

Treasurer's Report Annual Conference of LDCs 2008

Accounts

The move out of London paid a significant dividend in terms of costs as can be seen by the Audited Accounts and Comparison with Previous Years accompanying this report. I was disappointed however in not being able to collect all the subscriptions due. 3 LDCs – North Staffordshire, Somerset, and Southampton & South West Hampshire have not paid anything, and South Lancashire has only paid 50%. In each case, the blame can be directly attributed to the mismanagement of the introduction on the new contract by both government and PCTs who needlessly destroyed the levy collection systems without ensuring a suitable replacement vehicle was in place. The current surplus that has accumulated over the years is almost entirely due to the sponsorship Conference has received, and I would like to thank all sponsors, past and present for supporting Conference.

Conference Levy

For nearly 10 years now, the Conference Levy has been £5 per practitioner per year, and the Agenda Committee has no plans to increase it whilst we hold a large surplus. This surplus will be eroded very quickly if we do not maintain the current contribution levels particularly as the current increase in costs bears little relation to official inflation figures. I have been contacted by several LDCs whose own financial position has worsened to say that they will in future only pay the Conference Levy on behalf of those practitioners who contribute to their own levy, rather than for each practitioner on their PCO's primary care performer list. I have strongly resisted this move and encouraged the LDCs concerned to improve their own finances by increasing the numbers who contribute to their levy. The BDA has an advice pack for LDC Secretaries, which includes help on levies.

Northern Ireland

For many years, the LDCs in Northern Ireland paid a reduced levy to Conference on the same grounds as discussed above. The Agenda Committee thought it was inequitable that LDCs should not contribute proportionally, and we have had many discussions with NI in an attempt to resolve the situation. The Northern Irish LDCs have taken the unanimous view this year that as their contract negotiations are heading in a different direction to England & Wales, their resources would be better employed concentrating on local issues, rather than pay the full fee to Conference. This decision is for this year only and we hope they will reconsider next year and rejoin Conference

Website

The website was started by the Agenda Committee last year to facilitate the flow of information and reduce stationery and mailing costs. It is the Agenda Committee's intention to use the website for the bulk of the mailings, and if you have not already registered I encourage you to do at www.ldcuk.org Unfortunately, only 50% of the delegates here registered on the website in time to receive the official mailings, and I think the continued use of the website should be debated, perhaps at Official's Day.

Tim Harker

Hon Treasurer