

**CIPFA**

The Chartered Institute of  
Public Finance & Accountancy

North West, Audit, Risk and Governance  
Professional Development Group

# Annual Development and Training Event 2025

7– 9 March 2025  
Old England Hotel and Spa  
Bowness-on-Windermere

[www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk](http://www.macdonaldhotels.co.uk)

Featuring expert speakers and an interactive training workshop, this annual CPD event will improve the knowledge and skills that help audit, risk, governance and finance professionals to work smarter.



Participate in this event to enhance your Professional Development in 2025

## Aims and objectives

This is an exceptional value for money CPD event that will provide you with a range of views, practical advice, tips and guidance to improve your own working practices and to raise the value and reputation of your services in the face of continuing challenges to what you do and how you do it.

## Who should attend?

Anyone who has an interest in public sector auditing, risk management and governance arrangements, including;

- Internal Auditors
- Governance Officers
- Risk Managers
- Fraud Investigators
- Accountants
- Students

Whatever your current position or level of experience, there will be something here for you. Join fellow professionals and expert practitioners in exploring how to address some of the key issues and emerging challenges.

## Friday 7 March 2025

<b>17.00</b>	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b>
<b>17.15</b>	<b>Name: Lorraine Cox; Director of STAR Procurement and Nichola Cooke, Assistant Director at STAR Procurement.</b>
<b>Topic: Contracting with the right suppliers to deliver real impacts</b>	
<p>Lorraine has led STAR for almost eight years securing £284M (38.8% of contract value) of social value to date, delivered £148M of this, and retained 78.9% of local spend within Greater Manchester (GM) for the 4 GM Councils in 23/24. Lorraine is considered the 'subject matter expert' in social value and public sector and has a history of contributing to government reviews nationally and regionally, she received a national award 'Best Council to do Business With' historically which she received at No.10 Downing St and received a highly commended for leadership of social value at National Social Value Awards.</p> <p>Nichola has many years' experiences of reviews of various procurement teams, departments and shared services, identifying savings / efficiencies and performance improvements. Nichola is a LGA Peer Reviewer and is part of the LGA Shared Service Expert programme. She currently leads the development team for STAR Procurement which undertakes commissions for a range of public sector organisations, including procurement reviews, social value implementation, training, strategic and operational procurement support, strategy and policy development and shared service support. Nichola and her team have been working closely with STAR Partners across the country to help them fully prepare for the new Procurement Act 2023, and to ensure that the opportunities this new legislation brings are maximised.</p>	

This presentation will cover how the new procurement legislations brings additional responsibilities and burdens, particularly around transparency, but how it also provides opportunities for increased supplier diversity, more flexibility to tailor approach and processes, and opportunities to be innovative and efficient. The session will explore how the new Procurement Act will impact you and your organisations and how you can use it to drive social value and ultimately do business with the right suppliers that make a real impact in our communities.

**18.15** **Ann Brook: Head of Technical Content and Research, Institute of Internal Auditors**

**Topic : Topic: Implementing the Global Internal Audit Standards**

Ann has been working in the internal audit and related professions for over 25 years and became the Head of Internal Audit for a large Building Society in 2009. Since then, she has worked in Risk Management and various other governance roles, and held appointments as a Board, Council and Audit Committee member across a range of sectors and industries. Ann moved into Higher Education in 2013 and was course leader for the only Internal Audit focused degree in the UK and helped develop both the level 4 and level 7 Apprenticeships with the trailblazer group of employees. Ann has been an active volunteer of the Chartered IIA since 2007 and is now Head of Technical Content and Research.

The UK public sector's internal audit functions are expected to conform with the new Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS) from the 1 April 2025. The GIAS guide the worldwide professional practice of internal auditing and serve as a basis for evaluating and elevating the quality of the internal audit function. Complementing the GIAS, 2025 will also see the introduction of the IIA's Topical Requirements which much be considered when undertaking related audits, a Code of Practice for the Governance of Internal Audit in UK Local Government (CIPFA) and an Application Note from the UK Public Sector's Relevant Internal Audit Standard Setters. Ann will help us navigate these developments and challenges with practical advice and interpretation on implementing the changes within our UK public sector context.

**19.15** **Dinner - Dress code: casual**

## **Saturday 8 March 2025**

**09.30** **Dave Smith: Deputy Head of Internal Audit, Salford and Warrington Councils**

**Topic: Options when Auditing Financial Systems**

Dave has over 22 years of experience in the public sector internal audit, governance, control, counter fraud, and risk environment, gained across different organisations. Dave is a professionally qualified member of both the Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors (CIIA), and Chartered Institute of Public Finance (CIPFA) and is a member of the Institute of Leadership. Dave is currently the Deputy Head of Internal Audit for both Salford City Council and Warrington Borough Council, with responsibility for the two internal audit teams, in addition to the counter fraud and insurance teams at Salford. Dave volunteers for a

national charity as a Co-opted Trustee / member of their Audit and Risk Committee. He is also a member of the North West Audit Risk and Governance Group and in his second year as Chair of the group.

Over the years there has been many different approaches, used in different contexts, and these approaches are still evolving. This will be a facilitated workshop exploring the range of different approaches when auditing financial systems. The session will draw on attendees' and speakers' knowledge and experience in exploring systems based, risk based, IT/cyber, data matching, control matrices, implementation projects, change control, continuous auditing, and agile, alongside considering interdependences with stakeholders including counter fraud team and the external auditor.

**10.30**

**Rich Gregson: Data Scientist and Artificial Intelligence Engineer, Capgemini UK**

**Topic: GraphRAG: Connecting Data, Driving Intelligence**

In his current role Rich designs and builds scalable machine learning solutions for clients both in the public and private sector. Notable work has included the development of an open-source computer vision tool which can diagnose colorectal cancer using tissue slides retrieved from patients. As well as technical work Rich provides advisory support to client stakeholders; helping them align their data strategies with business objectives, creation of data policies and a key focus of his recent work has been on developing Large Language Models (LLMs) that utilise Graph Retrieval-Augmented Generation (GraphRAG) techniques to improve information retrieval and contextual understanding within large datasets.

Rich's presentation will be focused on this work and cover how GraphRAG LLMs work and why they are becoming an industry standard for organisations that want smarter generative AI applications.

**11.30**

**Break - Tea and Coffee**

**11.45**

**Rosanne Nulty: Head of Governance for the Civil Nuclear Constabulary**

**Topic: Joining up the pillars of good governance**

Rosanne is the Head of Governance for the Civil Nuclear Constabulary, responsible for risk management, internal assurance, strategic planning, performance management and the delivery and servicing of Board and governance meetings. She has worked in the internal audit and risk field for 27 years, first in Local Government and then more widely working with public sector clients as a consultant across all governance issues. Rosanne is a CIPFA qualified accountant, and later in her career became a Chartered Internal Auditor. She specialised in risk management around 14 years ago and has developed risk registers for many public sector clients, in local government, education, NHS and now works in the policing sector. She is the Chair of the College of Policing Working Group for Risk Management systems and software and has been a guest speaker for the RSM sessions 'Boredom in the Boardroom' presenting to audit committee members on approaches to risk management. Rosanne is also an Accredited Counter Fraud Specialist, having completed the CIPFA course in 2022.

Rosanne will deliver a presentation on the risk journey for the Civil Nuclear Constabulary over the past 8 years, and their use of risk management software and joined up reporting to support good governance and good decision making.

**12.45**

**Lunch**

**13.30 Practical Workshop / Opportunity for networking**

Either participate in the arranged practical workshop or take the opportunity to take some well-deserved down time! Delegates have free use of the hotel's fantastic spa facilities – no pre-reservations needed.

**19.00 Gala Dinner - Including raffle sponsored by John Barker, JSB Consultancy**

19.00 Meet for pre-dinner drinks  
19.30 Gala Dinner

**Dress Code: Smart / Casual**

## Sunday 9 March 2025

**10.00 Dan Bates: Financial Resilience and Analytics Director at LGImprove**

**Topic: Looking Forward – Devolution and Funding Reform**

Dan is the Financial Resilience and Analytics Director at LGImprove. He started out as an Audit Commission graduate trainee and has worked in both external and internal audit. Dan now specialises in financial resilience and runs a benchmarking service for local authorities to help them better understand their financial health.

The new government is pressing ahead with significant changes to local government structures as well as a long overdue reform to funding. Dan will look at what this means for finance and internal audit teams.

**11.00 Break – chance to check out**

**11.30 Sarah Horseman: Deputy Director, Audit and Assurance; Greater Manchester Combined Authority**

**Topic: Audit, Risk and Assurance in Combined Authorities – enabling the system**

Sarah leads the Audit, Risk and Assurance teams at Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Transport for Greater Manchester. Her role also includes responsibilities as Head of Internal Audit for Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service and Greater Manchester Police. Prior to moving to the public sector in 2019, Sarah spent over 20 years in one of the big 4 accounting firms delivering a variety of assurance and advisory services. She has also held a variety of voluntary roles and is currently a Trustee of a multi-academy Trust where she also Chairs the Audit and Risk Committee.

Sarah will talk about devolution in Greater Manchester. She will also describe her role and how audit, risk and assurance can support city-region ambitions.

**12.30** Closing remarks followed by lunch

## Prices and bookings

Delegate Fees	
Per delegate	<b>£200 + VAT</b> per delegate

The price has been frozen from 2024 and again heavily subsidised to keep the cost low for delegates. There are no other rates for part attendance.

The price includes: two days conference, two nights full board, gala dinner, optional workshop and team building activity.

Refunds cannot be guaranteed if bookings are cancelled.

The organisers reserve the right to amend the programme without prior notification.

Delegate places are limited and we cannot guarantee that all bookings will be accepted. Applications will be dealt with in the order they are received – early booking is advised.

**Bookings or enquiries should be directed to: [joanne.billington@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.billington@wyre.gov.uk) Tel: 01253 887372**