



IRRV ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

18 – 20 OCTOBER 2016
TELFORD INTERNATIONAL CENTRE



irrv

INSTITUTE OF REVENUES
RATING & VALUATION

PROGRAMME – Tuesday 18 October

9.00 REGISTRATION AND EXHIBITION OPENS

9.55 OPENING OF CONFERENCE

Cllr Rae Evans, The Mayor of Telford and Wrekin

10.00 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Jim McCafferty, IRRV President

10.15 FUTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Wallace Sampson, Chief Executive, Harrogate BC

Duncan Whitfield, Strategic Director of Finance and Governance, Southwark LBC

Chris West, Executive Director – Resources, Coventry CC

The speakers will critically analyse the future of Local Government in these uncertain times? Public spending is being cut. BREXIT is upon us. The economy is shrinking, 100% Rate retention is coming. Services are being devolved. Welfare Reform is faltering.

11.15 REFRESHMENT BREAK

11.45 KEY NOTE ADDRESS

Lord Freud, Minister of State for Welfare Reform

The Minister will comment on the revised UC programme, the impact of the housing element as part of UC and rent direct, the future of DHPs, the partnerships between local government and the DWP, the pension challenge and the inclusion of housing costs and the future of Social Security funding.

12.30 LUNCH BREAK

13.45 NNDR REVALUATION

Mary Hardman, Director – Non-Domestic Rating, Valuation Office Agency

The speaker will address the incidence of the shift in value of the various classes of hereditament. This will be the first major paper from the VOA post the publication of the draft list. The impact of the revaluation will also be addressed as well as the potential need for transition.

14.30 RATE RETENTION: 2020 AND BEYOND

Aivaras Statkevicius , Senior Adviser, Local Government Finance Team, LGA

The speaker will address the following issues: What does 100% really mean? What will be the impact of the revaluation? Will the system cope with the structure of the combined authorities? What will be the range of new services passed over to local administration? Will devolution work? What are the options for transferred services?

15.00 REFRESHMENT BREAK

15.30 UNIVERSAL CREDIT: THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Zena Cooke, Chief Financial Officer, Tower Hamlets LBC

The speaker will reveal what is really happening in local government regarding the implementation of UC? Are local authorities ready for the impact on housing? How will local authorities respond to the growth in poverty as a result of Welfare cuts? What does the future hold for the role of local government in the delivery of UC?

16.00 SERVICE DELIVERY TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES: WHO DELIVERS WHAT?

Nigel Blair, Head of Product Management & Innovation, Northgate Public Services

Judith Keech, Business Development Director – Group Strategic Sales, Capita

Gary Bell, Managing Director, BPO Services, Civica

Chair: Rob Whiteman, Chief Executive, CIPFA

The speakers from the main IT suppliers to Local Government will provide their vision for the future of service delivery in revenues, benefits and valuation. This session will address the issues of channel shift, developing technologies and managed services.

17.30 END OF SESSIONS

17.30 AGM

18.00 EXHIBITION CLOSES

PROGRAMME – Wednesday 19 October

REVENUES & ENFORCEMENT STREAM

8.30 REGISTRATION AND EXHIBITION OPENS

9.00 REFORM OF COUNCIL TAX – THE DEBATE

Kerry Macdermott, Head of Revenues and Assurance,
Pembrokeshire County Council

Sarah Kingston, Revenue Services Manager, Bracknell Forest BC

Carla-Maria Heath, Head of Revenues, Corporation of London

The speakers will address the following key statement: “The reform of Council Tax is long overdue?”. Is the banding system sufficiently resilient? Do we need a revaluation? Are the discounts appropriate to a modern society? What will be the impact of the localisation of Council Tax Reduction? Should Council Tax be replaced by a Land Value Tax?”

10.10 FUNDING OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Gordon Heath, Director, Gordon Heath Ltd.

The speakers will look at the future of the funding of local government? Are the current property taxes fit for purpose? Do we need to broaden the tax base? The buoyancy of both Council Tax and NDR need to be improved? What is the role of sundry income in the funding of local government? There is a need to find new sources of revenue that are sustainable.

10.45 REFRESHMENT BREAK

11.15 MONEY ADVICE ... WHERE FROM HERE?

Caroline Siarkiewicz, Head of Debt Advice, Money Advice Service

The speaker will outline the future of the Money Advice Service. She will look at the following issues: What is the current relationship with Central Government? Is the Third Sector sufficiently structured to take a wider role? How will the service cope with BREXIT and the declining economy? Is there a case for the service getting closer to local government?

11.50 WITHDRAWAL OF COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS – THE PAIN AND THE GAIN

Simon Quilter, Local Taxation Manager, Broadland BC

The speaker will address the following questions: Are Billing Authorities sufficiently active in the maintenance of the discount scheme? Is the verification process sufficiently robust? Do Billing Authorities have sufficient resources to collect the consequential debt? Is fraud aggressively pursued?

12.30 LUNCH BREAK

14.00 LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN INSOLVENCY

Hemel Mistry, Director, Horsfields Financial Consultants and Insolvency Practitioners

The speaker will reflect on recent case law and practice and potential legislative changes in this essential review of the performance of the Insolvency process. There will also be discussion on the role of the consultant in these matters and the value of the Billing Authority in taking an aggressive stance in these matters.

14.35 BREXIT AND REVENUES

Richard Harbord, Managing Consultant, MRF UK Limited

The speaker will give a thoughtful insight into the real impact of BREXIT on revenues administration? He will address the issues relating to data protection, local government funding, European procurement, regeneration, TUPE, Erasmus+ funding, State Aid and data sharing to name but a few!

15.15 REFRESHMENT BREAK

15.45 ENFORCEMENT: THE FUTURE

Nick Rowe, Strategic Finance Partner – Local Tax and Accounts Receivable, Ealing LBC

Vernon Phillips, Director General, CIVEA

The speaker will attempt to answer the following questions: Has the reform of enforcement worked? Do we need a review of the enforcement remedies available to local government? Has the enforcement industry performed? Is there any future for in house services?

16.45 CLOSE OF EXHIBITION & END OF SESSIONS

18.45 DRINKS RECEPTION

19.30 PERFORMANCE AWARDS GALA DINNER

PROGRAMME – Wednesday 19 October

BENEFITS STREAM

8.30 REGISTRATION AND EXHIBITION OPENS

9.00 HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENT: A POTENTIAL 'BLACK HOLE'

Ed Bowen, Service Support Manager, Chiltern & South Bucks District Councils

The speaker will comment on the problem of housing benefit overpayments and the importance of maximising the recovery of any outstanding sums. He will outline the techniques that are being used to help local authorities reduce the level of arrears.

9.35 CHALLENGING GOVERNMENT POLICY ON WELFARE REFORM

Geoff Fimister, Campaigns Officer, RNIB

We are now moving into a critical period in the Government's Welfare Reform programme. Without an effective opposition in Parliament who is going to hold the DWP to account. In this session the speaker will address the impact on poverty and in particular analyse the effect on the working age claimant addressing the fairness of the inclusion of the housing element and tax credits and what will be the hidden consequences.

10.10 THE LATEST FROM THE DWP

Claire Elliott, Deputy Director at Department for Work and Pensions, DWP

The speaker will consider the latest developments from the DWP. She will consider the role of local authorities as the transfer to Universal Credit gains pace after the recent announcements. There will also be the latest information on the subsidy discussions with the local authority associations.

10.45 REFRESHMENT BREAK

11.15 DWP SESSION

Alan Sullivan, Managing Consultant, Business Finance and Housing Delivery Directorate, DWP

John Giblin, Management Consultant

The speakers will look at the management of performance, fraud and error. The latest on FERIS and the future intentions of the DWP regarding the incentivisation of anti fraud and overpayment activity.

12.30 LUNCH BREAK

14.00 IMPLEMENTING UNIVERSAL CREDIT: THE BASILDON EXPERIENCE

Shanna Chandiwana, Commercial Implementation and Change Manager, Basildon BC

The speaker will consider whether Universal Credit has yet to gain pace. This session will look at the approach from a forward looking local authority that have developed innovative partnerships with stakeholders and key players in the Third Sector.

14.35 JOINING-UP BENEFITS AND WELFARE ACCESS ACROSS TWO TIERS

Frankie Cartwright, Director of Financial & Welfare Services, South Staffordshire BC

The speaker will look at the development of services in a two tier structure. It will address the challenges of drawing together two local authorities with different political structures and different styles of service delivery.

15.15 REFRESHMENT BREAK

15.45 CTR SCHEMES: 3 YEARS ON

Louise Freeth, Change and Service Development Manager, Liberata

The speaker will look at the development of CTR schemes and the need to be innovative with the funding becoming more restricted. She will comment on the DCLG Review and the conclusions that were drawn from the first three years of scheme delivery.

16.15 SUPPORTING PEOPLE: THE LAMBETH EXPERIENCE

David Ashmore, Divisional Director Revenue & Benefit, Lambeth LBC

The speaker will address the challenges of delivering key services to vulnerable customers in this "award winning" London Borough. The paper will highlight the innovative approaches to implementing local policies in a deprived local authority.

16.45 CLOSE OF EXHIBITION & END OF SESSIONS

18.45 DRINKS RECEPTION

19.30 PERFORMANCE AWARDS GALA DINNER

PROGRAMME – Wednesday 19 October

VALUATION STREAM

8.30 REGISTRATION AND EXHIBITION OPENS

9.00 CHECK, CHALLENGE AND APPEAL – THE DEBATE – WHAT NEXT

Blake Penfold, Consultant Business Rates, GL Hearn

Tony Masella, Chief Executive, VTS

The speakers will challenge the Check, Challenge and Appeal proposals. It will ask if they are fit for purpose and workable. What will be the response of the Rating Surveyor? How will they protect the position of their client; the ratepayer? Will the new approach reduce the overall volume of work?

10.45 REFRESHMENT BREAK

11.15 RATE AVOIDANCE – DEFENDING THE INDEFENSIBLE

Cain Ormondroyd, Barrister, Francis Taylor Building

The speaker will consider the amount of revenue being lost to rate avoidance and whether this is increasing. The extent of the loss is such that something must be done; however, avoidance is lawful and only significant legislative change can arrest the leakage of income. This session will explore all the options which will include “doing nothing”

11.50 OUTCOMES FOR THE 2017 REVALUATION: IMPACT ON OCCUPIERS, LANDLORDS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Andrew Hetherton, Director, Head of Business Rates, GL Hearn

Simon Green, Partner, Gerald Eve

The speaker will address the various outcomes of the revaluation and address the impacts on all the interested parties. It will comment on the shift of incidence of the tax and ask if the various impacts are fair. The need for a transitional scheme will also be explored.

12.30 LUNCH BREAK

14.00 RATES RETENTION – ISSUES FOR VALUERS

Roger Messenger, Partner, Wilks Head & Eve

The speaker will analyse the current rate retention scheme and explore the impact of the move to 100% retention. He will address all the key issues including the exercise and fettering of discretion together with the financial damage caused to local authorities by reductions in assessment and transfers to and from the Central List.

14.35 FREQUENCY OF REVALUATIONS, FORMULA AND SELF-ASSESSMENT

Duncan Preston, Director of Valuation, Aston Rose Chartered Surveyors

The speaker will look at the options for the use of formula approaches to valuation and the use of self assessment. He will comment on the frequency of revaluations and the ideal solution for this difficult issue. In addition, the potential use of AVMs for non domestic valuations

15.15 REFRESHMENT BREAK

15.45 THE UPPER TRIBUNAL

Peter McCrea, Member, Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber), Royal Courts of Justice

The speaker will explain the key role of the Upper Tribunal in protecting the decision making in the valuation process. He will illustrate this by reference to recent key decisions and the reasoning behind the various outcomes. He will also comment on the impact of the Check, Challenge and Appeal process on the Upper Tribunal.

16.15 VTS AND VTE

Lee Anderson, Director of Operation and Development, VTS

The speaker will explain the current operation of the VTE and VTS and explain the impact of Check, Challenge and Appeal on the day to day operation of the service. The speaker will explain how the new process is designed to operate efficiently with both the ratepayer (and their advisors) and the Valuation Office Agency

16.45 CLOSE OF EXHIBITION & END OF SESSIONS

18.45 DRINKS RECEPTION

19.30 PERFORMANCE AWARDS GALA DINNER

PROGRAMME – Wednesday 19 October

FRAUD STREAM

9.35 FRAUD IN BUSINESS RATES

David Magor, Chief Executive, IRRV

Janet Alexander, Professional Services Manager, IRRV

This session will look at the contrast between property tax evasion and avoidance, the application of reliefs and exemptions, misrepresentation and the potential for internal fraud.

10.45 REFRESHMENT BREAK

11.15 HOUSING AND TENANCY FRAUD

Mick Hopkins, Senior Investigations Officer, Oxford CC

Jo O'Shea, TEICAFF

This session will be a practical approach to identifying the different forms of housing and tenancy fraud. It will outline the most effective remedies that are being applied to ensure the maximisation of the recovery of resources and repatriation of funds.

12.30 LUNCH

PROGRAMME – Thursday 20 October

9.30 REFRESHMENTS

10.00 LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN LOCAL TAXATION, REVENUES AND BENEFITS

Kevin Stewart, Local Taxation & Benefits Manager, Wealden BC

Alistair Townsend, Revenues & Benefits Service Delivery Manager,
Milton Keynes Service Partnership

This final morning session will take a wide view of the very latest developments in key areas of Institute activity. The speakers will look at recent decisions in the courts, the discussions taking place in Government departments on the implementation of Rate Retention, Council Tax, Enforcement, Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Welfare Reform and reform of the Non Domestic Rate.

12.30 CLOSE OF CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE EXHIBITION

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- DWP
- Engie
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- Equita
- Esendex
- Excel Enforcement
- Experian
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