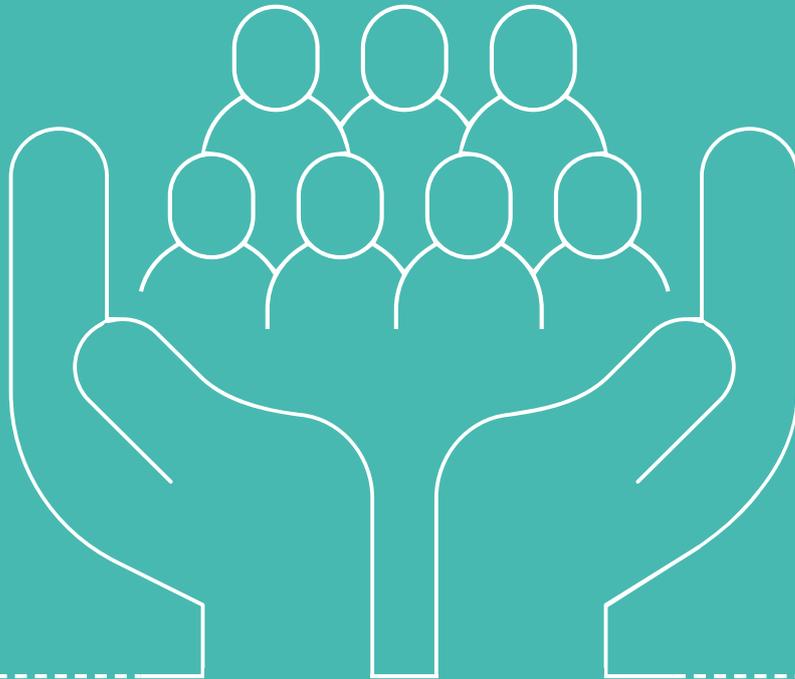


Protecting Place and Planet





“ Protecting the livelihoods of the most vulnerable people in our communities should be at the heart of all decision making.

Rob Whiteman
CIPFA CEO

Introduction

At the heart of the public services agenda is the drive to keep people safe, healthy and educated, and to ensure that this is done in a sustainable way. There are three aspects to the concept of sustainable development: the economic, the environmental and the social (profit, planet and people). This means that environmental actions impact upon and must be integrated with economic and social development in order to find better, more efficient ways of maintaining the wellbeing of communities and ensuring the sustainability of public services for future generations.

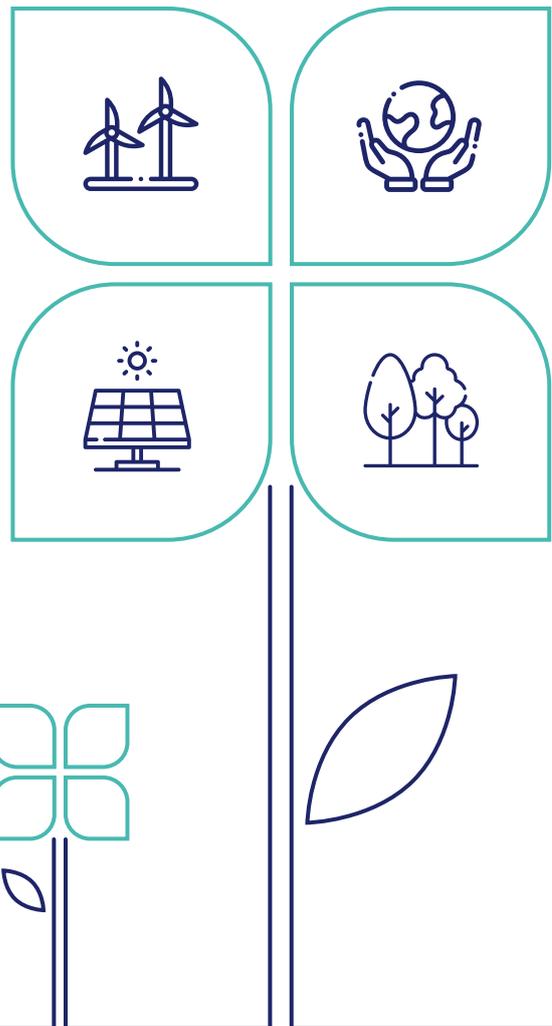
Two of the most pressing issues in our society today are the pandemic-driven global health crisis and climate change. The UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) offer an ambitious and exciting blueprint to guide countries towards a more prosperous and sustainable future. With a delivery target of 2030, the SDGs call for action on a comprehensive range of social, economic and environmental indicators, from poverty and inequality to infrastructure, urban development and institutions.

As work accelerates on the SDG agenda, public finance professionals will be central to the effort of protecting our places and the planet, from getting the right housing and implementing sustainable social care to tackling the climate crisis.

Why does it matter?

Improving public services is the key to improving the lives of people within communities. Public services help ensure that people stay safe and healthy, have the freedom and resources to learn and thrive, and that the places where they live and work are clean, sustainable and connected.

At present, the focus of public sector organisations remains on economic growth and financial sustainability, which is increasingly seen as a means of complementing the pursuit of environmental goals. For example, having green or social credentials could encourage wider investment and boost the reputation of a company and the area in which it operates. This balancing act between environmental ambitions and economic outcomes will need to shift as the sustainability agenda gathers pace. Ultimately, as incentives and regulation take hold, sustainability will make more business sense, including for the public sector.



The challenges

More than ever, COVID-19 has magnified social and economic disparities. However, in many geographies, public sector funding has been hardest hit in the decade since the global financial crisis, yet these services are vital for the health and prosperity of people and communities.

Increasingly, public finance professionals need to tackle:



Tightening budgets and resources

This places extra strain on an organisation to balance its allocation of funds and assets, including its workforce, while maintaining and seeking continuous improvement in service levels.



Unmet service needs

This includes the provision of affordable housing as well as the provision of social care, and the need for both has increased as a result of the pandemic.



Distribution of public services

Public sector bodies face the struggle of keeping pace with ever-changing events in an effort to channel public services proportionately and where they are most needed.



Retaining, creating and attracting jobs and businesses

Shifting patterns of living and working have impacted many businesses, which in turn can have a significant impact on the overall health and wellbeing of communities.



The rising cost of climate-related damage to people and property

More frequent extreme weather events across the globe are forcing public authorities to forward plan and budget for tackling this issue.



Expenditure on green, social or sustainable projects

As the climate challenge accelerates, green initiatives will become evermore mandated, and public sector entities will face the financial and legislative management of this.

How can CIPFA help?

CIPFA is the global leader in public financial management and governance. We are also committed to making a lasting difference to the world we live in and the communities we are part of.

CIPFA's range of targeted solutions and services for public service professionals help them and the organisations they work for achieve financial resilience and minimise risk, while improving outcomes and contributing to social value.

In addition to the below offerings, CIPFA will shortly be making further recommendations on how environmental sustainability can be prioritised in decision making, while maintaining a high standard of financial management and value for money.



Advisory and consultancy

The CIPFA advisory team can support public bodies in translating financial management and governance principles into integrated organisational strategies and approaches that responds and delivers improved outcomes for communities. Working with public sector organisations, we can help tackle the social and environmental impact of public services and encourage a culture of continuous improvement that responds to community needs and pressures.



Building sustainable social care

Recent events have highlighted the importance of ensuring social care is resilient and sustainable for both the short and long term. To ensure public bodies are identifying, prioritising and protecting vulnerable citizens, forward planning is crucial to managing the effective delivery of this volatile and demand-led service.

The CIPFA CPRAS Technology Procurement Association

CIPFA has collaborated with the Cost and Procurement Advisory Service (CPRAS) to create the CIPFA CPRAS Technology Procurement Association (CCTPA). From payment and payroll systems through to pothole repairs and environmental solutions, CCTPA's aim is to help public sector bodies procure innovative frontier technology solutions that not only help improve financial resilience and community outcomes but also wider sustainability.



Property and estates management

CIPFA Property is a critical friend supporting the public sector to deliver property related outputs. Working with the sector through its consultancy offering, building surveys, networks and training courses, it is committed to ensuring the delivery of value for money outcomes seen through the primary lens of environmental sustainability and added social value.



Data to drive decisions

Understanding how frontline services are performing is critical to knowing the best ways to allocate costs while maintaining good service levels. Through our benchmarking tools, measure the impact of a range of services and utilise analytical tools to prepare for future needs, from education and social care through to housing services, culture, leisure and recreation and waste management.



GrantIS

GrantIS enables public bodies to deliver public funds into the right hands quickly, transparently and safely. Utilising GrantIS' digital grants management system, public bodies can achieve better community outcomes by providing financial support to stimulate innovation and support those who need it most.



Tackling the housing crisis

CIPFA's unique position in local government finance, together with our public sector property and local authority housing expertise, means we can work with you to join the dots. We can help you connect finance, planning, delivery and management to help ensure that your local authority achieves the best outcomes for your communities. At this unprecedented time, this has never been so important.



Lifelong learning

All our educational and learning programmes are designed to provide public finance professionals with the knowledge, skills and confidence to carry out their roles effectively. Expert led and informed by the latest thinking, our extensive range of courses and events can assist those charged with integrating the three core elements of sustainability: the economic, the environmental and the social.

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