

www.cipfa.org/tisonline

\ contributor information

Supporting financial managers
in the public sector





good practice
guidance by public
sector practitioners

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\ about TISonline

TISonline – www.cipfa.org/tisonline – is CIPFA's online resource providing 35 information streams of best practice, guidance, commentary and legislative context for financial managers across the public services.

The focus of TISonline is providing core good practice guidance 'by practitioners, for practitioners'. Our users consist principally of financial managers and directors, accountants and auditors working throughout the public sector. Over 400 organisations hold a subscription to TISonline, including the majority of local authorities in the UK.

Most of the content is written and updated by editorial boards made up of practitioners who draw on their personal experience and expertise.

TISonline, including information streams and discussion forums, is accessible to an online community of several thousand users. Our discussion forums cover VAT, audit, finance, capital and treasury, housing and fraud.

About CIPFA

CIPFA, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, is the professional body for people in public finance. Our 14,000 members work throughout the public services, in national audit agencies, in major accountancy firms, and in other bodies where public money needs to be effectively and efficiently managed.

CIPFA's portfolio of qualifications are the foundation for a career in public finance. They include the benchmark professional qualification for public sector accountants as well as a postgraduate diploma for people already working in leadership positions.

We also champion high performance in public services, translating our experience and insight into clear advice and practical services. They include information and guidance, courses and conferences, property and asset management solutions, consultancy and recruitment services.

Globally, CIPFA shows the way in public finance by standing up for sound public financial management and good governance. We work with donors, partner governments, accountancy bodies and the public sector around the world to advance public finance and support better public services.



roles and responsibilities

Operation of editorial boards

TISonline information streams are produced and developed by editorial boards comprising authors and contributors with practical experience across a range of public sector functions and services.

TISonline information streams cover **core finance functions** such as Internal Audit, Capital, Budgeting, Risk Management and Counter Fraud and Financial Management and Corporate Governance, **service functions** such as Adult Social Care and Environmental Services, and **other sectors** such as Local Authority Housing and Housing Association Finance. TISonline operates 24 editorial boards covering a range of technical accounting and service areas.

There is no single model for the operation of the editorial boards and most have adopted their own **terms of reference**. However, most editorial boards meet two or three times a year, enabling members to discuss developments within the subject area, agree updating requirements, review draft content and general progress, plan future work and sign off updates to the information stream.

Meetings are informal and typically last two or three hours. Lunch and refreshments are provided and travelling expenses reimbursed.

Between meetings, contributors are encouraged to discuss content and provide feedback by email in order to progress content to publication.

As publication is online, editorial boards put strong emphasis on the submission and review of content on a continuous basis, rather than relying solely on meetings. This ensures that content can be published and updated frequently, keeping the guidance up to date.

Each editorial board has an assigned **editor** who co-ordinates the work of the board, provides editorial guidance, oversees the progress of drafts and edits and publishes material on TISonline.

TISonline information streams:

- Adult Social Care and Health
- Asset Management
- Budgeting
- Capital
- Charging
- Charity, Accounting and Financial Management
- Children's Services
- Counter Fraud
- Education VAT
- Environmental Services
- Financial Management and Corporate Governance
- Government Grants and Business Rates Retention
- Guide to the Council Tax
- Health VAT
- Housing Association and RSLs VAT
- Housing Association Finance
- Human Resources
- ICT and Business Transformation
- Insurance
- Internal Audit
- Leisure and Cultural Services
- Local Authority Accounting
- Local Authority Housing
- Local Authorities VAT
- Local Taxation
- PAYE and NI
- Pensions
- Planning
- Police and Fire
- Procurement
- Public Health
- Risk Management
- Social Enterprise
- Transport
- Treasury Management

Your role as a contributor

Your role and the level of personal commitment required will vary according to the editorial board that you join. However, as a contributor you should be prepared to:

- attend and make an active contribution at editorial board meetings
- write content as agreed in accordance with the timetable set by the editorial board
- review and provide feedback on material prepared by other members of the editorial board
- offer professional comment and advice on current issues and developments in your area of interest and share practical experiences
- interact with fellow editorial board members by email.

Role of the chair

The chair of the editorial board has a key role to play in ensuring that the board works effectively.

The chair's role is to:

- chair editorial board meetings
- lead the activity of the board and drive the

information stream forward in conjunction with the editor

liaise with the editor on the membership of the editorial board, the board's progress on work and organising meetings

agree the agenda for editorial board meetings in conjunction with the editor and sign off the minutes.

Editorial team

The editorial team works with contributors to produce content for the TISonline service. The editors are the first point of contact for contributors and have the following roles and responsibilities:

- co-ordinating and providing editorial support to the contributors and boards
- organising editorial board meetings
- recruiting and commissioning new contributors
- acting as a liaison between the boards and CIPFA and external bodies
- editing, proofing and quality assuring material
- publishing material on the website
- promoting the TISonline service.



Statement of purpose

TISonline has a general statement of purpose applying across the service to which individual editorial boards adhere:

TISonline will provide subscribers with a comprehensive and up-to-date information service, providing practical guidance on the financial management and administration of the public services.

Beyond this, individual editorial boards will:

- determine the scope and content of the information stream
- keep material updated and in accordance with the perceived needs of subscribers
- contribute to the promotion and usage of TISonline.

Terms of reference

Each editorial board will have its own terms of reference, including clarification of:

- the composition of the editorial board (perhaps to include representation from specific sectors and organisations)
- the role of members
- the role of the chair (and vice-chair if applicable)
- the editorial board's relationship with other organisations, groups or panels.



guidelines for authors

Each editorial board's terms of reference details the aims and objectives of the individual information stream. Some editorial boards also have specific guidelines relating to the length, structure and content of drafts, available from the relevant editor. However, there are some basic principles which should be noted when producing a draft.

Style

The editor edits final drafts in line with the style conventions for CIPFA prior to publication and amends any grammatical, typographic, or formatting errors.

Contributors are requested to take note of the following broad guidelines:

Drafts should include a brief introduction (15-40 words) stating the purpose and scope of the section.

Drafts should include a concise background of the subject, the current issues, any relevant legislation, and references to key documents. However, editorial boards may have specific requirements regarding content, and guidance should be sought from the relevant editor.

Drafts should typically be 8-10 pages in length, although requirements will vary across information streams and guidance should be sought from the editor and editorial board.

Text should be factual and authoritative, without opinion and conjecture.

Drafts should be clear and concise – historical background should be kept to a minimum unless it has a major bearing on current activity.

As publication is online, the use of headings, sub-headings, bullet points and checklists to

convey key points is encouraged, ensuring text is easy to read. Footnotes should not be used.

The use of tables, diagrams and statistics is encouraged.

Acronyms should be spelled out clearly with the first use, and jargon should be avoided wherever possible.

References to legislation and external websites will be hyperlinked throughout, and signposting to other sites is encouraged (the editor will check all relevant links).

If relevant, the section should end with a Sources of Further Information, listing relevant websites and publications.

Where possible, the use of appendices should be avoided when a hyperlink or signpost could be used instead.

Format

All drafts will be formatted by the editor, but contributors are requested to bear the following points in mind when submitting a draft:

Drafts should be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word.

If updating a draft, please ensure you are using the most recent version, and use the track changes function to indicate any corrections.

Copyright

Material published on TISonline is the copyright of CIPFA. By submitting a draft to be published on TISonline, you are agreeing to transfer copyright to CIPFA.

All drafts submitted to TISonline should be original works by the author, or the author's organisation. If you use material (ie a figure or text) from elsewhere, please credit the original source.

You may refer to information available on the internet, but please be advised that some items may require copyright permission if reproduced in their entirety, which the editor can request on your behalf. If you are in any doubt as to ownership please consult your editor.

Further guidance

Specific guidance on any of the above issues is available from your editor (see page 11 for details of the editorial team).

A useful source of guidance is the Plain English Campaign's guide *How to Write in Plain English*, available from their website:

www.plainenglish.co.uk/files/howto.pdf



\ benefits

Joining a TISonline editorial board and contributing towards the development of TISonline provides a number of benefits.

The pursuit of your individual research interests and having your work published in a respected resource, to which an ever growing number of public service organisations subscribe, including the majority of UK local authorities.

The opportunity to meet fellow practitioners and exchange ideas and experiences, which will be of benefit to you and your organisation.

Your contribution will help guide other professionals to provide a better service and improve standards.

One free place per year on a CIPFA Network event.

Participation contributes to the continuing professional development (CPD) schemes operated by CIPFA and other professional bodies.

Your contribution will be acknowledged on TISonline.

Full personal access your TISonline stream for the duration of your membership.

Some comments from current contributors

"It increases your professional capacity and can help with career development for those who are planning their long-term career."

"Writing for TISonline and making contributions focuses understanding of technical issues and identifies knowledge gaps. In the current world it is impossible to ignore developments and issues if you want to safeguard your job, let alone complete mandatory CPD or achieve career progression."

"You learn a lot from informal discussions before and after the formal meeting, as well as during the meeting itself."



\ continuing professional development (CPD)

Membership of a TISonline editorial board contributes to the continuing professional development (CPD) schemes operated by CIPFA, and many other professional bodies.

TISonline editorial board members participate in the following activities, which are recognised by CIPFA as qualifying for CPD hours:

- editorial board meetings
- discussion groups
- writing technical material for publication and commenting on drafts
- project work
- undertaking individual study
- volunteering activities
- providing advice on technical issues
- web-based development.

As a participant in any CPD scheme you will be asked to record your activities, and may be asked to produce evidence to support your submission. TISonline will provide you with a certificate for this purpose at the end of the year and your editor will be happy to verify your attendance at meetings, the drafts you have produced and any other contributions if required.



registering and subscribing to TISonline

Access to TISonline is provided to organisations on an annual subscription basis, but all contributors receive a **complimentary personal** subscription for the duration of their membership.

To use TISonline – www.cipfa.org/tisonline – users must register to receive a password which is then used to log on. Registration is free and open to all. Certain areas of the website, including the discussion forums, are accessible to all registered users. However, full access to the content is restricted to subscribers.

A subscription provides multi-user organisation-wide access. This means that anyone in a subscribing organisation can use the service. Users register individually and receive a unique password.

When a user logs on they are granted access to the information streams according to the level of subscription held by their organisation. A subscription can cover individual information streams or the full TISonline service. Contributors have full access.

The subscription year runs from 1 April to 31 March, with pro rata rates available for part year joiners. For current subscription rates and more information email tisonline@cipfa.org.

How to register

Go to www.cipfa.org and click on Login/MyCIPFA in the top right hand corner of the screen.

Click on 'You can register here', complete the form, and click on Register.

A password will be generated immediately.

You can now log in at www.cipfa.org/tisonline using your email address and password.

You can change your password by logging in at Login/MyCIPFA and clicking on 'Change Password'.

When you register you can also choose to receive instant emails, which alert you to when new content is published, and the monthly e-alert, which contains a summary of updates and relevant TISonline news. You can do this in 'TISonline Preferences'.

My subscription

If any of your details change, go to 'My Details' once logged in.

Please also inform your editor of any changes.

\ meetings

Location

Most TISonline editorial board meetings are held at:

CIPFA

77 Mansell Street
London E1 8AN
T: 020 7543 5600
www.cipfa.org.uk/about-cipfa/conference-centre

The nearest underground stations are Aldgate East or Tower Hill on the District line or Aldgate on the Circle line.

Some meetings may be held at other venues when the board has decided to meet outside London. If the meeting is held at a different venue, the editor will provide details.

Expenses

CIPFA will reimburse all reasonable travel and subsistence expenses. Contributors are asked to retain all receipts and submit them with a claim

form which is available from your editor.

All claims should be submitted within 60 days of the meeting and no later than 31 January after the end of the calendar year in which they were incurred.

Wherever possible, travel should be by **standard class** using fares purchased in advance.

Timings

Meetings usually start between 10am and 12pm and last between two to three hours. Lunch and refreshments are provided.

Special requirements

Please notify your editor of any special arrangements (eg dietary needs, access, or equipment) you may require.





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www.cipfa.org

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