**Minutes of the Executive Committee**

**8th October 2021**

**Venue: Virtual (Private) Meeting**

**SDCT Website:** [**www.cipfa.org/partners/society-of-district-council-treasurers**](http://www.cipfa.org/partners/society-of-district-council-treasurers)

**In Attendance:** Adrian Rowbotham (VP), Angela George (Secretary), Terry Collier, Homira Javadi, Richard Baker, Simon Freeman, David Stanley, Sal Khan, Sian Moore, Helen Smith, Clare Fletcher, Richard Bates

**Also:** Andrew Chappell and Julie Schofield (PSAA – for item 4)

1. **Apologies:** Alison Scott**,** Peter Stuart,Jenny Poole**,** Peter Catchpole, Carolin Martlew,Tracey Bircumshaw, David Heyes.
2. **Minutes of meeting of 10th September**

The minutes of the previous meeting of 10th September 2021 were agreed. Any matters arising or outstanding issues are considered further on the agenda.

1. **Finance and Budget Issues**

Adrian Rowbotham had attended the DLUHC LG Finance meeting the previous Monday with Alex Skinner from DLUHC and update the Executive on the key points of discussion. Homira Javadi had attended the DCN Webinar on the spending review and gave an update on the expectations.

The budget announcement is due on 27th October.

The Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement (PLGFS) is anticipated to be early to mid-December.

**Postscript:**

**Adrian attended the DLUHC briefing on the 27th October Spending Review/Budget regarding the impacts on local government. The main points are:**

1. **Core Spending Power to increase by an average of 3%pa over the 3 year Spending Review period.  £1.6b increase from Treasury.**
2. **Includes Adult Social Care Reform**
3. **And Council Tax increases which are assumed at 2% pa + 1% Adult Social Care Precept.  This will be confirmed on the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (PLGFS)**
4. **There is not much information on the distribution, wait for the PLGFS.**
5. **District Council Tax increase assumption being used by DLUHC is 2% or £5 but not mentioned in Spending Review**
6. **£38m over 3 years to tackle Cyber Security**
7. **From 24/25 councils will receive income from the Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme**
8. **Homelessness and rough sleeping funding will increase to £639m in 24/25.**
9. **£300m capital funding to unlock small brownfield sites for regeneration.**
10. **Business Rates – 3 yearly revaluations starting in 2023.  Expect compensation from BR reliefs.**
11. **NI 1.25% levy – funding distribution basis to be included in the PLGFS (included in £1.6b)**
12. **Reform – nothing announced today but expect some details in PLGFS.**
13. **PLGFS – aiming for early December but it is a political process so may be delayed.**
14. **PSAA – Procurement – next appointing period.**

Andrew Chappell and Julie Schofield gave a presentation to the Executive (slides on SDCT Website) regarding the options for appointing auditors for the next appointing period. The problems in the audit market are very well documented and there was an acknowledgment that returning to a predictable and stable position will take considerable time.

Currently 98% of authorities opt in to the PSAA procurement exercise. The PSAA view is that we are all ‘fishing from the same pond’ and that sticking together for the procurement exercise is the best option in very difficult circumstances.

The presentation was followed by questions from the Executive. In practical terms, notwithstanding the considerable dissatisfaction with the current arrangements, it was considered there may be no practical alternatives for individual councils. However, it does appear from data seen that Districts as a whole are faring badly in terms of getting audits signed off on time and additional fee requests. This will be further investigated.

The final date for opting in is March 11th 2022, and under the Regulations this has to be a decision of full council. Auditors must be appointed by 31st December 2022.

1. **Consultation Responses:**
* CIPFA CoP – Local Authority Accounting 2022/23.

**Action – David Stanley to respond by 11th October.**

* CIPFA Treasury Management and Prudential Codes (Stage 2 consultation)

**Action - Tracey and Adrian to respond respectively by 16th November.**

* MRP Consultation (DLUHC first draft)

**Action – Tracey to respond**

1. **Executive Issues:**

**6.1 Advisor areas update.**

A draft was circulated and following discussion this will be finalised and published (now on SDCT website)

**Action Jenny and Clare to progress handover of Treasurer role.**

6.2 **Timetable of meetings 2022**

The draft was agreed, and this will be circulated (now on SDCT website)

**Action - Angela**

1. **Any Other Business: None**
2. **Date of Next Scheduled Meeting: 10th December (virtual)**