



## Chair's Annual Report 2015-2016

### Overview

I have been delighted to see ACE strengthen and deepen its role this year, with a strong membership our events have increased in number and quality, as have our relationships with senior stakeholders at the centre of government reinforced a growing interest in the value and role of ALBs and their leaders. We began our strong programme with a seminar with John Manzoni, Chief Executive of the Civil Service on the outcomes of the spending review, and have since delivered a range of discussions on areas of key interest to CEOs such as cyber security, talent interchange, public body reviews and Brexit. Our events have provided opportunities for engagement with key figures within government, such as Sir Jeremy Heywood, Head of the Civil Service, the Rt. Hon. David Gauke MP, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, the Minister for Cabinet Office, the Rt. Hon Ben Gummer and Sarah Healey, Director-General, Department for Exiting the European Union. We are also pleased to be building partnerships with other sectors and our event on leadership with ACEVO, the network for CEOs of charities, was a great opportunity to learn from and explore common themes and challenges across sectors.

The past few months have been a time of significant change for the UK, and there are still many uncertainties surrounding the implications of the Brexit vote and subsequent change in government for the ALB landscape. However, such periods only reinforce the value of the ACE network, to share challenges and influence government. As I step down as Chair of ACE, after a number of years on the board, I am confident that our network is well-placed to support members and the centre to work together more effectively to deliver the government's agenda.

### Engagement with stakeholders

ACE continues to work to strengthen our influence within Whitehall, including continuing to engage with the Public Bodies Reform Team in Cabinet Office, Sue Owen, Permanent Secretary at DCMS and ACE Government Sponsor, as well as John Manzoni and Sir Jeremy Heywood.

### Cross functional reviews

Following conversations with John Manzoni, Chief Executive of the Civil Service in July 2015, looking to explore better ways of working collaboratively across departments and ALBs, ACE were very pleased to be at the forefront of initiating the first cross-functional review, in partnership with Cabinet Office and the Public Chairs' Forum. Cross-functional reviews offer the opportunity for ALBs to explore ideas for reform by looking broadly across a wide scope of public bodies to learn from each other's approaches, identifying efficiencies that could have been missed if reviewing bodies through the individual lens of the department. The first ALB-led

'regulatory futures' review was completed in September. Amanda Spielman, Chair of the review, has reported that the review team has identified a number of significant recommendations for the regulatory sector. The next review of this nature will be on advisory bodies and is currently underway.

The PCF and ACE are very supportive of the move to work collectively to review public bodies and believe there is much value in leaders at the frontline of delivery being embedded in the process. We therefore see value in reflecting on what has worked well in this first review and taking the time to consider any potential areas for improvement. Our report "*Lessons learnt on the set-up and commissioning of the regulatory futures review*", which was written in partnership with the PCF, aims to identify the key indicators for setting up these reviews for success. Once the review is completed the PCF/ACE are planning a secondary report on what this new approach actually delivered and how we can learn from it.

### ALB sponsorship

ACE is also working closely with Cabinet Office as there is a move to reform the sponsorship function. The recent House of Commons Public Accounts Committee, (PAC) report on *Departments' oversight of arm's-length bodies*, which launched off the back of [National Audit Office's investigation](#) earlier in July, has produced a number of significant recommendations - notably calling for guidance from Cabinet Office to facilitate more consistent and proportionate levels of oversight across departments and recognition of the expertise and skills within ALBs. ACE sees this as an opportunity not just to tighten oversight, but to redefine the relationship between departments and ALBs. We will be aiming to work closely with Cabinet Office as they develop their framework in order to shape a new model of sponsorship based on effective partnership.

### Civil Service Policy Profession

Central to our agenda is ensuring that delivery perspectives are built into reform agendas. Therefore, we are liaising with the Civil Service Policy Profession, where we are exploring ways to facilitate greater communication between CEOs of delivery bodies and individuals at the forefront of policy-making. ACE is currently forming an interest group with individuals from both sides of policy and delivery and will be looking to put together an event in the New Year.

### **Membership**

ACE currently has 93 corporate members, which includes 187 individual members. We are always looking to increase our strength and influence by widening our membership, but also maintaining the value and intimacy of our conversations. In a time of great public sector reform, and with the support of the membership, ACE has reviewed their membership criteria this year to increase the flexibility of eligible members. Membership is now open to organisations that have a main service delivery function with a direct relationship to either central or devolved government, parliaments and assemblies. ACE is committed to ensuring that our members make a valuable contribution to our network.

### **Looking forward**

2016 looks set to be another interesting year; the Brexit vote and Autumn Statement will have some big challenges, and ACE is committed to ensuring that we offer tailored and responsive support to our members as they respond to the challenges ahead.

### **ACE Executive Board**

The ACE Executive Board for 2016 included:

#### **John Alty, Outgoing Chair**

Formerly Chief Executive, Intellectual Property Office, moved to Director General Department for International Trade

#### **Claire Bassett, Vice-Chair**

Chief Executive, Parole Board

#### **Ian Gambles, Honorary Treasurer and Head of Governance**

Director, Forestry Commission England

#### **Sheenagh Adams**

Keeper & Chief Executive, Registers of Scotland

#### **Adrian Belton**

Chief Executive, Construction Industry Training Board

#### **Graham Farrant**

Chief Executive and Chief Land Registrar, HM Land Registry

#### **Michael King**

Chief Executive, Local Gov. Ombudsman

#### **Elaine Lorimer**

Chief Executive, Revenue Scotland

#### **Anne Sharp**

Chief Executive, ACAS

#### **Glenys Stacey, DBE**

Chief Inspector of Probation, HM Inspectorate of Probation

**Private Roundtable Discussion with John Manzoni, Chief Executive of the Civil Service, February 17 2016**

A discussion on the objectives of the Spending Review and how ALBs can contribute to the reform agenda.

**Cabinet Office, ACE and PCF joint seminar, March 23 2016**

A seminar on public body reform strategy, including cross cutting and tailored reviews

**Building and Engaging our Workforce, April 21 2016**

A seminar looking at engaging staff in transformational change.

**Security in a Digital World, May 23 2016**

A seminar focusing on building cyber resilience into our ALBs.

**'Leading in Uncertain Times' in partnership with ACEVO, September 13 2016**

An event exploring common themes and challenges across leadership in voluntary and government bodies.

**Breakfast seminar with Sir Jeremy Heywood, Head of the Civil Service & Cabinet Secretary, October 7 2016**

A joint seminar with the Public Chairs' Forum considering the implications of the EU referendum result across government and for arm's length bodies.

**Private roundtable discussion with Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Rt Hon David Gauke MP, October 25 2016**

A seminar with the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, considering government's direction to fiscal policy.

**Financial Report - December 2015-November 2016**

Although income fell 6% below expectations, control of discretionary costs meant that a surplus of £6.5K was achieved for the year, well above budget. ACE's balance sheet remains healthy, with reserves at 31 March 2016 of £54,322.

The Board anticipates pressures on the level of management charge in the current year, the elements of which are under discussion with our landlords the Institute for Government and our partners the Public Chairs Forum.

Depending on the success of efforts to boost ACE membership, this will inevitably have some impact on the income and expenditure account, but the underlying position remains robust.

**Ian Gambles,  
ACE Treasurer**

**ACE income and expenditure 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016**

	Budget	Variance	Total
<b>Income</b>			
Subscriptions	55,000	-2,032	52,968
Other sources	9000	-1,800	7,200
Total income	64,000	-3,832	60,168
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Management charge	50,000	0	50,000
Admin/running costs	4,000	-2,952	1,048
Conference costs	7,000	-4,437	2,563
Total expenditure	61,000	-7,839	53,611
Surplus/deficit	3,000	3,557	6,557
<b>ACE Balance Sheet</b>			
<b>Assets</b>	<b>31 March 2016</b>		<b>31 March 2015</b>
Cash at bank	64,744		46,901
Debtors	33,375		31,534
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Accruals	30,607	30,670	
Deferred income	13,125	0	
Net assets	54,324	47,765	
<b>Funded by:</b>			
Reserves b/f	47,765	66,043	
Surplus from I/E account	6,557	-18,278	
Reserves c/f	54,322	47,765	



## **Minutes of ACE Annual General Meeting: 24 November 2016**

### **Institute for Government**

#### **1. Election of Board and Officers**

John Alty stood down as ACE Chair due to his new position in central government. Graham Farrant was elected as new ACE Chair; Claire Bassett was re-elected as vice-chair; and Anne Sharp was re-elected for the board. Sarah Harrison was elected to the board for the first time. Elaine Lorimer stood down from the board.

The board is now comprised of the following members:

Graham Farrant, Chair

Claire Bassett, Vice-Chair

Ian Gambles, Treasurer

Anne Sharp

Sheenagh Adams

Glenys Stacey

Adrian Belton

Sarah Harrison

#### **2. Appointment of Chair**

It was agreed that Graham Farrant would chair the meeting.

#### **3. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies from Ian Gambles, Treasurer, were noted.

#### **4. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

The minutes of the last annual general meeting of ACE held on 3 December 2015 were approved as an accurate record. There were no matters arising.

#### **5. ACE Annual Report 2015/2016**

The annual report for 2015/2016 accounts of the Association for 2015/2016 were formally received and noted.

#### **6. Any other business**

Graham Farrant thanked John Alty for Chairing ACE.

**7. To agree the arrangements for the next AGM of the Association**

Graham Farrant confirmed that the next AGM would take place at the Association's conference in 2017.