**IRRV Thames Valley Association Business Rates Forum**

The Thames Valley Executive are pleased to present a day of topical presentations from **five** well-known figures in the business rates world, each giving a presentation from a very different perspective on Business Rates in both the current climate and in the future.

We are extremely grateful to our five speakers **David Magor,** **Frank Wilson,** **Andrew Hetherton, Alistair Townsend and Kevin McCarthy** for giving their time to speak at this event and we have no doubt that the content of the day will be exceptionally interesting and thought provoking.

The event will be held on **22nd April 2016** in the Council Chamber at the Wokingham Borough Council offices in Wokingham town centre. Lunch will be provided and attendance is free to IRRV members. Non-members are very welcome for a charge of only £20.00 per head. Please email to confirm your attendance as requested at the bottom of this document.

The proposed programme for the day is as follows:

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| Time | Content  |
| 10.00 | Registration and Coffee |
| 10.30  | **David Magor****Chief Executive, IRRV** Maximising Business Rate Income  |
| 11.15  | **Frank Wilson** **Strategic Director, West Oxfordshire District Council & Cotswold District Council**Benefits and risks of Local Authority pooling arrangements  |
| 11.45 | Coffee Break |
| 12.00 | **Alistair Townsend** **Revenues & Benefits Service Delivery Manager, Milton Keynes Council**Mandatory and Discretionary Relief – time to review?  |
| 12:45 | Lunch  |
| 13:30 | **Andrew Hetherton** **Director of Business Rates, GL Hearn**Business Rates Update  |
| 14.15 | Coffee Break |
| 14.30 | **Kevin McCarthy****Managing & Operations Director, Newlyn Plc** Latest developments in Business Rates enforcement and recovering debt from problem ratepayers. |
| 15.15 | **Further questions and open discussion****Opportunity to ask any further questions to any of the five speakers.**  |
| 15.30 | Close of Forum  |
| 15.45 | Thames Valley Association AGM  |

**David Magor OBE IRRV (Hons)**

David is the Chief Executive of the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation. He was formerly the Director of Housing and Revenues at Oxford City Council, David is a past President of the IRRV and became its CEO in 2001. He was awarded the OBE by the Queen in 1994 for his services to local government.

His knowledge of the theory and practice of Local Government Finance and Benefits is held in high regard and he has been a frequent advisor to Government departments such as the Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Communities and Local Government, and the Ministry of Justice. He also was an advisor to the Local Government Association.

He was a member of the OECD/World Bank training group advising transition countries and has been an advisor to the Northern Ireland Assembly. He has participated in numerous missions worldwide on local taxation, he recently returned from a successful visit to advise the Chinese Ministry of Finance on property tax.

**Frank Wilson, West Oxfordshire District Council & Cotswold District Council**

Originally from York and having previously worked for Selby District Council and Hambleton District Council in North Yorkshire, Frank has been in West Oxfordshire since 2006. Frank has been in a shared Director role with neighbouring Cotswold District Council since 2009 with responsibility for all Corporate Resources activities including Finance, Revs and Bens, ICT, Legal and Property and from 1 April becomes Head of Paid Service for both Councils as they extend their shared service adventure with other partners Cheltenham BC and Forest of Dean DC.

He is an executive member of Society of District Council Treasurers and Honorary Treasurer of that body for the last two years (the Treasurer’s Treasurer!).

Key specialisms include Strategic Finance; Property; Shared Services and Revenues (albeit a bit rusty)

West Oxfordshire established a business rates pool with Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council in April 2014 in what was entitled North Oxfordshire Business Rates Pool. Cotswold went into the Gloucestershire County Business rates pool the same year – a fully inclusive pool for the whole county.

**Alistair Townsend, Milton Keynes Council**

Alistair has been an IRRV member for many years and he was elected onto the National Council in October 2013. He currently serves on the Law and Research Committee and is current Chair of the Local Taxation and Revenues Faculty Board. He is a regular contributor to "Insight" and Faculty publications and was until recently, an Institute examiner.

Alistair is employed by the Milton Keynes Council as the Revenues & Benefits Service Delivery Manager. He heads a team of over 140 people delivering all aspects of the Council's Revenues & Benefits Service, Local Welfare Provision Service and Corporate Debt team.

Alistair has played a large part in tackling known Business Rates avoidance schemes and has a wealth of knowledge and experience in this area.

**Andrew Hetherton, GL Hearn:**

Andrew is Head of Business Rates and is responsible for advising clients in respect of rating matters. His current work encompasses all classes of rating; however, specific types within retail warehouses and retail shops included offices, warehouses and stores.

He also co-ordinates and negotiates appeals. He has gained experience with the Valuation Officer previously dealing with settlements of Council Tax appeals and presentation of cases on behalf of the Listing Officer before the local Valuation Tribunal.

**Kevin McCarthy – Newlyn Plc:**

Kevin is a leading authority on the enforcement reforms and their impact. As Managing and Operations Director of Newlyn plc and with over 20 years’ experience as a certificated enforcement agent, Kevin is an advocate for standards and development in the industry - currently vice president of CIVEA. Kevin understands the impact of the legislation changes and is actively involved in ongoing consultation with the Ministry of Justice, with particular emphasis currently in relation to the first year review.

**Association AGM**

At the end of the Business rates Forum the association’s executive will be holding its Annual General Meeting, if you are interested in become part of the executive or are interested what happens at the AGM please do feel free to stay and attend.

If you are interested in finding out more about the association prior to the meeting or would like to join the executive please contact Kevin Strong, President of the branch by email Kevin.Strong@hounslow.gov.uk.

**Location**

The meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at Wokingham Borough Council, Shute End
Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1BN. The Offices are just a short walk from Wokingham train station and there are car parks located nearby. A map can be found here:

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/contact-us/visit-us/>

**Registering Attendance**

As lunch is being provided at this event, please can you register your attendance at this meeting by emailing sarah.kingston@bracknell-forest.gov.uk by 15th April, so that the appropriate lunch order can be placed.

**Not an IRRV Member?**

Non IRRV members are more than welcome to attend this meeting; however, as stated above there will be a small charge of £20.00, payable in advance.

The IRRV and its associations run a full programme of events throughout the year designed specifically for Revenues, Benefits and Valuation professionals including professional qualifications, training and forum sessions on various subjects to name a few. If you are interested in becoming a member please visit the institute’s website at: <http://www.irrv.net/membership/index.asp>