CICA - Legal Aid Agency, Office of the Public Guardian and Criminal Injuries and Compensation Authority; MoJ HQ and ALBs - Ministry of Justice Headquarters and arm's length bodies.
Example and why this is best practice

Similar to the previous slide, the example on this slide from Whole of Government Accounts Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Displays financial information in an engaging and informative way;
✓ Provides commentary based on the figures it presents;
✓ Sums up information in a way that can better communicate messages and increase user engagement.

Please note that this example has been taken from the 2018-19 accounts, due to the timing of preparing the WGA.
**Reporting Issue**

The mandated adoption of IFRS 16 Leases is due from 2022-23. However, two departments were granted permission to adopt IFRS 16 early (DCMS and DfT) from 2019-20 due to specific circumstances affecting the groups.

**Example and why this is best practice**

The example on the slide from the Department for Transport Annual Report and Accounts:

- ✓ Provides a table which is divided into the different areas of leases the department has and clearly shows the figures for each (next page);
- ✓ Some useful commentary has also been included in relation to the figures presented.

---

**7. Leases**

As explained in Note 1.6, the Group has adopted IFRS 16 ‘Leases’ from 1 April 2019. As permitted by the FReM, the Group has implemented it using the cumulative catch-up method, without restating prior year figures. Most leases recognised as operating leases until 31 March 2019 (as shown in Notes 3.2 and 10) are now recognised as right-of-use lease assets and borrowings in Notes 7 and 20, with the associated costs being recognised in Notes 3.4 and 3.7.

The Group’s lease contracts comprise leases of operational land and buildings, plant and machinery and motor vehicles. Most are individually insignificant. Three elements, however, are significant in their own right:

- The Core Department’s most significant lease relates to its main headquarters building: this lease commenced in December 2018 for a term of fifteen years with no extension options. Rentals increase annually in line with the consumer price index, subject to a cap and floor. The value of the asset as at 31 March 2020 was £78m.
- The MCA provides UK-wide services from ten bases operating under the UK Search and Rescue Helicopter Service contract. This contract also includes non-lease components. The value of the asset as at 31 March 2020 was £238m.
- Network Rail holds £230m of property leases and £181m of other leases.
Example and why this is best practice
The example on the slide from the Department for Transport (DfT):

✓ Provides a table which is divided into the different areas of leases the department has and clearly shows the figures for each;

✓ Some useful commentary has also been included in relation to the figures presented.

---

**Figure 46a – Department for Transport**

Right-of-use lease assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2019-20</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Land and buildings</td>
<td>Other assets</td>
<td>Core &amp; Agencies</td>
<td>Land and buildings</td>
<td>Other assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost or valuation</td>
<td>£m</td>
<td>£m</td>
<td>£m</td>
<td>£m</td>
<td>£m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial recognition</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reclassifications from PPE</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additions</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revaluations</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derecognition</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(19)</td>
<td>(19)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remeasurement</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At 31 March 2020

131  293  424  410  257  1,091

Depreciation

Charged in year

(13)  (46)  (59)  (56)  (48)  (163)

Revaluations

-      -      -      -      2      2

At 31 March 2020

(13)  (46)  (59)  (56)  (46)  (161)

Carrying amount at 31 March 2020

118  247  365  354  211  930
Example and why this is best practice

The example on the slide from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Annual Report and Accounts:

✓ Uses a table to visually show the impact IFRS 16 has had on their financial statements, which is split out between the core department and departmental group (table is on next page);

✓ Provides detailed explanations regarding the implementation of IFRS 16.

Implementation and Assumptions

The group has applied IFRS 16 using the modified retrospective approach and therefore the comparative information has not been restated and continues to be reported under IAS 17 "Leases" and IFRIC 4 "Determining whether an arrangement contains a lease". The cumulative effect of adopting IFRS 16 is included as an adjustment to equity at the beginning of the current period. IAS 17 operating leases are included within the SoFP as a lease liability and right of use asset for the first time with changes made through the general fund as a cumulative catch up adjustment. The calculation of the lease liability and right of use assets is included below.

The option to reassess whether a contract is, or contains, a lease at the date of initial application has not been used, the group has used the practical expedient detailed in IFRS 16(C3).1.

The definition of a contract is expanded to include intra-UK government agreements where non-performance may not be enforceable by law. This includes, for example, Memorandum of Terms of Occupation (MOTO) agreements.

The group has expanded the definition of a lease to include arrangements with nil consideration. Peppercorn leases are examples of these, they are defined by HMT as lease payments significantly below market value. These assets are fair valued on initial recognition. On transition any differences between the discounted lease liability and the right of use asset are included through cumulative catch up. Any differences between the lease liability and right of use asset for new leases after implementation of IFRS 16 are recorded in income in the SoCNE.
Example and why this is best practice

The example on the slide from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS):

✓ Uses a table to visually show the impact IFRS 16 has had on their financial statements, which is split out between the core department and departmental group;

✓ Provides detailed explanations regarding the implementation of IFRS 16.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core department</th>
<th>Departmental group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£'000</td>
<td>£'000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating lease commitment at 31 March 2019</td>
<td>72,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discounted using discount rates</td>
<td>(24,426)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance Lease liabilities at 31 March 2019</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Exemptions for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Short terms leases</td>
<td>(736)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Leases of low value assets</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intangible Assets</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Extension and termination options reasonably certain to be exercised</td>
<td>100,126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Variable lease payments based on an index or a rate</td>
<td>819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Residual value guarantees</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Advance payments</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Excluding previously included non lease components</td>
<td>(4,502)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impacts of restatements for Operating lease and Finance Leases</td>
<td>(12,829)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-assessments for IFRS16</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lease liabilities recognised at 1 April 2019</td>
<td>130,946</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5 – Further links

1. The Building Public Trust Awards:

2. Government Financial Reporting Review


4. Audit Scotland good practice note on improving the quality of central government annual report and accounts

5. The ONS recently published guidance on producing effective graphs and tables
HM Treasury contacts

This document can be downloaded from www.gov.uk

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