

# The Association of Charity Independent Examiners

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## Practice Points

### News and updates from the UK Charity regulators

#### [Reporting relevant matters of interest to UK charity regulators](#)

This is a joint publication from the Charity Commission for England and Wales, the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

The Regulators urge a 'when in doubt, report it' approach and provide examples of relevant matters which may be reported:

- insecure funding putting beneficiaries at risk – for example, a charity established to care for vulnerable adults and children is reliant on a single contract for 90% of its income in the reporting period and the trustees are uncertain whether they will be able to secure future funding at the current level when the contract is renewed the following year
- donation that may indicate vulnerability to abuse – for example, a large donation is made via an intermediary organisation, restricted to teaching the strict beliefs of a particular religion and requires educational materials to be purchased from a specified overseas source
- lack of financial oversight by the whole trustee body - for example, minutes show that the finances of a large charity are only

considered annually during a presentation from the CEO.

### [Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme: how to claim top-up payments](#)

If you're a charity or CASC you can claim top-up payments on small donations of £20 or less under the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS).

From 6 April 2017, you can claim on donations made using contactless technology, such as a contactless credit or debit card.

Before 6 April 2017, you could only claim top-up payments on small cash donations. Cash donations can be in coins or notes of any currency that have been collected and banked in the UK.

You don't need to know the identity of the donors or collect Gift Aid declarations.

## News and updates from the Charity Commission England & Wales

### [Charities must do more to promote diversity on their boards, new research shows](#)

New research recommends that charities do more to promote diversity on their boards and encourage applications from women, young people and people from ethnic minority and socially diverse backgrounds.

The report was commissioned by the Office for Civil Society and the Charity Commission, and delivered by a consortium led by Cass Business School and the Cranfield Trust.

The research finds that men outnumber women trustees on boards by two to one. The majority (92%) of trustees are white, older and above average income and education.

The research also finds that charity trustees, who are overwhelmingly volunteers, feel positively about their role and about the personal reward and satisfaction it gives them. It also highlights that trustees' contribution to charities amounts to a monetary equivalent of around £3.5 billion a year.

The researchers surveyed a sample of 19,064 trustees, via a national survey in January 2017. Around 3,500 trustees responded to the survey.

The report finds that:

- 71% of charity chairs are men and 68% of charity treasurers are men
- the average age of trustees is 55-64 years; over half (51%) are retired
- 75% of trustees have household incomes above the national median
- 60% of trustees have a professional qualification; 30% have postgraduate qualifications
- 71% of trustees are recruited through an informal process
- in 80% of charities trustees play both a governance role and an executive role – they have no staff or volunteers from whom they can seek support
- 70% of trustees are involved in charities with an incomes of less than £100k a year

- trustees report lacking relevant legal, digital, fundraising, marketing and campaigning skills at board level
- trustees are concerned about their skills in dealing with fraud and external cyber-attack
- trustees seek support and advice from one another - 80% of all respondents regard this as their most important internal source of advice and support, with only 6% seeking guidance or training from an external provider
- on average, trustees donate almost 5 hours a week to their trustee roles

The report also recommends that guidance and support for trustees should be reviewed and enhanced and should draw on developments in digital technology.

The Charity Commission has [responded](#) to the report, saying:

*This presents two concerns to us as regulator. First, charities are missing out on the widest range of skills, experience and perspective at board level. A diverse board can bolster a charity's resilience and give it the best chance of fulfilling its purposes into the future.*

*Second, uniformity at board level puts any organisation in any sector at risk of adverse group dynamics, including group-think, an unwillingness to challenge colleagues, and complacency of vision. Charities are not immune to that. It is to be welcomed that trustees consider their awareness of their legal duties as being high. In practice, the application of that knowledge may be compromised*

*if there are behaviours and cultures that undermine good governance.*

### [Legislative changes affecting the Charitable Incorporated Organisation \(CIO\)](#)

The Charity Commission has announced a phased timetable allowing charitable companies to convert to charitable incorporated organisations (CIOs) following legislative changes in Parliament on 23 November 2017.

The new legislation also means that all charitable incorporated organisations (CIOs) will be listed on the Business names index, held by Companies House.

The much anticipated Secondary Legislation under the Charities Act 2011 contains 3 distinct elements:

- the Charitable Incorporated Organisations (Conversion) Regulations
- the Charitable Incorporated Organisations (Consequential Amendments) Order
- the Index of Company Names (Listed Bodies) (England and Wales) Order

The Charity Commission (the Commission) is now preparing a programme of work to support these changes.

**Prof Gareth G Morgan of The Kubernesis Partnership LLP has prepared a 4 page introduction for anyone thinking of converting. You can access the document by clicking [here](#).**

## News and updates from OSCR

### [OSCR encourages more charities to come forward with Notifiable Events](#)

There is no legal requirement to report a Notifiable Event. However, it is a great way for charities to

reassure us that they are on top of the issues they are facing. Ultimately, we may become concerned if there has been a matter that has not been reported to us; especially if it goes on to have a negative impact on the individual charity or the wider charity sector.

A Notifiable Event could be:

- fraud and theft
- significant financial loss
- incidents of abuse or mistreatment of vulnerable beneficiaries
- a lack of charity trustees required to make a legal decision
- when a charity has been subject to a criminal investigation or an investigation by another regulator or agency; sanctions have been imposed, or concerns raised by another regulator or agency
- when significant sums of money or other property have been donated to the charity from an unknown or unverified source
- suspicions that the charity and/or its assets are being used to fund criminal activity (including terrorism)
- charity trustees acting improperly or whilst disqualified.

From 01 November 2016 to 31 October 2017, charities reported a total of 94 Notifiable Events. The most common type of incident was trustees or staff acting improperly (24) followed jointly by incidents of fraud and theft and financial loss (18). During this time there were around 24,000 active Scottish charities.

OSCR Head of Engagement Dr Jude Turbyne said,

“It is important that charities realise the positive impact of reporting Notifiable Events to us.

“We do not want to know about every event, only those that threaten to have a significant impact on the charity or its assets. Reporting these incidents is a way of charities showing that they are trying to get on top of the problems they are facing and is generally a sign of good governance.

“We would like to acknowledge the charities who have submitted Notifiable Events to us so far. Where they have come in, we can see that the trustees are generally taking the correct steps to sort things out wherever possible.

“If you are nervous about reporting these issues to us, don’t be. Reporting such events is actually a positive step. It gives OSCR the reassurance it needs with respect to the governance of the charity, allows us to identify the correct sources of guidance and support for any given situation, and is ultimately a way of us acting together with the charity to try to ensure trust and confidence in the charity going forwards”

### [IFA added to list of Independent Examiners](#)

The Regulations have now [been amended](#) to allow members of The Institute of Financial Accountants to also provide independent examination services to charities preparing fully accrued accounts.

## News and updates from the Northern Ireland Charity Commission

### [New guidance on serious incident reporting](#)

### [CCNI EG059 Serious incident reporting - a guide for charity trustees](#)

“Should a serious incident occur in a charity, trustees are expected to follow the correct processes to manage the incident and report it to the Commission,” explained Commission Chief Executive Frances McCandless.

“The Commission’s role is to ensure that trustees take appropriate steps to limit the immediate impact of the incident and prevent it from happening again.

“Our new guidance acts as a step-by-step guide for trustees, highlighting what constitutes a serious incident, as well as when and how to report the incident to the Commission.” The Commission regards a serious incident as an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in, or risks, a significant:

- loss of charity money or assets
- damage to charity property
- harm to the work of the charity, its beneficiaries or reputation.

The most common types of incident include frauds, thefts, significant financial losses, money laundering, criminal breaches, allegations of terrorism or extremism, and safeguarding issues.

If a serious incident takes place, charity trustees are expected to report what happened to the Commission and explain how it is being managed. Incidents should be reported to the Commission even if the trustees have already reported them to the PSNI, donors or another regulator.

Ms McCandless added: “No one wants to see a serious incident occur in any organisation, but it’s

important that should such an incident occur trustees know how to deal with it.

“Being a charity trustee is a responsible role and it’s vital that trustees are aware of all their legal duties and responsibilities - reading our guidance is a first step.”

## Reflections on IE

### General Data Protection Regulation – how will it affect you as an independent examiner?

If you hold and process personal information about your clients, staff or suppliers, you must protect that information. This is the case under the current UK Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and will continue to be the case under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) when it commences on 25 May 2018. GDPR is an evolution of DPA – if you were compliant with DPA most of your current approach will still be valid.

The GDPR applies to ‘controllers’ and ‘processors’. A controller decides how and why ‘personal data’ is processed and the processor acts on behalf of the controller. The GDPR provides a more detailed definition of ‘personal data’. A recent webinar reminded the viewers that personal data is loaned to you, so you should respect it and remember it’s not yours to keep. Much of the GDPR is common sense – treat the personal data you hold in the way that you would want someone to safeguard and use your personal data.

The principles of GDPR, as set out in Article 5 of the Regulation, are:

- Lawfulness, fairness and transparency in relation to all personal data held
- Purpose limitation – use for specified reason only

- Data minimisation – only collect the data that you need
- Accuracy – erase or rectify out of date data
- Storage limitation – only keep data as long as necessary or depersonalise it if you need to keep it for analysis or other reasons
- Integrity and confidentiality – protection against unauthorised processing and accidental loss
- Accountability – a new requirement of GDPR whereby you must be able to demonstrate compliance with the regulations

GDPR also provides a right of access to the data you hold by the individual whose data it is.

### So, what do you need to do?

It really depends on the size of your business. If you are a sole-practitioner with no employees, you need to identify what personal data you hold, why you hold it and how are you going to keep it safe. Clearly all of the new regulations apply to you as much as to a larger organisation, but it should be more straightforward for you to comply.

For larger businesses with employees, it is crucial that all employees are aware of the new regulations. The following may be an appropriate way to help you comply with GDPR:

1. It is advisable to prepare a data map that shows what personal data you have and how best to protect it. This approach will enable you to identify and delete obsolete procedures and systems.
2. You need to consider whether a Data Protection Officer (DPO) needs to be appointed. Even if the GDPR does not require such an appointment all organisations are able to appoint a DPO.

Whether or not a DPO is appointed, you must ensure your organisation has sufficient staff and skills to discharge your GDPR obligations.

3. Put a team together to create a communications plan and strategy. Ensure all your staff know what GDPR is and why it is important.
4. Work out how the requirements of GDPR fit around your usual procedures and identify business opportunities arising from the process. Carry out a gap analysis against the principles listed above and the rights of individuals.
5. Make any changes that are needed to your procedures and policies. This will be a wide-ranging risk-based exercise that will take the information drawn from the first four steps, enabling you to meet the requirements of GDPR. This is likely to be a lengthy process and external assistance may be necessary, so do seek expert advice if necessary.

Having said this, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) website contains a number of useful toolkits to help you comply with the existing law as well as adapting your systems to meet the new regulations. Please see [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk) for further information.

### How will it affect your charity clients?

Your charity clients will be affected in the same way as you. They will need to review the personal data they hold and ensure it is safely held in accordance with the GDPR provisions, as outlined above.

Charities are likely to hold significant levels of personal data, whether it is in relation to beneficiaries, supporters, staff, volunteers, suppliers,

etc. Trustees will have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring their charity complies with GDPR but, in most cases, they will rely on staff to make sure the charity is compliant.

Article 6 of the Regulation sets out the legal justifications for holding an individual's personal data. The first one is that the individual has given their consent to the processing of their data for one or more specific purposes. The other one that primarily relates to charities is the sixth one, namely that processing the data is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the controller. Consent now requires a positive opt-in – consent by default is not allowed. In addition, charities (and everyone else) will have to be able to prove that people understand to what they are consenting.

The ICO lists five top data protection tips for charities, as follows:

1. Tell people what you are doing with their data
2. Ensure your staff are adequately trained
3. Use strong passwords
4. Encrypt all portable devices
5. Only keep personal data for as long as necessary

In addition, the ICO website includes various toolkits specifically for the charity sector:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/charity/>.

### EU ePrivacy Regulation

As if GDPR was not enough, another regulation is on its way – the EU ePrivacy Regulation. This Regulation addresses personal data protection and

concerns cookies, electronic communications, data privacy and much more.

This far-reaching Regulation will cover the Web, the Internet, telephone communications, instant messaging, spam, direct marketing, mobile app developers and so on.

The Regulation was originally intended to come into force at the same time as GDPR. However, as the draft text was not published until January 2017 it is now unlikely to be ready by May 2018. Despite the likely delay, the Regulation will be important and will add to your responsibilities under GDPR.

**Author: Peter Barton (FCA) Kreston Reeves**

## Ask the Examiner

*ACIE offers a 'queries' service for members. In those instances where we think the response to such queries would be helpful to the general membership, we will publish the anonymised response.*

**Query: I have a client for whom I act as Independent Examiner and this year they have asked if I can prepare the accounts and examine them, is this possible and what would your advice be?**

**Response:** The short answer to your query is - yes - it is normally permissible to prepare charity accounts and then examine them. Many examiners are asked to do this, usually for smaller charities that don't have trustees/staff with accountancy experience, and particularly if accruals accounts are needed, given all the disclosures required by the SORP and FRS 102.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In England & Wales there is no statutory requirement for IE where the income of the charity is less than £25k. In Scotland and Northern Ireland there is a requirement for an IE even if the charity income is £0.

*However, there are a number caveats of which you need to be aware:*

The trustees (and only the trustees) are responsible for preparing compliant accounts. Whilst they can seek assistance from their examiner (or anyone else) with preparing the accounts, their responsibility cannot be delegated. Your role in preparing the accounts would therefore be one of assisting the trustees with their duties, which is entirely separate from your role as Independent Examiner.

It is recommended that this is clearly detailed in your Letter of Engagement with the trustees.

*Whilst, it is normally permissible for the examiner to prepare accounts from the records provided by the trustees, the examiner should have no part in the accounting/bookkeeping process, otherwise you end up examining your own work.* This is not permissible as it brings your independence into question. Working from the client's trial balance, or cash book totals, if there is no trial balance, is generally fine.

However, it is not unusual to find that errors or omissions need to be corrected. In this case, you need to keep a note of all the entries required and get the trustees to confirm that they agree with the changes/additions that you propose to make. Obviously if they are using an accounting package, it is essential that they record these entries in their system or the starting point for the following year will not be correct.

Once you have a completed set of accounts. It is essential that the trustees review these carefully and are satisfied that they are correct, otherwise you can get into the following "circular" false argument.

- The trustees approve the accounts on the basis their accountant has prepared them, therefore they must be correct
- The accountant, now acting as examiner, takes the view that the trustees have approved what she/he prepared from the records that she/he has seen, therefore they must be ok.

In each case, a decision is made on the basis of what the other party is assumed to have done. This can be dangerous. If, for example, a grant has been recorded as unrestricted when it should have been restricted and there is no documentation to explain this to the examiner, the accounts could be materially misstated.

Before signing your IE report, you may wish to obtain a Letter of Representation from the client, which explicitly states that all the trustees have read the accounts; they are all satisfied that they are correct in all respects and that they accept full responsibility for the contents. What you are seeking to avoid is any possibility of the trustees attempting to "pass the buck" back to you in the future should matters come to light, that you were not made aware of, which cast doubt on the accuracy of the accounts.

### **Revision of Practice Note 11: The audit of charities in the UK**

**For those members who also carry out audits, this article may be of interests. It should also be noted that [Appendix 2](#) provides a good summary of the law on charity accountancy and audit/IE across all three UK jurisdictions at the present time, include the distinctions between different legal forms.**

The Financial reporting Council (FRC) has issued a revision of [Practice Note 11: The audit of charities in the United Kingdom](#) (PDF). Practice Notes are intended to assist practitioners to comply with the requirements of UK auditing standards, by providing additional contextual material on the application of those standards in particular circumstances or in

specialised sectors. The revisions to Practice Note 11 reflect:

- Revisions to International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK));
- Changes to UK accounting standards (FRS 102) and the revision of the Charities SORP;
- Continuing developments in regulation and guidance issued by the UK Charity Regulators; and
- Changes in relevant legislation.

The Practice Note has been developed with input from an expert working group comprising audit practitioners, charity regulators, and representatives of charities. The revisions that the FRC has made will support the delivery of high quality audit, and responds to recent well-publicised failings of certain charities that have been investigated by the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Select Committee, and the Committee of Public Accounts. An Invitation to Comment was issued in May 2017. The final revised Practice Note reflects the actions that the FRC determined should be taken, having considered the responses received.

## Charity Sector News

### [Budget 2017 does little for charity sector, according to Charity Digital News](#)

One of the key points delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer include an amendment to the Gift Aid donor benefit rules – the government will reduce from three to two the monetary thresholds setting out how much the value of benefits that charities can give a supporter as a result of a donation and still claim Gift Aid on that gift. Responding to the announcement, the Charity Tax Group said this means that, from April 2019, benefits can be worth up to 25 percent of the value of donations of up to

£100 and worth up to 5% on donations of more than £100.

It was also announced that the last £36m from the Libor rigging scandal will go to organisations including armed forces and rescue charities from funds raised through fines levied on banks following the Libor rigging scandal.

### [Fraud among charities up £400m; cost on charities over £2bn](#)

Fraud among the charity sector has risen by £400m over the year, costing charities approximately £2.3bn, estimates from a new fraud report have shown.

According to the [Annual Fraud Indicator 2017](#), published by the UK Fraud Costs Measurement Committee and based on research from Crowe Clark Whitehill, Experian and the University of Plymouth, found procurement fraud rose to almost £1.2bn, payroll fraud to £990m and grant fraud to £161m.

Although the report claims there is no official procurement expenditure data for the charity sector, the levels were estimated by its payroll costs and grants from the total turnover figure.

In 2016, fraud in registered charities stood at just under £1.9bn, showcasing a rise of £400m over the year to an estimated £2.3bn.

Last month during Charity Fraud Awareness Week, the Charity Commission warned a third of all charity fraud abuse is reported from within a charity, highlighting the scale of misuse of charity funds from within the charity itself.

Charity Commission chief executive Helen Stephenson said research by the Commission has found a third of fraud among charities is likely to

have been perpetrated by trustees, staff or volunteers of charities.

“We undertook some research into a sample of organisations who reported fraud to us, and a third of those were internal, meaning they were frauds originating from within the charity itself, perpetrated by trustees, staff or volunteers,” she said.

That’s why we’re working together with the wider sector to protect charities and donors. It’s not just people from the outside reporting issues. It is sadly people from within charities that are prepared to misuse charity funds,” she added.

## ACIE: News and Events

### Applying for Full Membership

One of the first communications Affiliates received from ACIE is a guide to becoming a full member. We realise because so many of you are busy ‘doing’ IE (and possibly a day job on top of that!) that making an application is not top of your ‘to do’ list. However, whatever your professional background, we believe that taking that step to full membership will benefit you, your practice and your clients.

### Benefits of becoming a Full Member

If you don’t have any other accountancy qualifications, full membership is the only way you can undertake IE at the higher level. (i.e. above £250,000 in England & Wales and Northern Ireland and the examination of accruals accounts in Scotland). Full membership can also be a demonstration of your commitment to upholding best practice. In the words of someone who recently achieved full membership:

*“Compliance for the majority of charities under the audit threshold is really important and that means Independent Examination. Independent Examination is*

*not just “audit light” but the best fit for these charities. As the partner in a firm specialising in the charity sector it is crucial that the appropriate compliance aspect is done well. I chose full membership of ACIE because it would demonstrate this commitment for myself and our charity team.”*

Becoming a full member allows you to appear on the ACIE website - the ‘Find an Examiner’ facility. Anybody looking for an Examiner can start here by seeing the services you offer and your location. Potential clients can contact you directly to discuss their requirements and fees. The ACIE office also takes a number of calls and emails from people looking for an Examiner and we are happy to act as contact point and pass on referrals.

### There are two different levels of Full Membership

Depending on your of level experience and/or your professional qualifications you might want to join as either an Associate or a Fellow.; both carry a designation. So what is the difference between the two?

Associate (Professional designation - ACIE)	Fellow ( Professional designation - FCIE)
Licence available for following levels: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. R &amp; P to £100,000</li> <li>2. R &amp; P to £250,000</li> <li>3. Accruals Accounts to £100,000 plus R &amp; P to £250,000</li> <li>4. All Accounts to £100,000</li> <li>5. All Accounts to £250,000</li> </ol>	Licence permits IE up to the legal limit, including the IE of accounts of a charity over the legal limit for IE, where dispensation from statutory audit has been granted by the relevant regulator.

As a rule of thumb, people without any other accountancy qualification tend to opt for Associate, some starting with the lower licence and then

working their way up to 'all accounts to £250,00' and, perhaps, then on to Fellow. Qualified accountants tend to opt for Fellow because it reflects what they are permitted to do under the current regulations.

### The Full Membership process

To become a full member you must submit an application form and examples of your work. The number of examples and the types of accounts you must submit vary according to whether you wish to become an Associate or a Fellow. For example, you need to have completed at least two examinations to apply for Associate Licence 1 level and a minimum of six examinations if you apply to become a Fellow.

Once applications are checked over for completeness, copies are sent to two members of the Membership Committee; each assess the application independently and the two reviews are compared. If both assessors are in agreement as to the quality of the application, a decision is made. If there is any disagreement between the two assessors a further discussion takes place and the final decision rests with the Committee Chair.

After the assessment process has been completed one of the following outcomes will be assigned:

- Application accepted
- If some minor concerns a Licence is granted for a period, usually 12 months, and a request for further submissions
- If close to meeting requirements you may be asked for additional evidence
- If Committee feels that a different category/licence is more appropriate (usually lower) that will be offered
- Application is rejected – full reasons for the rejection are given to the applicant

### What does a good application look like?

ACIE are looking for evidence that you have the appropriate knowledge and understanding of accounting principles, charity accounting and charity law and regulations in general as well as regulations specific to whatever part of the UK you work in.

We look for evidence that you have the appropriate knowledge and understanding of Independent Examination. For example, the application form asks you to list the steps you would take before, during and after an independent examination.

You will also need to demonstrate how you apply the key principles of independence, integrity, objectivity and confidentiality to your practice. The accounts you submit should also be presented in an appropriate form.

### What are the common reasons for applications being rejected?

Some of the most common reasons for an applications being rejected include:

- Too many sets of accounts based on a standard template. This can mean inappropriate notes from one client being transferred to another
- Non incorporated entity making reference to the Companies Act
- IE report not making reference to qualification of the Examiner when income > £250,000
- Carrying out work when not qualified to do so
- References in accounts and IE reports to old legislation – wrong SORP; wrong Charities Act; wrong Companies Act
- Accounts sent in with no TAR- which makes it difficult to assess accounts.

- Incorrect allocation of funds- fund notes (if there any) not agreeing with fund balances in SOFA or balance sheet
- Lack of understanding of general, designated, restricted and endowment funds
- Trustees listed for the year, not up to the date of signing
- Undated sets of accounts
- Accounts/notes which do not add up
- Mixtures of R & P accounts and full SORP accounts

### Supporting you to become a Full Member

What can we do to support you to become a full member? Firstly, rejected applications always provide feedback on mistakes and gaps in knowledge and understanding; we encourage people to reapply.

ACIE runs training events which provide introductions to charity accounting and examination as well as 'best practice' guides for more experienced examiners. We also have a regular 'Benefits of Full Membership' slots at our national conferences.

We are in the process of developing a new training schedule for 2018 which will address the some of the gaps in knowledge identified by the Membership Committee. We listen to your feedback from training events, national conferences and the recent learning needs survey to support you to the best of our ability.

You can download the application form and supporting notes from our website or email [info@acie.org.uk](mailto:info@acie.org.uk) for further information.

**ACIE supports Community Accounting conference - ACIE Members can benefit from reduced rates. (overnight rate including dinner and accommodation £279 compared to £299 standard - day rate £139 compared to £159 standard)**

**Wednesday, 7 Feb 2018, 15:00 - Thursday, 8 Feb 2018, 16:45 - Holiday Inn Manchester City Centre 25 Aytoun Street , MANCHESTER , M1 3AE:**

The conference gives delegates a technical update and practical advice on the key issues facing Community Accountants and charities across the UK.

Anyone involved in providing services and support in finance, accounting and payroll to the voluntary and community sector.

Come along and hear Ian Barrett (FCA FCIE) Chair of ACIE Trustees talk about the latest changes to charity regulation and come and catch up with Ian and Anne-Marie at our ACIE Stand. Click [here](#) to get more details.

### ACIE Learning Needs Survey

Respondents were asked to list their 'top three' learning priorities for 2018. Twenty six people responded. The list falls into the following broad topic headings:

1. Practice and policy updates
2. Best practice guides
3. Additional skills and knowledge for IE's

### Practice and policy updates

The majority of respondents (N=25) wanted updates on changes to Charity law, regulations and charity accounting. The most frequently mentioned examples were: updates on the new Directions, SORP, FRS 102, the duties and responsibilities of Trustees and restricted funds.

## Best practice guides

A number of respondents (mainly but not exclusively) Affiliates wanted to best practice guides on the following topics:

- Sets of 'good' accounts with commentary (R&P, Accruals and CIO's)
- Good examples of Trustees Annual Reports
- Good examples of Examiners reports
- 'How do other people do IE?' - including mentoring
- Refresher on how to do an IE
- Record keeping

## Additional skill and knowledge for IE's

Examples of additional skills and knowledge included:

- Data protection
- AML
- Payroll and benefits
- Gift Aid
- Tax
- Fraud
- Strategic planning
- Impact assessments
- Developing interpersonal skills

Face to face delivery of training was the popular method for delivery, followed by downloadable resources. Just over half of respondents also indicated that they would be happy with delivery via webinars and flexible, online learning.

Respondents had a clear preference for single day training. Our existing way of delivering courses over two concurrent days was one of the least popular methods.

The ACIE board will take the survey results into account when working on the new training schedule for 2018.

## ACIE in Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Advisory Committee hold its first meeting in December and ACIE Development Manager, Anne-Marie, will be joining Board Member Tony Clarke at an event at Queen's University, Belfast: *Accounting and reporting by Northern Ireland charities: where are we and where are we going?* 13th December 2017.

The event is hosted by the Centre for Not-for-profit and Public-sector Research, Queen's Management School (in association with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland - CCNI).

Members of the Management School recently produced a **Charity Accounting and Reporting at a Time of Change**

by Ciaran Connolly, Noel Hyndman, and Mariannunziata Liguor. Key features of this book include examples of reporting from UK and RoI charities, extracts from Trustees' Annual Reports and annual reports/financial statements, an investigation of performance-management systems in a charities context, and a charity annual report and annual review checklist.

Members who are interested in purchasing the book can do so on line: [www.charteredaccountants.ie/book](http://www.charteredaccountants.ie/book)

## Update on ACIE Training: Introduction to Charity Accounting & IE 28/29th November 2017.

Fourteen people joined our trainer Margaret Birse in London and I am pleased to say that the feedback was excellent! One participant commented:

*"Day two carried on where Margaret ended day one, with enthusiasm and an abundance of expertise"*

*delivered in a professional manner. Day two was bumper packed with a breadth of practical knowledge and experience delivered by a tutor who lives the walk that she delivers. A great advert for ACIE and advert why we should become members.”*

### A Postcard From Devon: Ian Barrett (ACIE Chair)

Dear Friends

Just an update on how life is for the Chair of your trustees.

Since becoming Chair (be warned, don't fall asleep during a vote at a trustees' meeting!) I have been clocking up the air and train miles on your behalf.

Late August was a flight to Edinburgh to go on to Perth for the ACIE Scottish conference, October, a train to London for the ACIE trustees' meeting and in November a train to Leeds to help to staff a stand, together with Anne-Marie for ACIE at the ACAT conference.

This was my second year at the Perth conference and it is great to be able to meet and spend time with members from north of the border. We still need a representative from

Scotland to join the board. A couple of years ago there were three Scottish members on the Board and now there are none!

In London it was good to meet with the Board and especially the new trustees, Alison, Susan, Shaun, Maroof and Thomas and our co-optee from Northern Ireland, Tony. We meet together three times a year in February, June and October. Please feel free to let us know of any matters that you would like us to address.

Our presence at the ACAT (Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers) conference was something that, as far as I am aware we have not

done before. Our drive over recent years has been, and still is, to increase membership and quality of members of ACIE but at the ACAT conference we were there to promote the existence of ACIE and its members. We felt that it was a way of meeting with treasurers and trustees to promote the idea, as part of good governance, of appointing Independent Examiners with knowledge and experience of church and charity accounts.

We made some good contacts and met a number of people from churches and from dioceses who had never heard of ACIE. We are also exploring greater links with ACAT and similar organisations in the future.

That is enough from me now so it just remains to wish you (if your life is like mine) a tax return filled Christmas and a 31<sup>st</sup> December year end filled new Year!

**Ian Barrett, Chair of Trustees**

### Keep the date!

The date for our next **England & Wales conference is 14th June 2018** - Location Manchester (Friends' Meeting House, 6 Mount Street, Manchester, M2 5NS)

The date for our next **Scottish conference 23rd August 2018** - Location Perth Concert Hall

### Interested in contributing to the next issue?

We are always looking for articles (500 words approx) and examples of good practice to publicise. Deadline for copy 15th February 2018. Email [anne-marie@acie.org.uk](mailto:anne-marie@acie.org.uk)

### Next Issue: March 2018