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|  | | | **CIPFA North East** |
|  | | | President: Judith Savage |
|  | | | Vice President: Jim Dafter |
|  | | | Treasurer: Matt Calvert |
|  | | | Secretary: James Charlton (Acting) |
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| minutes | | |  |
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| Meeting: | | CIPFA North East Executive | |
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| Date and time: | | 23 January 2018 | |
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| Venue: | | Newcastle Civic Centre | |
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| Executive present: | | Judith Savage (President), Jim Dafter (Vice President), Matt Calvert (Treasurer), Laura Burbridge, James Charlton, Katy Laing, Peter Sullivan (Website and Social Media), Angela Waring, Tracy Wood | |
| Also present: | | Dan West (CIPFA) | |
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| **1** | **Apologies for absence** | | | |  |
|  | Michael Brodie, Jane Cuthbertson, Helen Dalby, David Jobson, Clive Johnson, Patrick Melia, Bruce Parvin | | | |  |
| **2** | **Minutes of meeting of 08 November** | | | |  |
|  | JS dialled in for the start of the meeting to give an update on the RDP – this has now been approved and with it additional funding (£2k) to provide paid support with event planning, data analysis etc. We now need to agree how this will be utilised, i.e. what do we need and how do we go about getting it? Rather than employing someone directly for a couple of hours a week it may be more appropriate to pay for this resource from one of our own organisations.  ACTION – JS to forward the email confirming RDP and funding approval - exec members to think of where we can add value by using this additional resource. Deadline of 1 week to feedback to JS on this.  TW queried whether the events feedback template mentioned in the minutes had been produced. PS confirmed that a feedback form was handed out at the conference in December and therefore would be the basis of the template.  Actions from the previous meeting were discussed and those still outstanding are included in the list of actions in Appendix A.  The minutes were agreed as a true record. | | | |  |
| **3** | **CIPFA Update** | | | |  |
|  | DW gave an update from CIPFA, noting that there had been a big change in the organisation following a string of redundancies in December. A notable difference being performance targets have now been stripped back to more sensible levels, as previously these were too optimistic and were not being achieved.  DW would like to set up regional courses / workshops, e.g. on commercialisation, but needs the Exec’s support in identifying the appetite in the region. The minimum attendees required for CIPFA to run these qualifications locally is 6 or 7. It is noted that having the courses run locally would save time and money for employers, i.e. the alternative being people travelling down to London for the course. DW to contact Exec members individually to discuss with respect to their organisations.  TW asked whether CIPFA offer products tailored for NHS based members, noting there are CIPFA members in a diverse range of finance roles operating in the public sector, that are outside of Local Government. The NHS has made steps towards becoming more commercial but this is being driven by people within the NHS rather than CIPFA.  DW acknowledged that typically CIPFA has not offered much in respect of services tailored to the NHS, however the plan is to engage more with different public sector bodies. DW is challenging CIPFA on its engagement with regions, and acknowledges the importance of attending regional meetings and feeding back to CIPFA.  PS suggested reinvigorating links with HFMA, which DW noted are keen to work with CIPFA, as demonstrated by a recent joint event in the Yorkshire & Humber region.  TW suggested someone from HFMA had previously indicated they would like to get involved with CIPFA NE. PS highlighted that about 3 or 4 years ago we held several events in the year which required very little input from the Exec as they were joint events in which the partner was happy to take the lead in organising.  ACTION – DW to provide HFMA contact details to TW to enquire about potential joint events. | | | |  |
| **4** | **Feedback from CIPFA NE Conference 2017** | | | |  |
|  | All agreed the 2017 conference was our best yet and received very positive feedback. MC also confirmed the conference made a surplus of £2k.  One of the points in the feedback received suggested holding the conference further south of the region. It was discussed and agreed that the Sage works well as a venue for this event but opportunities to hold other events in the south of the region are welcome.  In terms of the lunch at the conference, it was noted that having to stand up whilst eating soup was perhaps a barrier to networking and therefore it was proposed there would be scope to improve the lunch offering at the next conference.  DW attended the conference dinner and noted that Andy Burns, CIPFA President and chair of this year’s conference, said this was the best conference he had been to in his presidential year.  Special thanks to Jane for organising yet another fantastic conference. | | | |  |
| **5** | **Volunteer Recruitment** | | | |  |
|  | It was noted from the 2017 conference feedback that 2 people had expressed an interest in volunteering with CIPFA. JD confirmed that he and JS will be in contact with them to discuss.  In terms of how to attract more volunteers AW suggested a named contact in the room at events for potential volunteers to speak to. LB suggested more information should be available to members on what volunteering involves, and it was noted that there are various levels of commitment and that not all volunteers would be expected to attend all meetings / events.  DW proposed that an email could be sent out to all members a couple of weeks prior to each exec meeting, asking whether members would like to raise anything for discussion at the meeting.  JCh raised an issue around sending emails to the membership via Mailchimp in which the percentage of recipients that open the emails only average between 25% and 30%, possibly due to these emails being treated as spam.  It was raised that in order to recruit volunteers to the exec we need to establish what we need, i.e. a skills audit. It was therefore suggested that each exec member produces a short bio of themselves which may also go on the website.  ACTION – ALL – send 1 paragraph bio to JCh so these can be collated and put on the website. | | | |  |
| **6** | **CIPFA North East Events 2018 (AW)** | | | |  |
|  | It was recognised that the events bookmark produced by AW looks fantastic. AW noted that due to its size it was treated as a leaflet and therefore no VAT was charged. As a side, MC reminded exec members wherever possible to obtain a VAT receipt / invoice to ensure costs are minimised.  Student meet and greet – LB gave an update on the student meet and greet event which was initially planned for 22nd Feb, but following a CIPFA Student Network (CSN) meeting earlier in the month it was proposed that this should be changed to the 3rd March. The CSN released a schedule of dates for potential student new starter events across the country, to coincide with college course dates, and with the aim of getting sponsors (e.g. Penna) to organise these events and provide a speaker to talk to students. It therefore makes sense to combine this potential sponsor led student event with our meet and greet event. There is currently nothing confirmed however.  ACTION – JCh to contact the CSN President for an update and confirmation of student new starter event.  6th Form Management Games – AW gave an update on the 6th form management games which are being held on 9th and 16th March; recruitment is going well but we currently need about 5 more volunteers. There are also a few more schools needed which DJ is organising.  ACTION – PS to post another social media call for volunteers for the 6th form games.    Professional update day & AGM – LB had brilliant idea of starting earlier than usual to accommodate a PEP session for students in the morning. Aga from Student Support has agreed to give an update on the online PEP system and the Strategic Case Study exam going online in 2019. Timing of the morning session expected to be 10:30 to 12:00. A venue has not yet been confirmed due to difficulties identifying a suitable venue in the Durham area however AW proposed we return to Gateshead Civic as it is free of charge and accessible.  As a side, regarding holding events in the southern part of the region, LB asked whether we could include a question on event feedback forms asking for suggestions for venues in the south of the region.  AW – including the PEP / SCS session, the Professional Update Day will be an all-day event with qualified members likely to arrive at lunch time.  Still need to confirm speakers – TW has been liaising with a colleague in the NHS for a fraud session and AW has been trying to confirm with the contact at CIPFA for an ethics session – DW however confirmed this person is no longer at CIPFA. KL suggested contacting the people who provided a soft skills session a couple of years ago. AW liked the idea of a personal branding session, i.e. how you can stand out when applying for jobs etc.  It was queried whether we would be able to pay fees for speakers and if so how much would we be willing / able to pay? The consensus is that we would normally cover expenses only.  MC mentioned that Mark Davies from the CCLA (met at Autumn Forum in Edinburgh) is keen to sponsor an event on treasury management, and this would likely suit the June CPD event.  As a side, MC requested that we have a standing item on the agenda for sponsorships to ensure we keep on top of sponsorship income. This was noted and will be added to the agenda.    Annual dinner – BP provided an update by email confirming this was in hand for 27th April. It was expressed that support is available from the events committee if BP ever requires any assistance with organising the annual dinner. JD also confirmed that Mazars will sponsor this year’s dinner.  2018 Conference – AW and events committee to organise 2018 conference, need suggestions for theme and speakers.  ACTION – all – suggestions for a theme and speakers for 2018 conference to AW in 1 week.  Sarah Howard will be the CIPFA President in 2018 and has agreed to chair the conference in November (note, has been moved forward to 23rd Nov). JC is confirming with the Sage that we can use the venue on this date. AW waiting to hear back on Rob Whiteman’s (CIPFA CEO) availability for the day.  Re Conference dinner – invitations to the dinner were discussed, i.e. should this be opened up to the membership? The consensus was no, as we don’t wish to draw people away from the annual dinner in April. It was noted that the LA7 DoF’s were invited to the conference / dinner in 2017 and PW coordinated responses.  LB asked if we are able to find out when college dates are scheduled so we can plan events that don’t clash with college / exams for students? Nicola Campbell at CETC should be able to answer this.    ACTION – LB to contact CETC to determine whether our regional events diary can be taken in to account when planning face to face courses in the North East.  MC noted that as a region we don’t have much in way of merchandise or a plan for getting merchandise, and this was raised in the RDP. Could we keep a stock of items and top up as and when needed? | | | |  |
| **7** | **Website and Social Media Update (PS)** | | | |  |
|  | DW asked is there any way we can have a link on the website for people to express an interest in an event and we are then notified of this. PS to check feasibility. LB also asked whether we can link events to Facebook events, i.e. so people can confirm attendance on Facebook. PS advised this may be an issue for paid events but will look into.  ACTION – PS to explore feasibility of including a link on the website for people to express interest in an event that generates a notification to us, and also consider Facebook events as an option.  Conference slides and write up along with photos from the day are up on the website. Additionally a write up was provided for the Spreadsheet publication.  Dates for 2018 events have been added to the website. Exec members to let PS know as soon as any event is ready for booking and he will update the website info.  Action regarding the older info on the website – this is not in the way of anything and therefore not urgent to take down but will be reviewed at some point.  Internal Audit sub-group – PS asks if anything is happening with this. PB was looking into this but no update as yet.  LinkedIn have changed how they are presenting groups – previously you had to go into the group to see posts – now however they will appear in your newsfeed. PS to continue to share posts via personal account however. | | | |  |
| **8** | **Financial Update (MC)** | | | |  |
|  | The draft 2017 accounts were presented by MC which shows a surplus for the year of £3.5k increasing the reserves to £22k. It was noted that expenditure was less than the previous year partly due to lower costs for the CIPFA annual conference. MC asked exec members to notify him of any other expenditure which has not yet been accounted for.  Outstanding debtors invoices with CIPFA HQ continues to be an issue, with the balance owed now being £7.8k. DW suggested cashflow had been an issue at CIPFA recently however due to the recent changes there should be an improvement. It was discussed whether invoicing for events should be brought back in-house rather than using CIPFA’s online booking, due to issues receiving the cash from HQ.  ACTION – DW to chase up outstanding invoices with finance team.  MC also asked for contact details regarding the annual dinner income from Engie.  ACTION – JD to find Engie contact information for MC.  MC confirmed he will arrange for someone to audit the accounts.  In a previous exec meeting JD confirmed he would review and revise the current constitution as they were several years old. This is almost completed, subject to some queries for MC, and confirmation with JS. The updated constitution will then be brought to the AGM in March.  ACTION – JD to finalise constitution amendments and bring to AGM. | | | |  |
| **9** | **Student Update (LB/JCh)** | | | |  |
|  | The student update was largely covered under events.  LB noted that the venue for face to face courses in Newcastle has changed from Kaplan to BPP Professional Education but students had not been made aware of this. It was identified by one of the students who noticed a subtle change on the list of course dates on the website.  LB also asked if we could find out how many students are needed to run a face to face course. JCh recalled that Nicola Campbell from CETC had previously stated between 10 and 12, though DW believed the actual minimum requirement may be less than this.  MC noted that we need to understand what the costs / issues are for CIPFA in putting on face to face classes and then we may be able to support.  ACTION – DW to find out more information on how face to face courses are planned in the North East and whether there is anything the exec can do to assist.  DJ asked in an email prior to the meeting if we could ask CIPFA to contact known students in the region who will be sitting the case study exam in June to determine the interest in a Pizza and Preseen event. The thought being the earlier this is communicated to students and interest is known the sooner we can plan the event.  ACTION – JCh to email Aga at Student Support to request an email to students in the North East about the Preseen event to identify potential interest. | | | |  |
| **10** | **Any other business** | | | |  |
|  | Regarding the AGM; PS noted that we should ask exec members if they wish to continue with their roles rather than assuming so.  It was noted the David Clarke award nominations deadline is 31st March.  MC – any comments on the draft accounts / additions to the narrative, further statistics etc. to let MC know ASAP.  Eleanor passes on her thanks to the Exec for the card and presents. | | | |  |
| **11** | **Date and time of next meeting** | | | |  |
|  | Wednesday 14th March 2018 5pm, Gateshead Civic Centre | | | |  |