

CIPFA South East Regional President's Annual Report for 2019

Presented to the 2020 Regional Annual General Meeting on 30 April 2020

I would like to start by thanking all of you for joining us for our AGM online and your continued support through these unprecedented times. We, alongside the rest of the country, are trying to adapt and ensure that we can utilise opportunities to deliver events in innovative and creative ways so we can continue to support our members in the region and deliver high quality events.

In my third and final year of representing you as Regional President I am pleased to report that the CIPFA South East Regional Council, has continued to deliver a broad programme of regular events that are designed to be inclusive for all our regional members and students. We have also collaborated with other regions and with other providers to encourage sharing of ideas and knowledge. I have very much enjoyed attending regional events and representing you and CIPFA at several functions.

We have delivered an excellent programme through a series of events providing much needed CPD, with the majority of this provided free or at minimal cost. I would particularly like to draw attention to our innovative 'speed mentoring' evening we hosted in October with special thanks to Tom England from the SE Council and Grant Thornton our hosts, this was a tremendous success. We were also delighted to be recognised nationally for this event picking up the award for Regional Innovation for the Year at the Regional Forum in November.

Special thanks to Grant Thornton, who once again host us for our AGM (all be it virtually) and who would have been sponsoring our Spring Conference due to have taken place on 20th April. We hope to reorganise this event for later in the year, so please do look out for updates on our website. .

Supplementing John's work on developing the programme is a network of volunteers across the region that helps deliver our member and student events locally. We are especially pleased with the ongoing development of our regional hubs where volunteers are assisting with sourcing venues and supporting organisation for these local events. Our London Division continues to thrive and has delivered the usual three morning seminars with topical agendas resulting in good attendance at each.

Whilst I was sadly unable to attend the Public Finance Live event (formerly the CIPFA Conference) this year due to family illness. Several of our regional members joined the volunteers from CIPFA Midlands to help at the Conference in July in Birmingham. Our volunteers assisted delegates at the venue and attended the regional reception for guests and sponsors during the Conference. We look forward as a region (Covid-19 permitting) to welcoming colleagues from across the CIPFA network either in July (or later in the year) for the Public Finance Live event in London.

The Annual Dinner in November was attended by around 200 members and guests. This was attended by CIPFA Past President Sarah Howard. This year again, we also arranged presentation of certificates by Sarah to some newly qualified members prior to the Dinner. A great welcome to the CIPFA family for our new members and their guests! Photos from the evening are on the regional website.

We held our annual 'Public Finance in Wessex' Conference in March which was well attended with some great speakers. This event, with support from the South West Region, was hosted by Hampshire County Council in Winchester. Our 'Public Finance in East Anglia Conference' in September at Newmarket was well received and demonstrated our commitment to offer these full day low cost CPD events at a growing range of venues across our region.

Our Regional Student Network has been very active this year, organising a number of events such as induction sessions and revision workshops to support formal learning and to encourage networking and volunteering. The annual September pub quiz was the usual success.

Our retired members group continued with its widening variety of interesting visits throughout the year. They definitely get to have the most fun.

The CIPFA Regional Forum was held in Chester in November, hosted by our North West colleagues, where representatives from most of the UK's CIPFA regions attended. Unfortunately whilst we were not able to send representation to the event due to an unforeseen clash with our annual regional dinner, we were able to utilise modern technology to participate in the key meetings and were pleased by the continuing collaboration and support across the regions.

Given that the region receives less than £4 per member annually from CIPFA funding centrally to operate its regional programme of events, a lot of hard work goes on to make all these events happen. I would like to thank all our regional volunteers including members of the South East Council for all their hard work and dedication. As with every year, I would strongly plea and urge you to volunteer and to help keep our region operating, we have been reliant on many of the same people for a few years now, some of which have indicated their intention to stand down over the next couple of years and we need to secure the future of the region by ensuring we have an adequate succession plan.

We remain especially grateful to those sponsors who have supported our events for several years, plus a number of others who have sponsored or supported us for the first time this year – either with funding, hosting or providing speakers: They are Grant Thornton, Zurich Municipal, CCLA, CIPFA-Penna, RP Martin, IMPOWER, 31Ten Consulting, Mazars, Moore Stephens, PA Consulting Group, BDO Hamlyn, PwC, KPMG, RSM and Allen Lane.

I should also like to extend thanks to all of the CIPFA HQ staff who have delivered support to our regional activities during the year.

As this will be my final report as President, I would like to thank you all for your support over the past three years. However, to maintain essential continuity during the Coronavirus Emergency the 2019/20 regional office holders will remain in place and membership of the current regional council will stay unchanged for the duration. Your Regional Council will review options for any changes later this year. It has been my pleasure to meet and represent so many of you and I would like to wish our new President the best of luck when a succession takes place.

Finally, I hope that you and your families stay safe during this time and we look forward to hopefully seeing you (in person or virtually) later in 2020 and beyond at some of our regional and national events.

Amy Crowson
Regional President
CIPFA South East

March 2020