**Society of District Council Treasurers**

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Executive Committee –**

**Held on 23rd November 2018**

**SDCT Website:** [**www.cipfa.org/partners/society-of-district-council-treasurers**](http://www.cipfa.org/partners/society-of-district-council-treasurers)

**NB: This meeting was held as a closed meeting for the purpose of concentrating on Business Rates Retention and Fair Funding specifically in relation to District Councils.**

**In Attendance**: Jill Penn (President), Simone Hines (Vice President), Angela George (Secretary), Steve Hearse, Paul Deal, Simon Freeman, Mark Dickenson, Jo Wagstaffe, Adrian Rowbotham, Sal Khan (dial in), Jenny Poole (dial in).

**Also:** Nicola Morton (LGA), Matthew Hamilton and Matthew Fernandez Graham (DCEN), Leon Clement, Stuart Hoggan, Anne Stuart, Tahmina Adan, Hannah Tindale (MHCLG)

1. **Apologies**: Ian Knowles, Simon Riley, Homira Javadi, Shelagh McGregor, Peter Stuart, Alan Peach, Jason Vaughan
2. **Minutes of Previous Meetings and matters arising**

The draft minutes of the previous meeting of 19th October 2018 were agreed (*on the SDCT website*). There were no specific issues arising.

**PART A**

1. **Business Rate Retention**

Leon Clement (MHCLG) stated that he would use the meeting to test the key messages in the BRR consultation document. He outlined each of the key areas set out in a presentation (presentation awaited) and the Executive/ LGA and DCEN gave their views on each area. There was a wide ranging discussion on the issues.

It was noted that the Steering group meeting originally scheduled for the following week had been cancelled and the next meeting was scheduled for 29th January 2019. There are no meetings of the Systems Design and Fair Funding Review Working Groups whilst MHCLG concentrate on getting the consultation documents issued.

It is anticipated that the consultation of BRR will be issued on 6th Dec alongside the Provisional Financial Settlement, and will run for a ‘number’ of weeks.

**POSTSCRIPT – The Provisional Financial settlement and consultations have been delayed due to the Brexit vote. Finally received on 13th December.**

1. **Fair Funding**

Stuart Hoggan outlined the key content of the consultation document that will be issued on the Fair Funding review. He stressed to the Executive that the discussions in this meeting would be too late to influence the planned consultation document.

It is anticipated that the consultation may be issued on 6th Dec (**POSTSCRIPT – subsequently delayed due to Brexit vote until 13th December)** and will run for a ’number’ of weeks. It will set out the Government’s proposed approach to a foundation formula based on population and area cost adjustment including sparsity and density. It was noted by the Executive that Deprivation appears not to feature. The consultation will also set out which services may have a service specific formula, approaches to council tax equalisation, and seek views on the principles of transition.

The outline timescale is that a further consultation will run in the late spring and over the summer, with a provisional settlement for 20/21 next autumn.

The MHCLG will attend the SDCT AGM on **7th January** to enable the wider membership to ask direct questions of the consultation documents specifically as they relate to Districts.

It was noted that the LGA and MHCLG are planning to hold regional events on the system design and Fair Funding Review consultations after they are published

**PART B**

1. **Executive issues**

It was agreed that the SDCT would require additional technical and in depth financial analysis support in a number of areas and Jill agreed to progress this.

**Action - Jill**

A conference call will be arranged for 12th December once the consultation documents have been received as the timescale for response to the consultations is expected to be tight.

**Action - Jo to organise. POSTSCRIPT – Subsequently delayed due to delay publishing the documents and will be rearranged.**

It was agreed that the SDCT and DCEN would collaborate on the consultation response as far as possible and were likely to have the same key principles in common whilst the focus of the specific detail of the individual responses might necessarily differ.

**Communication of issues with Wider Membership**

The MHCLG will attend the SDCT AGM on 7th January when the wider membership will be able to ask specific questions relating to Districts.

1. **Dates of Next Meetings:**

* A conference call will be arranged for the Executive to discuss the detail of the consultation documents issued on 13th December.
* **The SDCT AGM will be held on 7th January 2019.**
* The 2019 timetable of dates has been circulated with the first meeting of the Executive scheduled for **8th March**. Because the timetable of decision making in relation to BRR and FF is not clear, special meetings may need to be arranged as appropriate.