

Foreword

I am pleased that CIPFA has produced an updated copy of its 'essential reading' about housing finance. Housing is important to all of us, and so ensuring that there is an adequate supply of fit-for-purpose accommodation has for many years been a fundamental plank of social policy. Local authorities have a key role in responding in this area and understanding how the relevant finances work is vital if they are fully going to play their part.

Housing, and social housing in particular, has undergone many changes since the last edition of this long running series of publications. The first volume was published in 1984 under the title *Housing Finance*. CIPFA's Housing Panel has played various roles in the production of its many editions. For this edition, it outsourced the writing and then undertook a checking role to try to ensure that it accurately reflects the current position on housing finance matters. As the panel's chair, I greatly appreciate the time members give and the knowledge and expertise they bring to make this an authoritative publication.

This publication will not only be useful for local authority officers who are involved in housing and have a need to understand the main financial principles that apply to the housing services provided by local authorities, but will also be of use to those members who hold portfolios that encompass housing in their briefs, as well as those members who are charged with scrutinising the policy and practice.

Arrangements are no longer uniform across the UK and this edition provides a greater level of detail of where policies and practices in Wales differ.

I hope that you find this publication useful, informative and an authoritative source of information on housing finance. All involved in housing have a duty to manage public resources expertly and be fully accountable. Hopefully this book will aid this approach.

I know that CIPFA would welcome any comments on the scope and coverage of this guide for future editions. These should be addressed to the Chair of the Housing Panel at CIPFA, 77 Mansell Street, London E1 8AN.



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