

Spreadsheet

CIPFA.ORG | NEWS FOR MEMBERS AND STUDENTS

DECEMBER 2019



regional
stars

CIPFA North West, winners at the 2019 regional awards

in this issue

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CIPFA

Message from the President

Another year gone. December always seems so far away and then, all of a sudden, it comes crashing down upon us like a ton of bricks. That's not to mention trying to wrap up all the loose ends at work before taking a well-deserved festive break!

But even in this busy season, it's important to take some time to reflect on the year that has passed, and to look forward to what we wish to achieve in the year to come.

2019 has been a great year for CIPFA, so before anything else, I want to thank everyone, staff and members alike, for their hard work over the last 12 months. I took up the mantle of President in July, and in that short time I have been humbled by the passion and expertise that I have seen from members both across the UK and internationally.

Since the last edition in September, I've been on quite a journey, attending regional conferences in Wales, Northern Ireland, the Midlands and the North East, as well as events further afield in Sri Lanka and Vancouver. The Institute has also strengthened its footprint in central government and health, with two very successful sector-specific conferences in London drawing together senior figures from across the wider public sector.

We have continued to enhance our education and lifelong learning services to award-winning status. Our Achieving Finance Excellence in Policing programme was recognised at the Association Excellence Awards, securing the silver award for best learning and professional development programme in its very first year.

CIPFA has also seen some major policy developments over the last three months, including the creation of the Financial Management Code, the publication of the latest Performance Tracker, and the launch of the Financial Resilience Index.

In recent international news, we have re-signed our Memorandum of Understanding with CA Sri Lanka. We've also partnered with Humentum starting work to deliver the first ever global financial reporting guidance for non-profit organisations. These will command support from the accounting community and NPOs, as well as their funders and regulators.

As we enter a new decade, working together with our members and volunteers, sound public financial management and good governance will continue to be at the heart of our advocacy and policy work. We look forward to growing our education

and advisory services to support our members and the wider public sector. Keep your eyes peeled for developments on CIPFA 2020 – our project to revise our professional curriculum to best meet the needs of tomorrow's public finance leaders.

In the meantime, I hope you all enjoy the festivities and have a very happy new year.



**Carolyn Williamson,
President**



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Keeping up with CIPFA

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Spreadsheet

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Kathryn Hunter

We welcome your feedback on *Spreadsheets*. Please send your comments and suggestions for future articles to the editor.

Current issues

Working towards collective responsibility in financial management

By Rob Whiteman, CIPFA CEO

Who should we depend on to make the tough decisions regarding finance? If something goes awry, who creates solutions?

Good financial management requires collective responsibility, and needs to be embedded within the authority. Where finance in local government works well, there is often a common understanding and ownership of issues.

While the recent spending round brought good news for many areas of local government, the sector is still reeling from years of austerity, rapid political change and emerging financial threats. It is becoming more important than ever that we are all on the same page when it comes to financial management.

When we say collective responsibility, we mean that all members of an authority collaborate to understand and implement the principles of good financial management. Knowledge of these principles must extend into the corporate culture to yield best results.

While some local authorities display strong financial management, there is evidence that this is not the case throughout the sector. This is why CIPFA has developed the Financial Management Code. This new Code supports the sector by providing consistent standards that are rooted in transparency and support financial sustainability.

Building an awareness and understanding of shared financial goals throughout an organisation will improve the quality of decision making. Shared ownership creates a sense of community, incentivising us to work together to achieve the best outcomes.

Collective responsibility is one of several principles we are highlighting in the FM Code. While accountability, transparency and effective leadership are all crucial to success, so too is the assurance of long-term sustainability.

Through the development of the FM Code, we have worked with the sector to establish consensus and bring consistency to financial management for local government.

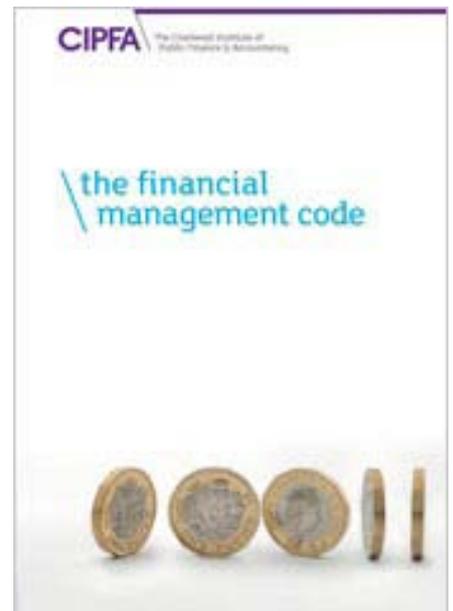
The FM Code aligns itself to other CIPFA Codes (such as the Prudential Code) that promote financial sustainability, bringing together many of these statutory requirements.

The FM Code principles also recognise the need for longer-term financial planning – a difficult but important challenge in these turbulent times of one year announcements. It aspires to support improvements in this area to enable local authorities to make decisions about the future effectively and create sustainable financial plans.

Putting those ideas into practice creates a way to defend against potential unexpected roadblocks, and establishes a sense of trust between local authorities and the communities they serve.

CIPFA is offering a variety of packages of hands-on support to local authorities implementing the Code, including webinars and bespoke on-site workshops.

We believe that good financial management should be at the very core of an organisation, permeating the inner workings of each department, the leadership team and those with an advisory role.



So, to revisit the initial question: who should we turn to when organisations need to make tough financial decisions? The answer should be: everyone.

This article originally appeared in the Municipal Journal.

CIPFA 2020

By Jayne Owen, Chair of the Student and Members Board, CIPFA

It has been a particularly turbulent few years. From Brexit, to austerity, to climate change and rapid technological advancement – changes have been thrown at finance and accountancy professionals from all directions. Rather than seeing these developments as a hindrance, we should view them as an opportunity to modernise, protect the environment and make the public sector fit for the future.

The accountancy profession and CIPFA must adapt to keep up with our evolving world. This starts with the education and training of the next generation of finance professionals. We must deliver a better service to our students and their sponsors if we are going to equip them to better serve citizens and society.

To rise to this challenge, CIPFA has launched CIPFA 2020, an exciting project to revise our professional curriculum. In the months ahead, our professional accountancy qualification will be reviewed completely to guarantee that we are providing the best training for tomorrow's public finance leaders.

We are currently consulting with employers and other stakeholders to understand the primary needs of the profession as it moves forward. We will also capture the expertise

of CIPFA members and staff. This is the first of four phases of the project, completing the research that will inform the qualification's development. After the research phase is completed, the process of developing the new curriculum will begin, and then the syllabus and coursework soon after.

It is customary to review curriculums and teaching practice every five years, but CIPFA 2020 is particularly well-timed. Since the last refresh in 2015, the public sector has endured further austerity and is emerging more resilient than ever. This should be reflected in our teaching methods.

In addition to the rapid social and political changes taking place around us, it is also important to keep up with fast-paced technological advancements. According to reports earlier this year from AAT, the majority of accountants think basic accountancy practices will be fully automated within five years, and this progress must be reflected in our curriculum. In turn, we can teach our students how they can use these tools to solve industry problems and nurture greater ingenuity throughout the sector.

Taking advantage of these developments will only bring us closer to greater efficiency and modernisation. And with the CIPFA 2020 project, we will be on the front line of this new accountancy landscape.

It is difficult to say what the future will look like. But as an organisation we can ensure that our professional qualification best prepares our students for whatever comes.

This article first appeared in PQ magazine.

Reading ourselves for the Redmond Review

by Rob Whiteman, CIPFA CEO

CIPFA has been watching with interest as audit rises up the public finance agenda, and the announcement of a review of local authority audit over the summer, led by former CIPFA President Sir Tony Redmond, was something we welcomed keenly.

Local public audit in England underwent a drastic change with the 2015 abolition of the Audit Commission. Over a century of public audit practice terminated as the remaining public provision was effectively privatised and councils empowered to appoint their own auditors. Since then, however, concerns have been raised that the new regime has weaknesses. Some have noted a decline in the scope, quality and challenge of local public audit.

So CIPFA is glad to see the Redmond Review has been established to unpick these issues, and that it has started moving at some pace. CIPFA will be feeding into the review every step of the way; here are some initial thoughts on what the review could usefully explore.

It is worth considering whether the current regulatory environment is sufficiently effective and robust. Some of the delays to local audits suggest that adequate resourcing may also be an issue, so the question of what an appropriate level looks like could also be addressed.

There might be a role for a separate body with a particular focus and expertise in local audit. This could have a targeted remit to secure quality audit outputs, and would also need to access the expertise and understanding of international auditing standards, as well as ensuring auditors are appointed with appropriate understanding of

the regulatory regime in which local authorities operate.

Any new body should be established in accordance with the principles of public audit: independence from government; wide scope; transparency and accessibility; and responsiveness to changing contexts.

CIPFA also has questions around how audit findings are considered and acted on. Where an audit highlights issues, are local authorities establishing plans for corrective action promptly? Audit committees are a key component in this process and need to function as a central part of an authority's governance framework. CIPFA is concerned that some few councils are disregarding guidance, to the detriment of the sector and a risk to local taxpayers, and Redmond will need to consider a means for auditors to highlight this to government.

Any change to the audit and assurance regime must be comprehensive and clear, but it should also be progressive and fit for the future. It could be productive to discuss the potential of changes that would go beyond the traditional elements of financial statements, governance and value for money.

More innovative financial reporting could have a key role to play here. While financial statements are a cornerstone for accountability, demonstrating how public money has been used, it is also important that they communicate effectively to users, perhaps through real time or interim audit judgements.

CIPFA/LASAAC has recently begun a discussion to explore how local authority financial statements might tell their story more clearly,



Rob Whiteman, CIPFA CEO

be simplified and scaled to a size proportionate to the preparing authority. We're excited by the potential this could have to transform reporting, audit and assurance regimes.

The Redmond Review presents us with a blank sheet of paper – an opportunity to explore how we as a sector could do things differently. CIPFA is determined to be part of the vanguard driving change.

This article first appeared in Local Government Chronicle.

Since this article was written, CIPFA has formally responded to the consultation. You can read the response [here](#).

International Financial Reporting for Non Profit Organisations (#IFR4NPO)



The Technical Advisory Group at its first meeting in October 2019

In July of this year, Humentum and CIPFA launched a groundbreaking project to develop International Financial Reporting Guidance for Non Profit Organisations (NPOs). At present, there are no international financial reporting standards specifically for NPOs and this has many impacts across the sector, including wasted time, cost, inconsistency and lack of perceived value. The project has a five-year timeline, with the initial aim of publishing a consultation paper in September 2020.

One aspect of the potential impact of the #IFR4NPO project is in preventing fraud, as illustrated in Ian Carruthers' article on the following page.

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) held its [inaugural meeting](#)

on 3-4 October at CIPFA's London headquarters. Chaired by Ian Carruthers, Chair of CIPFA Standards, the TAG members have been nominated by accounting standard setters from Australia, Austria, Colombia, Canada, Malaysia, New Zealand, Sierra Leone, UK, USA and Africa (through the Pan African Federation of Accountants). Representatives from the IASB also attended as official observers.

Notable topics from the meeting included the scope and objectives of the proposed guidance, prioritisation of NPO issues and the best way to present the consultation paper to encourage engagement and meaningful feedback. The group will have monthly virtual meetings until the next face-to-face meeting in Washington, DC in April 2020.

CIPFA is also actively supporting Humentum to set up the first Practitioner Advisory Group (PAG) convening on 5–6 December in Nairobi, Kenya. The initial meeting includes sector representatives from the UK, US, Kenya, Indonesia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Switzerland, Russia and New Zealand, providing advice to the TAG on sector issues.

This initiative needs all parts of the NPO community in order to succeed – this could be you! For further information contact Karen Sanderson at Karen.Sanderson@cipfa.org.

A global charity case: examining the impact of financial reporting on fraud

By Ian Carruthers, Chair, CIPFA Standards

Fraud can happen in any organisation, regardless of sector or industry, and non-profit organisations (NPOs) are no exception. When accountability and transparency are not as good as they could be in an organisation, fraudulent activity can be shaded, making it a substantial challenge to detect and prevent. So what can we do to address this situation in the non-profit sector, and reduce the prevalence of fraud?

Given the reliance on donations and voluntary work to deliver services, having clear and consistent documentation of financial income and expenses is crucial for charities. Transparent accounting can improve operational efficiency, shed valuable light on financial sustainability and help attract additional charitable donations. However, the lack of an international financial reporting standard means these principles are at

risk and globally underdeveloped.

For many global charities, financial reporting processes can be rife with inefficiencies, inconsistencies and inaccuracies. There are always people who will manipulate, move and steal money for their personal gain. The absence of internationally recognised accounting standards for NPOs, together with opaque, inconsistent financial reporting methods in different countries creates a perfect storm ripe for exploitation by fraudsters, leaving vulnerable individuals and communities exposed. That's why CIPFA is teaming up with Humentum to develop the first-ever global financial reporting guidance for NPOs.

A single set of international financial reporting guidance means that NPOs will be able to report the same financial information, in the same way, at the same time, regardless of country or location – effectively closing the vast network of inconsistent gaps that make

it difficult to find, prove and correct instances of fraud. This framework will make the finances of international NPOs that much clearer and more transparent for increased internal and external scrutiny and auditing. Furthermore, the uniform #IFR4NPO guidance will set a global standard of 'what good financial reporting for NPOs looks like', allowing for greater accountability.

The development of international financial reporting guidance will have positive reverberations beyond organisational efficiency. Applying the new guidelines will make financial crime that much harder to commit within international NPOs. The global non-profit sector, and most importantly the vulnerable communities it serves, stands to gain the most from the implementation of new standards and the subsequent change in culture.

This article first appeared in Public Finance.



If you have something that you'd like to share with your fellow *Spreadsheet* readers, drop an email to the editor, kathryn.hunter@cipfa.org. Please keep your comments under 1,000 words.

What might your future local library look like?

By Joanne Pitt, Local Government Policy Manager at CIPFA

People love libraries. A library is the only community location where everyone can access an unlimited amount of information – a place for learning and research, and a window into the world of fiction. Many people assert that libraries should be kept open, free and fully funded as a public service offering. However, with limited public resources available, what does this mean for the future of libraries?

Although viewed as an essential public service for councils to provide, in most cases, the fiscal picture for libraries is bleak. In an earlier feature this year, CIPFA chief executive Rob Whiteman highlighted the latest trends in library funding and management: the number of people visiting libraries, number of libraries open and number of books in library collections are all in decline.

The past decade of austerity has meant that many councils have had to explore creative options with meagre funds. Local authority spending on libraries fell by 28.9%, from £977m in 2009/10 to £694m in 2017/18, a real-terms cut of 37.8%. As a result of this fiscal pinch, we've seen an increase in volunteerism and a reduction in the availability of library services.

Without clarity around the future funding structure of libraries, this increased reliance on volunteers won't go away anytime soon. However, libraries across the country have responded to budget restraints with innovation, becoming more modern and inclusive to attract a wider audience.

Some libraries may transition into shared or multipurpose spaces to raise additional funding. We already see some libraries partnering with local cinemas to support their overall, pooled financial position. Alternatively, this multipurpose idea could result in libraries being incorporated into other public service buildings, whether that be an employment or community centre. For instance, Chester library now offers a range of activities from work drop-ins to children's French classes.

This type of transformation is essential if libraries are to remain relevant for future generations. Libraries may adopt a greater online presence in order to reduce costs, making use of new technologies and an increased demand for digital books and resources, which can be accessed remotely.

Although libraries are likely to move towards volunteer-based, shared or online-based formats in the future, it's essential to consider how we continually provide the important social value of brick and mortar libraries. While this can be difficult to quantify, many fear recent library trends will push young and vulnerable groups away from free learning, literacy programmes and access to information. The data supports this concern. Analysis from the Institute for Government shows that local authorities in deprived areas of the country have seen the largest spending cuts on neighbourhood services.

In a time of increased demand for other services, libraries will inevitably feel pressure. However, it is important

that this much-loved service has the opportunity to be continually redesigned and reinvigorated into whichever shape benefits all members of their local community.

This article first appeared in Local Government Chronicle.

Library statistics for 2018/19 are now available [here](#).

Accounting for social benefits – a new standard

By Alan Bermingham, Policy Manager – Governments

In January 2019, the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (IPSASB) issued a new standard covering accounting for social benefits – IPSAS 42 *Social Benefits*. Social welfare is a key area for governments, who are generally responsible for delivering social benefits. These benefits represent a large proportion of government expenditures and can take the form of state pensions, unemployment benefits or other social and income support measures, all of which are within the scope of the new accounting standard.

IPSAS 42's origins stem from the need for transparency around the nature and financial effects of social benefit schemes, and their impact on government finances. Transparency with regard to the assets and liabilities of an entity facilitates making informed judgements about long-term financial sustainability. It is also crucial to understanding intergenerational (in) equity – the financial burden that future generations will face from our policies today.

Current standards covering provisions, contingent assets and liabilities, such as IPSAS 19, specifically exclude accounting for social benefits. Therefore any significant liabilities arising from these policies are not visible on government balance sheets. IPSAS 42 is designed to fill this gap.

It's important to understand what the recognition and measurement points are under the new IPSAS 42 standard.

In line with the *Conceptual Framework* published by IPSASB and the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB), a liability is defined as a present obligation for an outflow

of resources that results from a past event. Looking at social benefits, such as state pension entitlements, satisfying the eligibility requirements would be deemed the past event. In practice, once an individual reaches retirement age, is still living and has paid the relevant national insurance contributions, they will be eligible for the benefit.

For IPSAS 42, an entity recognises an expense for a social benefit scheme, measured at the amount of the next payment following satisfaction of the eligibility criteria. A key point to understand is that the satisfaction of eligibility criteria for each social benefit payment is considered a separate past event. This means the liability exists for the next payment only. For example, an individual still needs to be retired and living during the next week or month to satisfy eligibility criteria and receive that next payment.

Therefore it's likely that the liabilities of social benefits will generally be classified as short-term liabilities. These known amounts accounted as short-term liabilities will not need to be discounted to present value – this is the general approach to recognition and measurement in the new standard.

As with all accounting standards, there will be supporting disclosures in the financial statements. For example the 'general approach' to recognising social benefits requires entities to disclose information that:

1. Explains the characteristics of its social benefit schemes; and
2. Explains the demographic, economic and other external factors that may affect its social benefit schemes.

Governments using this standard will have to consider its implementation for the accounting period beginning on or after 1 January 2022. Although this new standard will increase the transparency around the government's liabilities for these schemes, it will not have the dramatic impact that one might expect. This change in standards will bring clarity and insight on the financial impact of social benefit schemes.

This article first appeared in Accountancy Daily.

How cuts are affecting social care performance: what the data says

By Dr Eleanor Roy

The picture of social care in this country is far from idyllic. Staff shortages and budget cuts prevent those who need help from receiving it. While it is the government's responsibility to fund programmes to help the most vulnerable, austerity measures have forced resources to be stripped down.

The Johnson government has paid lip service to "fixing social care". However, the time for words has passed. The government has to take action to prioritise social care if we are to provide support and protection to those in need.

The evidence is irrefutable. [The Institute for Government and CIPFA's 2019 Performance Tracker](#), which analyses data across nine public services, indicates that health and social care has noticeably declined in quality due to cost-cutting.

Challenges for children's and adults' services

Although all areas of government spending assessed by the tracker have seen reductions in quality, [adult social care has seen the most setbacks](#). Public spending on adult social care has fallen by 2.1% in real terms over the past decade. While the service has been able to achieve efficiencies, this cannot be maintained. As the population continues to live longer in poor health, the forecast growth in demand poses a significant challenge for public spending.

Demand for publicly funded adult social care is likely to continue to increase faster than the amount of money available. To continue providing the same quality of care over the next five years, the government would need to spend 11.3% more than it did in 2018/19.

[Children's social care faces a similar decline](#) in funding and quality of care. Services are provided to children most in need – those who are disabled, under protection or in residential/foster care – but vulnerable young people are slipping through the cracks.

Government spending on youth services, justice and children's centres fell by 56% from 2009/2010 to 2017/18. Children's centres have been particularly hit, with council spending on them falling by 62%.

[Social workers have reported](#) that some local authorities have limited the definition of 'child in need' to save funds, resulting in fewer children eligible for care. Some councillors say they lack the resources to meet their responsibilities.

Long wait for quality improvements

[While more money for children's social care was announced in the last spending round](#), demand may grow faster than anticipated. Many local authorities consider adult social care the more pressing issue, and could choose to use additional funds in that area instead. With only one year of funding guaranteed, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to meet increasing demands in a sustainable manner for future years: improvements to service quality are likely still a long way off.

It would be disingenuous not to highlight where there is good news. In general, a consistent level of satisfaction has been reported by those who receive adult social care. Regardless, the perception of adult social care continues to decline. This could partly be due to dissatisfaction of the workforce. As a result of budget cuts, social care workers have had to do more with less to maintain quality

of the care. [Vacancy and turnover rates in adult social care jobs are high, and continue to rise](#). This is echoed in children's services, where social workers have seen restrictions on pay rises.

For decades, the question of how to fund social care has been debated – and political action deferred. As the population has aged, life expectancy and the number of individuals suffering from long-term health conditions have risen – meanwhile funding has gradually reduced.

Substantial data gaps

Despite evidence showing that reduced performance levels cannot be sustained, it doesn't seem to be informing government decision making.

No government can make good spending decisions without understanding the data, and there are substantial gaps in the government's social care data pool. We don't have a national picture for the extent of private funding in social care, assessment waiting times, or what happens to adults who request but don't receive care.

This paints a bleak picture for the future of social care in England. While the Performance Tracker shows government spending must increase substantially to meet demand, we urge parliamentarians to consider how policy decisions could be better informed and evidenced. Without these insights, government will continue to fall into the crisis-cash-repeat cycle. The health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable will pay the price.

This article originally appeared in [Community Care](#).

CIPFA European Group AGM



Members of the CIPFA European Group

The CIPFA European Group Annual Seminar and Annual General Meeting took place in Luxembourg on 18 and 19 November, with CIPFA President Carolyn Williamson in attendance. The seminar started with a joint event of CIPFA European Group and the Association of British and Irish Accountants in Luxembourg on Public Sector Accounting Standards, held at the local Chamber of Commerce. Delegates heard from IPSASB Chair, Ian Carruthers, and the Head of EPSAS Task Force in the European Commission, John Verrinder, on latest developments on both international standards and the European standards project.

These included the significant level of adoption of international standards (IPSAS) globally, and the position on the development of accrual-based European standards (EPSAS).

The morning of 19 November saw a meeting of members of CIPFA European Group and invited guests, held at the offices of the European Court of Auditors. After the CIPFA President's welcome and opening address, Group President Paul Sime led a further discussion of key issues developing on the earlier accounting standards event. Members and guests went on to have an interesting and engaging session

around updates from CIPFA Director of Public Affairs, Drew Cullen, who discussed current topics including CIPFA's ethical framework, diversity and inclusion and international activities. Activities concluded with the Annual General Meeting.

The CIPFA President also had the pleasure of meeting with Phil Wynn Owen, Member of the European Court of Auditors.

CIPFA around the world

CIPFA attended the awards for the Training of Internal Auditors in the Public Sector (TIAPS) in Montenegro in November. CIPFA supports this programme as an essential component of efforts to build and strengthen professional qualifications for internal auditors in Montenegro, in collaboration with the Center of Excellence in Finance.

CIPFA CEO Rob Whiteman spoke at the Financial Management Institute of Canada annual conference on 19 November, on the theme of trust and resilience, emphasising the role of public finance professionals in building cultures of accountability, ethics and resilience.



TIAPS Montenegro group



Salema Hafiz, Acting Divisional Director for CIPFA International, in Montenegro



Rob Whiteman in Canada

Institute matters

CIPFA's Achieving Finance Excellence in Policing programme recognised for award

After being shortlisted for the Association Excellence Award – Best Learning and Development category, CIPFA's Achieving Finance Excellence in Policing (AFEP) team are proud to announce that the programme won the Silver award!

The [awards programme](#) recognises professional institutes and associations demonstrating excellence and best practice.

Amie Hall, CIPFA AFEP Programme Manager, commented:

"I'm so proud of the CIPFA AFEP team and all the forces that have contributed to the success of the programme. We are thrilled to have won the award which is taking pride of place back at CIPFA HQ."

Rob Whiteman, CIPFA CEO, added:

"The Achieving Finance Excellence in Policing programme is designed to support the police sector across the UK to deliver transformational change at a time when resources are stretched and crime is on the rise.

"We're hugely proud of the programme, and are delighted to have won this prestigious award."

Recent years have seen a severe reduction in police resources and an increase in crime (recorded crimes in England and Wales rose by 32% in the past three years). The AFEP programme is designed to meet these challenges head on.

The programme has been driven by the National Police Chief's Council Finance Committee (NPCC), Police and Crime Commissions Treasurers Society (PACCTS), Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCCs) and provides support to enable teams to stay in control of their financial strategy.



Amie Hall, CIPFA AFEP Programme Manager



Vacancy – Chair of the Governance and Financial Management Panel

Financial management, resilience and sustainability are at the core of public sector finance following a number of years of continued reduced resources. Do you want to play a crucial role in CIPFA's work supporting the sector on these key parts of accountability and governance?

CIPFA has a vacancy for the Chair of the Governance and Financial Management Panel. This panel is integral to CIPFA's work on governance and financial management, which will include the internationalisation of CIPFA's new

Financial Management Code. It is also responsible for responding to initiatives to strengthen governance and financial management in public services.

There are normally two to three panel meetings per year (as appropriate to the panel's objectives and workplans for the year). The meetings take approximately half a day. The Chair would be expected to chair relevant conferences and represent the panel.

For more details please consider the person specification and/or contact the

secretary of the panel (Sarah.Sheen@cipfa.org) for an informal discussion.

If you think that you could be the ideal candidate, send a brief letter of application together with your CV to [Milan Palmer](#) by Friday 17 January 2020. Thereafter, successful candidates will be invited for interview at the end of January/early February.

Public Communication: From Both Sides

By Stephen Richards, TISonline board member, Financial Management and Corporate Governance

As a council pay clerk in the seventies, I felt embarrassed when some council workers, querying pay deductions, addressed me as ‘Sir’ – questioning an official document was viewed as challenging authority. Such excessive deference to officials is a thing of the past, but our society continues to respect officialdom, and many citizens instinctively fear official communications. Being representatives of the state, officers must occasionally make an unwelcome intervention – ‘buff envelopes’ seldom bring good news. Rules can be inflexible, and constant compliance a burden.

A common reason for contacting a local authority is because of a previous communication that doesn’t correspond to one’s perception of the facts, often because the point has been overlooked or misconstrued. Welcome initiatives in using plainer English have not always been an unqualified success: time is lost in enquiries about the meaning of, or rationale for, a decision that could have been better explained in the first place.

Nowadays, with many local offices closed and services outsourced, direct verbal contact with someone working within an authority has become increasingly difficult.

Many large organisations provide a helpline, but this lies behind a barricade of options, queues and exhortations to use a website. There’s also the prospect that you might fail to find the answer you need on a webpage, or struggle to communicate your problem clearly without the benefit of human interpretation. Public service websites provide valuable information, but many can take some skill to navigate successfully.

Today’s huge media expansion with audience interaction, social media and the mandatory publication of more information has left people better informed. They realise the extent to which public decisions affect their day-to-day lives – and that these are decisions that could go either way. They want to be certain that they can identify and trust the decision maker.

On the other side of the fence, answering Freedom of Information (FOI) requests adequately without violating data protection is a full-time discipline. With a dissatisfied enquirer we risk a tangle of crossing requests, complaints, responses and new complaints about the responses.

Despite this, there is an unprecedented level of outreach as councils encourage more engagement and feedback. Some councils provide their own public online forums, such as the citizens’ (or ‘listening’) committees,

recently suggested by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, which have no legal powers but question members. These committees seem to be shadowing the official scrutiny process in authorities that want to strengthen or rebuild public confidence. [Kensington and Chelsea RBC’s Listening Forum](#) began in the aftermath of the Grenfell disaster.

There will doubtless always be an element of distrust in any community where civil power is concerned, met with defensiveness from the other side. We can minimise this by being as candid as possible in our interactions with the public, by welcoming constructive criticism, and most importantly by encouraging conversation rather than deterring it.

CIPFA is looking for new members to join its TISonline editorial boards

If your organisation doesn't yet subscribe to CIPFA's [TISonline](#) service, you're missing out on access to the one place you can find technical information about the whole public sector.

The content is regularly updated by our specialist editorial boards. Have you ever thought about joining one?

TISonline is our Technical Information Service for public sector finance, a repository of essential information [across 36 topics](#).

As a member of a board you would receive the following benefits:

- Join a dedicated support network, benefiting both you and your organisation.
- Increase your specialist knowledge
- Have your work published in a respected resource used by the majority of UK local authorities.
- Help guide other professionals to

provide a better service and improve standards.

- Participation contributes to continuing professional development (CPD).
- Receive one free place per year at a CIPFA Network event.
- Board meetings are two or three times a year, with travel expenses paid.
- Free lunch provided at meetings.

Below is the full list of all 36 information streams on the TISonline website.

Boards with vacancies are highlighted in purple.

Please contact TISonline@cipfa.org if you are interested in joining any boards.

To chat about subscription options, please contact customerservices@cipfa.org or call 020 7543 5600.

Call for feedback

The TISonline Planning board is responsible for updating existing content and producing new content for the [TISonline Planning stream](#). The board would love to hear what you think of the Planning stream, and what sort of content you would like to see the board produce for the stream in the future. The board would also like to know if CIPFA members would be interested in attending a discussion to share their views on planning. All feedback is welcome. Please email your feedback to: Eleanor.Blake@cipfa.org

Discussion Forums

TISonline also has seven discussion forums where you can discuss the issues that matter to you with your peers. They are Audit, Capital and Treasury, Finance, Fraud, Housing, VAT and Section 33 VAT, and are [accessible online here](#).

■ [Adult Social Care and Health](#)

- Asset Management

■ [Budgeting \(preferably from the NHS\)](#)

■ [Capital](#)

- Charging
- Charity Accounting and Financial Management

■ [Children's Services](#)

- Counter Fraud
- Education VAT
- Environmental Services

■ [Financial Management and Corporate Governance \(preferably from the NHS\)](#)

- Government Grants and Business Rates Retention

- Guide to Council Tax England

- Guide to Council Tax Wales

- Health VAT (HFMA VAT Committee)

- Housing Association Finance

- Housing Associations and RSLs VAT

■ [Human Resources](#)

■ [ICT and Business Transformation](#)

- Insurance

- Internal Audit

■ [Leisure and Cultural Services](#)

- Local Authorities and Similar Bodies VAT (CIPFA VAT Committee)

- Local Authority Accounting

■ [Local Authority Housing](#)

■ [Local Taxation](#)

- PAYE and National Insurance (VAT)

- Pensions

■ [Planning](#)

■ [Police and Fire](#)

- Procurement

- Public Health

- Risk Management

- Social Enterprise

■ [Transport](#)

■ [Treasury Management](#)

CIPFA-Penna Talent Spot

Staying the course: why it's important to commit in the world of interim

We've seen a worrying trend emerge over the past 12 months in the world of interim employment. Some interims are exiting contracts early, leaving public sector employers in a difficult position and interim providers rosy-cheeked with embarrassment. Why is this?

The most obvious reason is for money. Let's not underestimate the impact that IR35 has had on the public sector workforce. With interims now unable to claim back expenses, they are being forced to increase their day rates. This, in turn, impacts the public purse.

Working as an interim is becoming more appealing for those who are at a certain stage of their career or who want/need the flexibility it offers. Those who are new to the market, having perhaps just left a permanent position, are more likely to accept and then renege on an interim opportunity. There is a lack of understanding that this behaviour is just not accepted in the interim world. Some believe that by chasing the most prestigious positions, even after having accepted another role, they will progress faster. There is no such thing as fast track in interim. Your reputation precedes you and you are only as good as your last job.

Local authorities and hiring managers can occasionally be unrealistic about what they need to pay an interim but when they are operating from a stretched public purse there sometimes is no other option. Interims must be able to justify their day rate in the current climate and not waste public money by jumping ship.

It's not a surprise that quite often public sector finance teams can have been at the same authority for years, sometimes over a decade or two! They are prone to see an interim, whose brief is to change and innovate, as a threat and challenge their decisions. Faced with the inability to deliver a brief due to perm/temp clashes, the interim may rather leave a contract early than risk not being able to deliver on the client's expectations.

The market is candidate-driven to the extreme – with more roles than there are talented interims to fill them. Because of this, interims have the luxury of being picky about which positions they accept. This shortage of available candidates means that some interims choose to charge a premium for their services.

So what can hiring managers do to mitigate against these risks? CIPFA-Penna's advice to our clients is to scope your roles properly, be as competitive as you can and call on a trusted provider like CIPFA-Penna to consult with you regarding procuring interims.

And for interims themselves? Our advice would always be to safeguard your reputation – don't take on assignments if you're not fully committed. If you need someone to act as an intermediary between yourself and the client, talk to your recruiter – and consider registering with another provider.

Catherine Bush is Associate Consultant at CIPFA-Penna

Catherine.Bush@penna.com



Catherine Bush, consultant at CIPFA-Penna

Members news

Welcome to new members

A warm welcome to our new members who have joined CIPFA in the past few months.

May we wish you a long and prosperous career. Don't forget that as a **CIPFA Member** you are a chartered public finance accountant and can use the designation **CPFA**.

Members are listed by city or town.

Thomas Beake
London

Jennifer Bevan
Bury

Alison Black
Aberdeen

Luke Bristow
Chepstow

Aron Brown
Dartford

Phil Coad
Helston

Thomas Cooksey
London

Jacob Davies
Tamworth

Farah Abdiweli Dirye
Mogadishu

Neil Doherty
Manchester

Katie Feechan
Fife

Danielle Floyd
Watford

Helen Guthrie
Cowstrandburn

Jessica Hambley
Duffield

Jenny Han-Nguyen
London

Akib Hanif
Oldham

Geoffrey Hashman
Princes Risborough

Amanda Healy
Borehamwood

Rachel Hodgson
Preston

Samuel Johnson
Middlewich

Jessica Jordan
Oldham

Patrick Kilgallen
London

Mubarak Kolawole
London

Bisrat Kurabachew
Addis Ababa

Graham Little
Edinburgh

Graeme Long
Blackpool

Robert Andrew Macaskill
Isle of Lewis

Jenny McGhee
Haywards Heath

Angela McMullan
Norwich

Martin McVey
Vancouver

Lydia Nevitt
London

Tosin Orekoya
London

Jekaterina Popova
London

Sawan Shah
London

Katherine Sissons
London

Angela Smith
Chesterfield

Renata Stankeviciute
Taunton

James Stevenson
Chippenham

Samantha Stroud
Weymouth

Linda Taylor
Lochgilphead

Philip Tithecott
Bath

Laura Tuckey
Southend-on-Sea

Jacqueline Van Mellaerts
Brentwood

Alexandra Williams
Chester

Jeremy Williams
London

Parris Williams
Rayleigh

Jamie Wright
Carlisle

Updated CPD scheme and new requirements for CIPFA Members

We have updated our Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme to address the current and future development needs of CIPFA Members.

As you'll be aware, the CPD scheme is mandatory for all CIPFA Members. From 1 January 2020 the updated CPD standard comes into effect and the CIPFA CPD scheme has been amended to reflect the needs of the new standard.

The CPD scheme is a practical way for you to plan and record your learning and development throughout your career. By participating in the

CPD scheme, you are showing your commitment to maintaining the highest levels of service, not only to employers, but also to the wider public and the profession.

Summary of key changes to CIPFA's CPD scheme:

- The scheme has been simplified, with one level for all CIPFA Members.
- Recording CPD will now be done on an annual cycle, which should make it easier for you to manage your CPD and CIPFA membership.

- A Learning and Development record template is available for you to download and use to document your CPD activity.

We have also updated the CPD guide which will help you learn about the requirements of the scheme, including tips on recording your CPD and providing evidence of your CPD activities.

Further details about the CPD scheme, CPD guide and Learning and Development record template visit: www.cipfa.org/cpd

CIPFA Rewards for members



Professional Indemnity Insurance

The CIPFA professional indemnity insurance scheme has been arranged in conjunction with Trafalgar Risk Management and Parliament Hill Ltd.

The cover will offer you protection for negligence or breach of duty of care and in some instances this can be a stipulation from your client. CIPFA members are free to choose their own provider for professional indemnity insurance, however the above scheme offers:

- highly competitive rates
- cover in a few moments
- a simple application process

- options for employers and public liability (only available in conjunction with professional indemnity)
- full policy wording and summary located online.

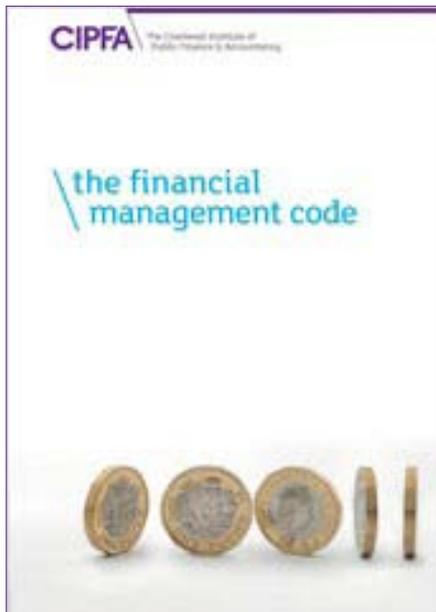
Cover is subject to final acceptance by the underwriters. Please note that the scheme is **NOT** available to **student members**.

Get a quote online at www.cipfapi.com

Please read [FAQs](#) on the website for any questions that you may need answering. If in doubt, please call **0333 003 3359**.

*Terms and conditions apply. See website for full details. Offer subject to change without notice and is correct at time of print. This benefit is made available through Parliament Hill Ltd of 40 Gracechurch Street, London, England, EC3V 0BT. Parliament Hill Ltd is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and their register number is 308448. Details can be checked on the Financial Services register by visiting <http://www.fsa.gov.uk/register/home.do> or by phoning the FCA on 0845 111 6768. A fee of up to £60 is built into the premiums charged. Please note that the territorial limits of the policy are worldwide excluding USA and Canada, their Dominions or Protectorates or as varied and excluded in the Schedule. The policy excludes any claim, potential claim or circumstance brought outside of a court within the territories of Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man or Channel Islands including any proceedings to enforce or based on an award from outside such courts. See policy wording for full details. Neither Parliament Hill Ltd nor Trafalgar Risk Management (the insurance intermediary who arrange the insurance) are members of the same group.

Recent CIPFA publications



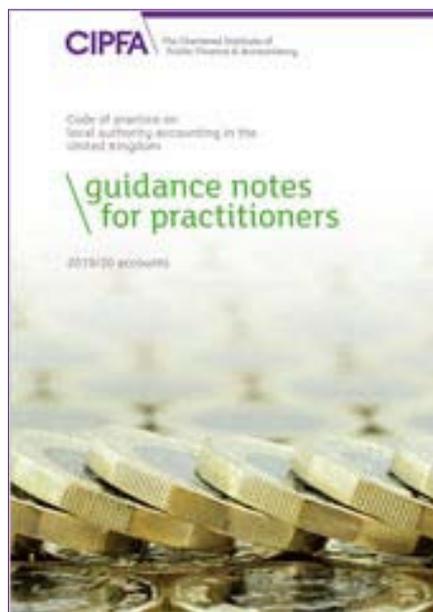
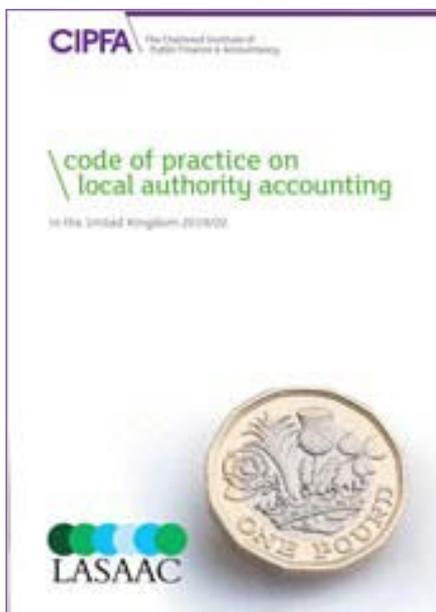
FM Code and the packages available

The tightening fiscal landscape has placed the finances of local authorities under intense pressure. Where finance in local government works well it's because of, and supported by, the principles of good financial management.

While organisations have done much to transform services, shape delivery and streamline costs, for these approaches to be successful it is crucial to have good financial management embedded across the organisation.

CIPFA's Financial Management Code (FM code), published in October 2019, will help assist local authorities to embed statutory responsibilities for sound financial administration.

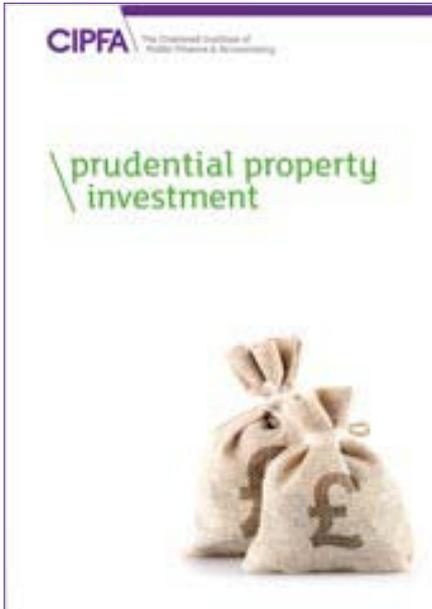
This is backed up by a [choice of packages](#) that will enable practitioners to get the best from the FM Code and help you build sound financial management across your organisation. Packages include the Financial Management Code, Financial Management Code Guidance Notes, a financial management conference and a series of webinars.



Code of Practice + Code Guidance Notes

Local authorities in the United Kingdom are required to keep their accounts in accordance with 'proper (accounting) practices'. Public sector organisations responsible for locally delivered services are required by legislation to comply with the terms of the *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom* (the Code). The [2019/20 edition](#) has been developed by CIPFA/LASAAC and has effect for financial years commencing on or after 1 April 2019.

The [Code of Practice Guidance Notes](#) provide expert support in dealing practically with the preparation of the year-end financial statements and reports that accompany them. The 2019/20 notes have just been published.



Prudential Property Investment

There has been a move towards investments in commercial properties, funded by borrowing, with the key driver appearing to be the generation of revenue. A look at the regulatory landscape casts doubt upon such practices.

The increased scale of investment in property was recognised by revisions to CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance and the Treasury Management Code in 2017 but the growing amounts being borrowed for such a purpose are putting a strain on the creditability of the Prudential Framework and reinforce the need to ensure that such acquisitions are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

In addition to the core issue of borrowing in advance of need, which the Prudential Code has very clear provisions on, [this publication](#) provides guidance on the risk perspective to the practical assessment of prudence and affordability. Those risks could be very difficult to manage. Even when these issues are managed and there is reliance on investment income, a potential failure or a downturn of the property market may have a direct impact upon local services.

This publication considers such issues and the actions local authorities would need to take to mitigate against such risks.

CIPFA Speaks!

CIPFA's new monthly podcast brings together the latest thinking from across the public sector on vital issues facing public finance and policymaking. The first two episodes are [now available on Spotify](#) and [Apple Podcasts](#).

Our latest episode features David Phillips from the Institute for Fiscal Studies on the future shape of local government funding, and Hubert Wu from the Behavioural Insights team on how behavioural science is being used to tackle public sector fraud.

Subscribe and stay tuned for the next episode!



Membership Matters newsletter

Membership Matters is our exclusive newsletter dedicated to providing members with all the latest news, updates and offers.

Every month, we provide a bite-sized summary of CIPFA's most recent developments, service improvements and events from all around the UK and internationally. It features our top picks from across the regions, as well as [exclusive interviews](#) with a diverse range of CIPFA members, who provide insight into their career in public finance as well as advice for fellow members.

It also provides regular reminders of the different types of rewards and benefits you are entitled to as a CIPFA member.

Membership Matters is aiming to provide members with both relevant and informative content, so we would love to hear your feedback on what you would like to see in future issues. If you have any comments or would like to be interviewed for the newsletter, please contact Catherine.Latimer@cipfa.org.

Do you have the write thing?

Do you have the knowledge and desire to write a possible technical best seller? CIPFA is always looking for experts in all aspects of public sector finance including accounting, standards, pensions, audit and governance. Our technical titles provide practitioners with the latest information and practical help to ensure they can carry out their roles effectively.

The books provide an in-depth look at all topics that affect practitioners including interpreting and understanding IFRS standards, producing transparent and effective annual accounts and managing services and contracts.

If you think you can help us with our technical offering or want a chat on what is involved email Rhiannon.Price@cipfa.org. Please include details of any publications you have written in the past and the topic areas you cover. And if you have any ideas for titles we should have in our list we would also love to hear from you.

CSE Student Network wellbeing event

By Lauren Gough, CIPFA South East student

The CSE Student Network ran a wellbeing event in November, where Alex Wakeham gave students tips about emotional intelligence for exams.

The session was half an hour of five useful tips for emotional intelligence which felt very easy to apply. The focus was on behaviours to maximise outcomes, which was very welcome a few weeks before exams.

Since the session we have been practising some of the advice given such as holding ourselves to account with revision plans, checking in on each other's plans, and adjusting our body language to release tension and endorphins.

Using the information shared by Alex, we feel more confident to deal with the emotions and stresses associated with taking exams.

Regional news

Regional Awards 2019

Three awards were presented at the Autumn Forum in Chester, 14-15 November 2019, by Sarah Howard, CIPFA Past President.

The three awards are:

- Innovation of the Year Award, selected via self-assessment submissions
- The Events Programme of the Year
- The Hedley Marshall Award, nominated by members.

Regional Innovation of the Year Award

This award can be for a new service to members or an improvement in internal processes. The region must show it has provided a creative solution and success in implementing the innovation.

The winner is: **South East Region, for their Speed Mentoring Evenings**

It was noted that this initiative responds to requests received from members and students. Two speed mentoring sessions have been held, each attracting over 30 members and at no financial cost to the branch. The social nature of the mentoring facilitated 'creative engagement with mentors and mentees alike' and received good feedback from all those involved.

Further sessions were held at the CIPFA Annual Conference and at the Central Government One-Finance Conference.

The concept is transferable and can be replicated by other regions. It provides a stimulating evening and can be done alongside other meetings and events. The format enables mentoring evenings to be set up with minimal administration.



CIPFA North West President Stephanie Donaldson, along with other members of the region, receiving the Event Programme of the Year Award from Past President Sarah Howard

Event Programme of the Year Award

This award is for a varied programme of events that meets members' needs and helps to raise the profile of CIPFA.

The winner is: **North West Region**

The winner of this award provided a varied and well planned programme of events. The region was split into sub-groups to enable events to be accessible to members spread across the region. An action plan for events is co-ordinated by regional volunteers made up of members and students. The calendar of events is publicised well in advance and includes CPD and sector specific events.

The region stated: "We are constantly striving to develop our programme and this year our focus has been to forge connections with other institutes recognising the shared learning and opportunities for greater collaboration."

Hedley Marshall Memorial Award

This award is given for an outstanding contribution to regional activities. It is awarded to an individual nominated by their peers. Each region can only nominate one person each year.

This year's winner is: **Andy Morley**

The nomination statement points out that he makes a "significant contribution to the region through the regional council and regional activities. He has been the engine room of the council for many years, offering advice and support and delivering strategic success."



The awards presentation

CIPFA South East Region Speed Mentoring



Attendees at the Speed Mentoring event in October 2019

By Tom England, CIPFA SE Regional Council Member

Winning the CIPFA Regional Innovation Award in recognition of our 2019 events, ‘the speed mentoring evening’, was a highlight for our region in November.

The CIPFA South East Speed Mentoring Evening has been running for three years now and in 2019 took place in February and October, both in London. Its format, now spreading in popularity, also featured at the CIPFA National Conference. Each event caters

for about 30 mentors and mentees. The event offers the 15 mentees an opportunity to meet experienced finance professionals from across the public sector through an exciting format where mentees move between mentors stopping for around ten minutes each to ask questions and learn. Each session goes very quickly! And sometimes more permanent relationships can be formed from this.

Our February event was aimed at aspiring finance leaders and was

sponsored by Allen Lane. The October event, organised jointly with the CIPFA South East Student Network, was targeted toward nearly and newly qualified mentees and was hosted by Grant Thornton in their Executive Lounge at Finsbury Square.

We plan to develop speed mentoring further within our region during 2020 and we are happy to offer advice and support to other regions wanting to pilot speed mentoring (see CSE website for contacts).

Putting their stamp on it: CIPFA South East retired members’ group outing

On a rare sunny morning, 17 retired members arrived at Mount Pleasant to visit the Post Office Museum and ride on the mail train. The train runs on a loop, and stops at two stations (Mount Pleasant and Liverpool Street) en route.

We then enjoyed a guided tour around the museum. It started with the Penny Post, and continued the history to the present day. This included the work of the Royal Mail during the two world wars.

After the business of the morning, we adjourned to the Apple Tree for a buffet lunch. It was decided to visit a monastery in Clerkenwell in the spring.

CIPFA South East summer school

CIPFA SE has been running a residential course, or summer school, at the University of Reading for over 60 years. Originally a weekend course for experienced professionals to keep their knowledge current, build their networks and share experience and best practice with members at an earlier stage of their studies or careers, the event now runs Thursday evening to Saturday morning, achieving maximum exposure to content with only one day out of the office. The course is wholly volunteer run and heavily subsidised by sponsors, with a high quality programme covering a broad range of financial and general management themes.

The event is distinctive for its focus on building networks and professional

resilience and for the unique group exercises, allowing teams to develop presentation and public speaking skills in a challenging but entertaining and supportive context. The residential format allows delegates to spend meaningful amounts of time discussing best practice and building connections both in the formal sessions and during the social events.

Many previous participants hold great affection for the course, but the organising committee needs to increase numbers for 2020 and so is seeking feedback and views on format. Please email REGSEA.Events@cipfa.org if you'd like to take part in our survey.



The dining hall



The University of Reading campus buildings

CIPFA SE Region’s events round up for this autumn and winter

Autumn saw our local CPD (regional hub) groups meet in Newmarket, Horsham, London, Oxford and Uckfield. Topical issues and the themes brought to these local groups around our region included financial resilience and the FM Code, commercial investment risk, financial implications of climate emergency declarations, ethical investment and diversifying treasury management strategies, the CIPFA 2020 project consultations and, of course, Brexit.

Our Annual Dinner at the London Marriott Hotel, Grosvenor Square was enjoyed by almost 200 guests. We celebrate our regional successes and thank our sponsors. Certificate presentations to newly qualified regional members were made by Sarah Howard (CIPFA Past President, who this year oversees regional activity). Sarah also presented Amy Crowson, CIPFA SE Regional President, with the 2019 Regional Innovation Award for Speed Mentoring. Our annual dinner raffle raised over £900 for Macmillan Cancer

Support, Amy’s nominated charity. Jonny Zero’s lively disco rounded off the evening for the more energetic guests and bar and table networking until midnight all made for another successful evening.

As winter beckons, our Regional Council is planning for 2020 – so watch out for news locally of a CPD event near to you (our local hub groups). Our Kent (22 January) and Wessex (12 March) conference dates are already confirmed. Our London Division Spring Seminar is booked for 6 March. Public Finance Live 2020 will be taking place in London on 8/9 July and CIPFA SE will be the regional hosts.

Our 2020 Regional AGM and Spring Conference will be held on 20 April, hosted by Grant Thornton at 30 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1AG. Details of that – and of opportunities to join our regional volunteer groups – will be on the CIPFA SE website early in the New Year.



CIPFA South East Annual Dinner

Flying high: CIPFA Wales retired members’ group outing

Retired members from the South Wales area visited the Children’s Wales Air Ambulance base at Cardiff Bay accompanied by Rebecca Nelson, President of CIPFA Wales Regional Branch. Rebecca also gave an update on the forthcoming activities to be held in the region.

Please contact Arthur Thomas for details of events being organised for the Retired Members Group for the South Wales Area.



CIPFA Wales retired members

CIPFA Cymru-Wales Annual Conference and Awards Dinner

The CIPFA Cymru-Wales annual conference was held on 21 November 2019 at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Cardiff. It was intended to give delegates the opportunity to hear from other sectors than their own and to forge links across health, local and central government.

The conference was opened by Rebecca Nelson, CIPFA Cymru-Wales President, and a range of high profile speakers covered topics relevant to finance professionals in Wales.

We were pleased to welcome the Welsh First Minister, Mark Drakeford, whose keynote address focused on the issues facing the country and his Welsh Government. In particular, that the Welsh Government budget, due to be announced on 16 December, would unfortunately (but understandably given the national government circumstances) only cover one year.

Adrian Crompton, the Auditor General for Wales, spoke about the need to restore trust in public services, and Dr Chris Jones, Chair of Health Education and Improvement Wales, provided his thoughts on the future impact of technologies on models of care and how this will change workforce planning and training as professionals prepare for the future.

A video presentation by Sophie Howe, Future Generations Commission for Wales, highlighted what needed to be done to safeguard the future, and Rebecca Richards, Director of the NHS Finance Academy provided an update on how the Academy was responding to feedback from finance professionals, that they felt undervalued and underdeveloped.

Brian Roberts, the Finance Commissioner appointed at Northamptonshire County Council,



Rebecca Nelson, CIPFA Cymru-Wales President, welcomes delegates

provided a frank talk on the ‘true story’ of the council’s problems, highlighting that CIPFA’s Financial Management Code and the development of Financial Resilience Indices will go a long way to recognising the signs of potential failures in the future.

Rebecca David-Knight, from the Centre for Public Scrutiny, highlighted the transformational effect that good scrutiny can have, provided it is useful, credible and valid, and Graham Atkins from the Institute for Government explained how the Institute worked with CIPFA each year to assess how government is performing.

The Conference was followed by an Awards Dinner where the after dinner speaker was Lowri Morgan. She is a television presenter, marathon runner and endurance athlete and spoke passionately about how she overcame her fears following a rugby career ending injury, to being able to conquer both an Amazon ultramarathon and a 350 mile arctic marathon. A truly amazing story!

This year’s awards were:

- NHS Wales Academy Programme team – the public finance team of the year
- Nathan Jones – rising star of the year
- Lynn Pamment – public finance professional of the year.

Events

EXCEL ONLINE – NEW TRAINING COURSE WITH AN EXCLUSIVE 50% DISCOUNT FOR MEMBERS

This new training course offers a personalised training programme tailored to your specific learning needs. Whether you're a complete beginner or an advanced learner, the adaptive teaching method enables you to progress through the topic areas at your own pace.

The course is available at two levels:

Microsoft Excel

- 60 modules of training
- 100+ videos and over 80 downloadable exercises
- Microsoft Excel certificate awarded once you've completed the course.

Microsoft Advanced Excel

- 120+ modules of training, covering the most business-relevant areas of Microsoft Excel
- 90+ videos and over 50 downloadable exercises
- Advanced Microsoft Excel certificate awarded once you've completed the course.

Excel Online is delivered via Filtered, a leading provider of personalised and intelligent learning.

To ensure that you uptake the training course at the appropriate level, the flexible platform allows you to formulate customised training modules most relevant to your level and learning goals.

What's more, we're offering CIPFA members and students a 50% discount for the 12-month subscription. For more details visit: www.cipfa.org/excelonline

HOUSING SYMPOSIUM 2020 – OPENING DOORS

23 January, London

Opening Doors: Strategies for Homes and Sustainable Tenancies beyond 2020

CIPFA's Housing Symposium 2020 looks at how those in need are able to access suitable housing and the funding challenges behind this goal. The event will address housing policy developments with insight from housing experts, leading edge research and the latest ideas and research into housing.

With a range of quality expert speakers and housing topics the day promises to inspire and to inform.

PUBLIC FINANCE LIVE 2020

8–9 July, QEII London – booking now open

Public Finance Live returns for 2020, bringing you the latest in public finance initiatives, insights and solutions. Join thought leaders, leading political figures, economists, financial innovators and commercial partners to develop blueprints for better outcomes and a sustainable public services and economy.

Welcoming over 700 delegates to the QEII Centre, London, this year's event will offer a variety of focused content streams for you to tailor the conference to your own personal needs and interest.

More upcoming events in 2020

- Pensions Actuarial Summit, 7 February
- Treasury Management Conference, 11 March
- Public Finance Live Scotland, 19-20 March, Glasgow Radisson Blu
- Finance Conference 1 May
- Summer Internal Audit Update, 1 June
- Understanding LA Accounts for Councillors, June

Who's who at CIPFA

Use this mini-directory to find the right people to contact at CIPFA about a specific area of our work. Where no direct line is provided, call our contact centre on +44 (0)20 7543 5600 and ask for the relevant person.

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