

Alternative Service Delivery Network
(CASDN)

Your network membership

2023/24

The network offer

Background

The CIPFA Alternative Service Delivery Network (CASDN) supports organisations and practitioners get to grips with the shift in the role and operating landscape of public sector organisations. With continuous fiscal constraints, demographic changes and citizen's rising service expectations, public services are increasingly being delivered through new and innovative delivery models:

- trading companies
- limited liability partnerships
- joint ventures, and
- public private partnerships

This is the case on both the “upstream” supply chain / supply of public services / supply of commercial services and the “downstream” supply chain where the public body is procuring from the private sector / voluntary sector / other public bodies / its own trading companies. Therefore, we see a link with the CIPFA Procurement and Commissioning Network, with whom we work closely.

What the network enables you to do

The increasing scale of commercial activity requires a major step-change in how practitioners carry out their day-to-day tasks and makes a pressing need for greater commercial and business-minded skills, governance and culture. This calls for expert guidance and support from a trusted partner like CIPFA.

It is now critical for public sector practitioners to develop new skills that allow them to generate innovative thinking, identify and implement better and more efficient ways of working compared to traditional models. All available opportunities need be unlocked that can help generate new income flows, which enable organisations to diversify and become less dependent on diminishing central government grants.

CASDN also supports new entities outside of the traditional public sector community which have been set up. We will combine our excellent public sector track record and draw upon support from leading private sector specialists to provide on-going guidance to nurture and help these organisations on their journey to become profitable. This massive transformational change is taking public sector organisations into uncharted and unfamiliar territory. Any incorrect step can lead to serious reputational and financial risks for the organisation as well as the potential to expose individuals to serious personal liability. The CASDN will help you navigate through these complexities with expert advice and support.

The CASDN will consider alternative service delivery models across their lifecycle, considering set up / implementation, operations and exit / expiry. This will include drawing on well-developed thinking on PPP / PFI exit / expiry.

The CASDN will draw on long standing guidance, tools and techniques, including CIPFA's Council Owned Companies guidance. Here, historically our focus has been to support Councils (and wider public bodies) consider the set up of Companies (whether trading companies, limited liability partnerships or joint ventures), ensuring that appropriate financial management, financial reporting, governance and commercial arrangements are in place at the Council for success. Given the profile and risk profile of Council Companies there is growing interest in ensuring that there are appropriate ongoing arrangements both at the Council (wider public bodies) and within the Council Companies.

Also, the CASDN draw on HM Treasury's business case approach which can underpin decision making, HM Treasury's joint venture guidance and best practice public private partnership (PPP) guidance. We will share historic and live case studies, including alternative service delivery models where there are lessons to learn. We will aim to explain and use a series of simple concepts in a consistent manner, including choices around "build, buy, borrow"; input, output and outcomes-based contracting; entity structures vs contractual structures – and a combination of both; choices around transform then transition (spin out) vs transition and then transform; supply chain relationships (e.g., confrontation; cooperation; collaboration; and alliancing) and the link to contractual structures.

The CASDN will involve and benefit all parts of public services and the supply chain. Also, a wide range of professions, including finance, commercial and legal as well as wider management and programme / project management. The CASDN / use of alternative service delivery models can be relevant to the full range of public services, including well established services. These alternative service delivery models are also relevant to new / developing areas of operations, for examples activities related to "Net Zero" and / or "Levelling Up". The CASDN will partner up with a range of other memberships organisation / think tanks / other commentators on alternative service delivery models to leverage the best member offer.

Features and Benefits

See below further information on the feature and benefits of the CASDN.

Programme of thought leadership and events

Through 2023 we plan to publish some form of thought leadership and run related / standalone events on a monthly basis. Please find below the current programme of thought leadership and events:

How to join?



If you would like further information about the benefits of subscribing to the CASDN, please contact Mark.Williams@cipfa.org who will be delighted to assist you.

Joining the CASDN

If you are interested in joining CASDN or have any questions, please email cipfanetworks@cipfa.org or call CIPFA on 020 7543 5600 and we can provide a quote based on your required level of membership.

Features and benefits

- Attendance at a wide selection of topical events (workshops, webinars and summit's) using pre-paid places at regional venues, as well as open training courses for this network
- Technical support and guidance on alternative service delivery arrangements from expert advisors and commercial managers who can respond to requests from subscribers either by e-mail or phone
- Timely updates on relevant new ways of working giving you all the facts at your fingertips, and information on how these will affect your job role, service delivery and your wider authority
- Opportunities for networking, career development and CPD
- Sharing of knowledge and best practice with peers to create an environment where key alternative service delivery arrangements can be debated and addressed
- Exclusive website access – <https://www.cipfa.org/services/networks/alternative-service-delivery-network> the websites contain a wealth of published information including regular briefings, newsletters and updates, as well as current and past event presentation materials (including webinar recordings) to allow you to engage with colleagues and members in your area and share best practice
- Regular newsletter to keep you updated on the latest alternative service delivery issues affecting your area of activity
- Discounts off any CIPFA Essentials training events run by other CIPFA Networks
- Access to other network events when bought under a corporate membership arrangement.

What our members say



“The event was well pitched, and I felt relevant to someone like myself who was on a bit of a fact-finding mission. The event itself was very well organised and provided a good opportunity to network with other local authorities.”



“As always, a well organised and presented event, excellent speakers and content. These webinars are way above that of other professional organisations. The subjects are timely – moving to the pace of change within the public sector and other organisations.”

Programme of thought leadership and events

Our planned events below are complemented by thought leadership, guidance alerts and briefings, newsletters and dedicated advisor support for practitioners in subscribing organisations. Pre-paid places can be used to attend any events set out in this service plan. Places will be pro-rated for half day and 1 to 2-hour bitesize events.

New events may be added during the year and details of these, along with options for use of pre-paid places, will be confirmed as part of the event promotion materials, CASDN newsletters and alerts.



31 January 2023 (14:00-16:00)

Prudential Borrowing and Commercial (Alternative Service Delivery) Models – guidance and bitesize event

There have been recent changes to the Prudential Borrowing Code and wider guidance. It is anticipated there may be further revisions. This event will consider the practical implications for Authorities drawing on recent project experience.



21 March 2023 (10:00-12:00)

PFI Expiry – thought leadership and bitesize event

PFI (as a subset of wider PPPs) represent an important alternative service delivery model, with over 700 PFIs set up. A growing number of these PFIs are reaching the end of their contract term. We will offer practical guidance on expiry and on follow-on arrangements.



24 May 2023 (14:00-16:00)

Alternative service delivery models for net zero and levelling up – thought leadership and bitesize event

Delivery of net zero and levelling up policies will require the consideration of alternative service delivery models. In this thought leadership we will focus on a series of case studies and practical lessons learnt.



July 2023

Getting your governance in order with Corporate Vehicles, including the roles of Directors – thought leadership and bitesize event

The event will cover governance considerations when setting up and then operating alternative service delivery arrangements including corporate vehicles/companies. It links to the November bitesize event which will cover roles and responsibilities of directors and builds on the Council owned company event.



September 2023

Use of HM Treasury’s better business case approach for decision making – thought leadership and half day event

HM Treasury’s well-established approach provides a decision-making framework which stakeholders work through in a structure, staged manner. Decisions around alternative service delivery models can represent some of the more complex and are potential contentious.



November 2023

Alternative service delivery models – annual summary – thought leadership and half day event

This event will summarise the CASDN activities in the last year, with a wide range of presentations. It will provide an opportunity for network members to share insights. Also, it will support planning for 2024.

Full details of these events will be available at www.cipfa.org/events or contact one of the advisors for further details.

Further support

On-site delivery

Most CASDN workshops are available as an on-site delivery or tailored webinar. Contact us for more information.

CIPFA Essentials

Our 'Introduction to ...' Essential's programme is designed to help support those who may be new to the sector, or perhaps working in a new role, and may also benefit non-finance staff and elected Members. These interactive workshops are a great way to help develop knowledge and awareness of a specific service area and are proving increasingly popular with staff development programmes.

Specialist support

The CASDN can offer public sector organisations peer to peer support, tax support and commercial sense reviews.

Please contact Mark.Williams@cipfa.org for further information

CIPFA Advisory

As both financial management and public sector experts, our advisory team will listen to your issues and develop the tailored financial management and governance solutions your organisation needs.

Through our work, we will provide an independent assessment of your current financial and future position at both an organisational and service delivery level. This not only relates to financial resilience and stability but also the governance, systems and processes required for the operational delivery of a robust finance environment.

CIPFA Property

Whether working with the sector through our consultancy offering, building surveys, property, highways and housing networks, or in the delivery of our acclaimed and sector-specific training courses, CIPFA Property is an industry leader. At our core, we are committed to ensuring the delivery of value for money outcomes with all decisions being seen through the primary lens of environmental sustainability and added social value.

Our networks


Looking for more support from our networks?

We offer a number of other networks across a range of topics. We also offer corporate subscriptions for your organisation allowing you and your colleagues to access events and support across multiple CIPFA networks according to your needs.

For any other network enquiries, or for details about our corporate network support package, please email cipfanetworks@cipfa.org or call CIPFA on 020 7543 5600.

Our current networks are:

- Alternative Service Delivery Network
- Better Governance Forum
- Benefits and Revenues Service
- Health and Social Care Finance Advisory Network
- Finance Advisory Network
- Insurance Network
- Pensions Network
- Police and Fire Network
- Procurement and Commissioning Network
- Treasury Management Network
- CIPFA Property Networks



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