**Minutes of the Executive Committee**

**9th December 2022**

**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)

**SDCT Members In Attendance:** Alison Scott (President)**,** Adrian Rowbotham (Vice President), Angela George (Secretary), Clare Fletcher (Treasurer), Homira Javadi, Sian Moore, Richard Bates, David Stanley, Terry Collier, Clive Mason, Jon Illingworth, Emma Foy, Christine Marshall, Carolin Martlew

**Also:** Patrick Flack, Kate Remenyl, Rachel Ghow, and Mehr Panjwani (DLUHC) for item 3.

1. **SDCT Executive Apologies:**  David Heyes, Richard Baker, Simon Freeman, Peter Catchpole, Richard Gibson
2. **Minutes of previous meetings:**

The minutes of the previous meeting of 14th October 2022 with minor amendments were agreed.

**Actions outstanding:**

**-** Angela to organise presidents chain handover with Simone.

- Terry to progress LinkedIn

Any other matters arising, or outstanding issues are considered further on the agenda.

1. **Financial Issues: DHLUC**

Patrick Flack, Kate Remenyl, Rachel Ghow, and Mehr Panjwani (DLUHC) attended for this item.

DLUHC members present gave a detailed presentation and there was a discussion with the Executive on several points. Patrick advised that that the settlement would be published w/c 19th December and a policy statement would be published the following Monday 12th December. All the information discussed was confidential at that point but is now published and available to all Councils’.

DLUHC will be attending the SDCT Executive meeting on 6th January 2023 to take queries and answer questions on the published settlement.

**Action – Settlement to be discussed further at the next meeting on 6th January**

1. **Audit Issues**

Audit delays – no further progress. The situation is becoming more serious for Local Authorities daily. Alison suggested an open letter to PSAA be drafted.

**Action - Alison**

Terry Collier updated the Executive on the recent Public Interest Report issued by Spelthorne’s outgoing external auditors KPMG relating to its Value for Money opinion on 2017-18 and specifically commercial investments. Spelthorne had an extraordinary Council on 8th December 2022 at which it considered the report and accepted the report’s recommendations which largely reflect arrangements and processes the Council already had in place. The central issue related to a difference of legal opinion on the ability of the Council, under the regulatory framework applying at the time, to make investment acquisitions within its borough and slightly beyond within its local economic functional area. Spelthorne obtained KC advice at the time, which has continued to be confirmed, that the Council had appropriate powers, the Auditors have a different opinion from a KC in the same chamber headed by Spelthorne’s KC. The Auditors have declined to test the issue in court. The auditors have indicated that they will now issue an unqualified opinion on the 2017-18 Statement of Accounts, and this will in turn allow the successor auditors KPMG to start the process of catching up with audits of subsequent accounts. KPMG in their report were not suggesting that the Council was not generating enough income to cover financing costs but understandably was highlighting future risks. However, the PIR report failed to reference at all the risk mitigation strategy deployed by the Council of building up sinking fund reserves by setting aside part of the rental income each year. The sinking funds balances are anticipated to be approx. £36m as at the 31st March 2023. In 2021-22 the Council collected 99.98% of the investment assets income invoiced.

1. **Consultations:**

**Infrastructure Assets** - a paper on Infrastructure Assets has now been published.

**MRP Consultation -** No further progress.

1. **Private Executive Business: Issues discussed:**

* Role of the CFO

**Action - Peter to update Executive**

* SDCT Accounts, handover of Treasurer role and Audit. Carolin agreed to investigate someone taking over the audit role

**Action – Carolin**

* SDCT Executive Membership / Roles and Advisors

**Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board** – A paper had been previously circulated detailing the terms of reference and membership of this new Board. The Board will cover the work formerly undertaken by the now defunct CIPFA Pensions Panel and are requesting a representative from the SDCT.

**Action – SDCT Executive to advise if they would be willing to be the Board representative**

**Action – Angela to update Advisor areas and numbers of Executive. NB: 2nd VP role still vacant.**

* Timetable of meetings for 2023

**Action – Angela to circulate**

* A Flyer will be prepared and distributed for the SDCT 2 day event in March 2023

**Action – Angela / Clare**

1. **AOB - none**
2. **DONM**

**- 6th Jan 2023 (Public)**

**- Also 16th and 17th March 2023 – Warwick University**