

CIPFA in the North West – Sept 2018

Institute Council Member – Shaer Halewood



Well hello Autumn at last. Now don't get me wrong, I love the sun and what a summer that was, but I miss my (fake) furry hooded things and sheepskin boots. Maybe not the attire one expects of a National Council Member granted, but I'm displaying authenticity, and that's very important for this month's blog.

Since the structures at HQ were split between the Council and the Board (more to come on this next time) Council have a wider role to play in setting the strategy for CIPFA and the agenda for today paid particular focus to this. Sarah Howard opened the meeting and Rob Whiteman kicked off with his usual update of main activities during the summer relating to:

- UK Financial Management Code being drafted with consultation in early 2019
- 180 responses received to the consultation on the financial resilience index
- Streamlining the accounts project reaches its first milestone with the development of practical guidance
- International CIPFA representation continues to raise the profile of public services across the globe
- New grant funding model on course to be completed by early October for FAS subscribers

We then went into a workshop session about the CIPFA 2019 Business Plan led by Interim COO Dan Worsley. This was a really good session and enabled us to consider and comment on the four main objectives in the business plan. Dan took us through how CIPFA plan to operate over the next 12 months through a new streamlined and focused model and asked for our contributions to feed into the ongoing development of the plan.

So back to the 'authentic' comment – one of the comments from the floor was about 'bringing your whole self to work' I've heard this used a lot and it sparked some curious debate about which bit of yourself you leave behind! But it's about being authentic and not being a different person for different circumstances. I feel this is really important and something I would go back and tell my younger self as I've definitely learnt from this. So, will you see me on the webcam at my work Council meetings in Ugg boots and a hoodie? Ok maybe I can actually wear different clothes and still be authentic 😊 The CIPFA Business plan will be available next year once finalised.

Maybe it's because I've found my feet at Council now or whether it's because our set up seems less formal but I really enjoy being able to offer a perspective in shaping how CIPFA goes forward to support and promote excellent public service financial management.

Next up was Ethics and the conclusion of two years work by the Ethics Working Group (EWG), of which I am a member. Council agreed to adopt the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants Code of Ethics (IESBA Code) as CIPFA's Statement of Professional Practice (SOPP). You will hopefully have seen the outcome of the ethics survey in Public Finance, <https://www.publicfinance.co.uk/news/2018/06/biggest-ever-ethics-survey-cipfa-first>

which was very stark and quite worrying – Rob Whiteman said that he receives quite a few phone calls on a weekly basis asking for advice about situations where FDs have been put under pressure to act unethically. It's a disturbing thought that so many are in this situation. There is still lots of work to do on the EWG – updating the website, promoting the help and support available, encouraging members to tell their stories so we can publish case studies and making sure the subject receives a continually high profile by speaking at events and publicising it on social media. We also need to support members to feel that they can speak up and not have to suffer on their own.

The penultimate session was to hear feedback on the survey of Members as to how they feel about CIPFA and whether it offers them what they need. The feedback was generally positive but there are always areas that can be improved. An action plan has been produced and we will all start to see the output from this over the coming 12 months. The responses from the feedback and the actions will be published in Spreadsheet soon.

The final session was about National Conference and the feedback from July which was good. I think we all benefited from being beside the seaside (except if you left your bag on the train – ref July blog). Next year's conference is in Birmingham's ICC on Tues/Weds 9 & 10 July. My brother lives down Peaky Blinders way so it'll be a good reason to go on the weekend and have a good old fambo catch up



And finally.....

So this happened over the summer, I thought I wasn't public servicey enough so I thought I'd join the police in my spare time.

Well ok, I just went to the Police Museum in Manchester (which I would highly recommend by the way) and they let me dress up #child

Shaer

Our regional webpages are:

Twitter – search twitter.com/CIPFANW

LinkedIn – search for the Group CIPFA North West

Facebook – search for the Group CIPFA North West

CIPFA Website - <http://www.cipfa.org/members/regions/north-west>