

**FEEDBACK FROM THE CHARITY REPORTING CONFERENCE
HELD ON 4 DECEMBER 2009**

1. Background

- 1.1. The SORP Committee agreed to the convening of a conference to serve a two-fold purpose. Firstly to launch the research report on the outcome of the SORP research exercise and secondly to engage the sector with the Accounting Standards Board's consultation on the future of UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (UK GAAP).
- 1.2. The conference was promoted by the Commission and OSCR through our sector partners, our websites and a direct mailing to professional advisers, funders, government funders, sector bodies and charities. In total 312 letters were sent. Of the 180 booked delegates, about 130 delegates attended all or part of the day.
- 1.3. After the initial presentations, there was an opportunity for debate during the closing plenary. Appendix 1 to this paper sets out the feedback noted and received. In addition to the discussion, there were 5 written pieces of feedback. In addition 60 conference feedback forms were completed rating the conference venue, presentations and arrangements.

2. Overview of the Conference

- 2.1. Overall feedback was very positive with all average ratings scoring good. A typical comment was: 'good conference with lots of additional material not on the slides i.e. worth listening'.
- 2.2. The ratings for each aspect were based on a weighted average. The average multiplied the responses recorded for each comment by the quality rating to yield a total. This total is then divided by the number of responses for that aspect to give the average quality rating. The resulting average score would lie between 0.0 and 4.0 where a rating of 4.0 would be excellent, 3.0 good, 2.0 satisfactory, 1.0 poor and 0.0 very poor.
- 2.3. In summary, all presentations scored good at 3.0 or better with Andrew Hind's keynote address the most highly rated with an average score of 3.2. All aspects of the conference were rated good with the highest ratings for the reservation (e-booking) process which had an average score of 3.4 and the accessibility of the location which also scored 3.4.

3. Initial themes emerging from the feedback

- 3.1. The feedback is considered in two parts, the feedback in the plenary session and separately the written feedback.
- 3.2. The feedback confirmed a number of areas of technical debate already identified by the SORP research report, namely the recognition of income and accruals for multi-year grants and the tension between the simplicity of receipts and payments accounting versus the greater accuracy

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afforded by accruals accounting when considering the financial position of a charity.

3.3. In debate there appeared some concern at the capacity of small charities and some audit practitioners to cope with any changes. A solution needed to be one that addressed these needs. The nature of whether £500,000 gross income was the cut off for small was also debated but without a consensus emerging.

4. Conclusions

4.1 The conference was a valuable event that enabled the ASB to meet a broad representative grouping of charity accounts preparers and practitioners in a broad debate.

4.2. The conference did not yield any new issues not reviewed by the research and it confirmed that a solution that focuses on the needs of smaller charities is supported. Also while a single comprehensive solution is preferred, there is some concern that a single solution itself does not prove to be too complex or lengthy.

Questions:

- 1. Have members of the SORP Committee who attended the conference any additional points to add that are not already noted in the feedback?**
- 2. Does the Committee agree that the appendix to this paper can be used to inform the response to the ASB's consultation and should also be edited and published as a summarised record of the event?**