

PUBLIC SERVICES NEWS!

AWICS

Independence.....Integrity.....Value
Adrian Waite (Independent Consultancy
Services) Limited



January 2007

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'AWICS' provides a full range of ethical management consultancy and training services, principally to those who provide public services such as local authorities, schools, colleges, housing associations, health authorities, voluntary bodies and many more.

All You Want To Know About Local Authority Housing Finance

When I first started to work in local authorities in the 1980s there was a general view that housing finance was complicated, boring and best left to accountants. Since then housing finance has certainly become even more complicated and possibly even more boring! However, there is a growing realisation that it should not just be left to the accountants.

How can a person be effective as a housing manager, councillor, member of an arms length management organisation board, civil servant dealing with housing or a tenant representative if they do not have a good basic understanding of local authority housing finance?

For some years I have been providing courses on local authority housing finance that have been well received. For example, Alistair Courtney of the Housing Best Practice Unit said:

"I always remember the housing finance course I attended which you delivered - it was ace - really clear and helpful."

This year we have organised another series of seminars in different venues around England during February and March 2007 that will let you find out all that you want to know about local authority housing finance. It will include an overview of the subject that is also completely up to date.

Details follow and a brochure and booking form can be downloaded from:
www.awics.co.uk/services/housingfinancecourse.asp

Adrian Waite

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E-Mail: Adrian.waite@awics.co.uk. Website: www.awics.co.uk.

Managing Director: Adrian Waite MA CPFA ACIH FIPSM.
Company Number: 3713554. VAT Registration Number: 721 9669 13

What the Course will Cover:

Housing Revenue Accounting, Rent Restructuring, Service Charges, Housing Subsidy, Capital Programmes, Housing Investment Programmes, the Decent Homes Standard, Housing Subsidy and Housing Investment Programme settlement for 2007/2008, Housing Revenue Account Business Plans, Comprehensive Spending Review 2007, Efficiency & Effectiveness, Strategic Housing responsibilities, Best Value, Private Sector Housing and Homelessness, Supporting People, Housing Benefit, Regeneration, Registered Social Landlords, Options Appraisals, Stock retention and sustainability, Arms Length Management, the Private Finance Initiative, Stock Transfer and many other aspects of local authority housing finance.

The course is accompanied by a very useful 100 page booklet entitled:

“All You Want To Know About Local Authority Housing Finance”

Many people – officers, elected members and tenants have already benefited from this course.

The Speaker

Our speaker Adrian Waite is well known for his in-depth knowledge of this subject and for his ability to present information clearly.

Adrian's recent work has included evaluating housing stock options appraisals for Regional Government Offices, carrying out housing stock options appraisals for local authorities, preparing housing revenue account business plans for local authorities, developing procurement and value for money strategies for local authorities and acting as an Independent Tenants' Advisor. He is therefore well placed to explain housing finance as it is seen in central and local government and its impact on tenants, their homes and the services that they receive.

Venues and Dates

London : Kensington Close Hotel - 13th February and 13th March 2007

Wakefield : Cedar Court Hotel – 1st March 2007

Lichfield: Little Barrow Hotel – 7th March 2007

Warrington: Rhinewood Country House Hotel – 22nd March 2007

How to reserve your place

- **By Phone:** Please telephone us on 017683-52347 or 54005
- **By Fax:** Fax us on 017683 54005
- **On line:** You can download this form from www.awics.co.uk/services/housingfinancecourse.asp, fill it in electronically and forward to: Adrian.waite@awics.co.uk
- **By post:** Complete this form and send it to:
AWICS Ltd, Appleby Business Centre, Appleby in Westmorland, Cumbria. CA16 6QH.

Do not send any payment: We will confirm your booking and send an invoice.

Delegate fees:

The cost of this seminar is £240 in London and £210 at other venues plus VAT making a total of £282 in London and £246.75 at other venues. The fee includes lunch* and booklet – 'All you Want to Know about Local Authority Housing Finance'

Local Government Finance Settlement 2007/08

The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2007/08 is the second year of the three-year settlement first announced in December 2005. This settlement introduced three-year revenue and capital grants settlements, a new grant system and the 'Dedicated Schools Grant'. The 2007/08 settlement therefore includes few surprises, no changes to the distribution formulae and no changes in the data used. The domestic rate revaluation is still postponed and the Lyons enquiry into local government finance has had its remit extended and deadline postponed.

The new grant system introduced in 2006/07 does not use notional figures either for spending (formerly the 'Formula Funding Shares') or for council tax yield (formerly the 'Assumed National Council Tax'). Instead the system uses projected data on population and the council tax base and introduced:

- Relative Needs Formula (RNF)
- Relative Resource Amount (RRA)
- Central Allocation
- Floor Damping

The Relative Needs Formula includes separate elements for: Children's Services; Adults' Personal Social Services; Police; Fire; Highway Maintenance; Environmental, Protective & Cultural Services; and Capital Financing. The Relative Needs are then considered within six groups: Upper Tier; Lower Tier; Police; Fire; Mixed Tier; and Capital. These Relative Needs are then converted into a cash amount.

Ruth Kelly, the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government, said:

"Sensible planning for service delivery needs a stable and predictable funding environment... This year's announcement therefore contains no surprises... I am convinced of the advantages of multi year financial planning, and most of what I hear from councils and their delivery partners... support that view."

The settlement provides for total revenue grants of £65.7billion, an increase of £3.1billion (4.9%) on 2006/07. However, this includes specific grants, dedicated funding for schools and £525million for the neighbourhood renewal fund. Formula Grant is set at £24.6billion, an increase of £0.9billion (3.7%) on 2006/07. Ministers point out that total government grants have increased by 39% in real terms since 1997. National non-domestic rates are set at 44.4p in the £ with a lower rate of 44.1p for small businesses.

Grant floors are set at 2.7% for all authorities other than Police authorities where the grant floor is set at 3.6%. Many authorities, including most London boroughs find themselves on the funding floor.

Ministers have made their expectations clear. Ruth Kelly, Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government, said:

"We expect to see an average council tax increase in England in 2007/08 of less than 5%. We will not allow excessive council tax increases... We have used our reserve capping powers in previous years to deal with excessive increases and wont hesitate to do so again if that proves necessary."

Cumbria County Council is an example of an authority that is reducing its expenditure as a result of this financial settlement. The Council has calculated that it needs to make savings of £10million a year for the next ten years. The main drivers of increased costs are equal pay claims, care for the elderly and waste management. The Council is increasing Council Tax by 4.99%! The main areas of savings that have been identified are:

- Education: Transport, Welfare, Swimming, Clothing Grants

- Social Services: Day & Home Care eligibility & charges, Meals on Wheels
- Highways: £1.2m (including £0.4m street lights)
- Other: Trading Standards, Local Committees, Libraries (shorter hours), Building maintenance, Regeneration & Cultural grants

The Local Government Association has highlighted problems in local government finance in its autumn statement 'Meeting the Challenges Ahead'. This document considers the drivers of local government expenditure (especially care for the elderly and waste management); the achievements of local government and the case for reform of local government finance.

The report states that local government expenditure has increased by 50% in real terms from 1997/98 to 2007/08 because of:

- Increased demand (for example 390,000 more people aged over 65)
- Increased government demands (including new legislation, doubled spending per pupil and 1000 targets and indicators)
- Rising Costs (including landfill, social care and energy)

In the face of these rising demands, local government has achieved £3billion of efficiency savings a year ahead of schedule with the audit commission finding that 95% of Councils deliver 'value for money' with services improving. Excluding specific grants and funding for schools, government funding for local government has increased by only 14% since 1997/98 compared to 90% for the National Health Service. The Council taxpayer has funded most of the increase in expenditure.

The Local Government Association points out that during the period of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review there will be 400,000 more elderly people. Local authorities wish to provide better care and more choice thus improving health and well-being. However, it is calculated that free care for the elderly will become unaffordable by 2009 and that consequently 370,000 people could lose free care. A lack of early intervention by local authorities could also increase pressure on the National Health Service.

The Local Government Association calculates that a doubling of expenditure on waste management is required by 2012/13 to £4.2billion to meet landfill targets. Waste volumes are increasing by 3% a year, landfill tax is increasing by 15% a year, the European Union landfill directive needs a 10% increase in expenditure each year and there is a need to increase recycling and reduce landfill.

The Local Government Association has identified the following challenges that authorities cannot meet with a 'funding freeze': Population Growth, Increasing migration and diversity, Ageing Population, Local Government Workforce, Pressure on natural resources & climate change, Global integration and technological change.

However, the government has not responded positively to the Local Government Association. Phil Woolas, the Local Government Minister said:

"We simply do not recognise the negative picture painted here and to talk of crises is both untrue and unhelpful... If local government wants to be a partner in governance... they have to talk the language of balanced books and not that of a pressure group (with) perennial tactics in bidding for more money."

With predictions of increasingly tight budgets following the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review, it therefore appears that local government finance will continue to be a challenging area. We will hold a series of seminars on local government finance during June and July 2007. Details are on page twelve.

Adrian Waite

Scotland: The future for Local Authority Housing

Recent votes against housing stock transfers by tenants of Scottish local authorities including Edinburgh, Stirling and Renfrewshire, along with problems encountered in Glasgow in carrying out the planned 'second stage' stock transfers from the Glasgow Housing Association are likely to lead to the Scottish Executive reviewing its approach to social housing.

The existing policy is to encourage stock transfer and to provide financial support in cases where there is a negative stock valuation or 'overhanging debt' to enable the transfer to proceed. Consequently there has been little emphasis on long-term planning for local authority housing.

The Scottish Executive has established a 'Scottish Housing Quality Standard' and a target for all local authorities to achieve this target by 2015. Authorities have been asked to produce 'Standard Delivery Plans'. This has led to an increase in capital expenditure of 40% as shown below:

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Capital Expenditure	£312million	£364million	£437million

Since 2004, Scottish local authorities have been able to use the prudential borrowing system to fund capital investment and have also made use of capital receipts and 'capital funded from revenue'. In the absence of a national policy on setting social rents this has led to an increase in rents of 9.3% as shown below:

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Average Rent	£40.96/week	£42.64/week	£44.78/week

The same period has also seen increases in revenue expenditure on management and maintenance of 10.2% as shown below:

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Management and Maintenance	£1,342/unit pa	£1,399/unit pa	£1,479/unit pa

As 64% of rent income is rebated most of these increased costs are funded by the government's housing benefit budget.

There are increasing concerns that with many local authorities retaining their council stock there will be increasing upward pressure on rents with implications for affordability and the government's budgets. Of particular concern is the possibility that increasing levels of debt will create a 'financial time bomb'.

While the Scottish Executive has developed 'efficiency' and 'value for money' strategies, the level of efficiencies that have been sought have not been as great as in England. One likely result of the Comprehensive Spending Review of 2007 will be to oblige the Scottish Executive to set more ambitious 'value for money' targets for local authorities.

Of course, 2007 will also see elections for the Scottish Executive and local authorities. Among the challenges that will be faced by the new Scottish Executive, controlling groups on local authorities, their officers and tenant representatives will be the need to gain a thorough understanding of local authority housing finance, sustainable housing business planning and the 'value for money' and 'efficiency' agenda.

On 23rd May 2007 'AWICS' will hold a seminar in Glasgow to address these matters. Details are on page twelve.

Adrian Waite

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Fenland Tenants vote for Stock Transfer

'AWICS' was appointed as Independent Tenants' Advisor at Fenland District Council for their housing stock options appraisal in May 2004. The tenant-led working group that carried out the appraisal concluded that stock transfer would be the best way for Fenland tenants to secure the improvements in homes, neighbourhoods and services that tenants sought. In May 2005, a consultation with tenants, managed by 'AWICS', showed that 51% of tenants who responded agreed with this view.

The Council therefore decided to embark on a stock transfer and 'AWICS' was re-appointed as Independent Tenants' Advisor. In this capacity we worked with tenants to ensure that the best possible 'offer' was made and that all tenants had access to impartial and accurate information. The ballot of tenants was held during November and December 2006. It was undertaken by the Electoral Reform Services and had a turnout of 71.6%. 53.9% (1,747) tenants voted 'Yes' to transfer while 46.1% (1,497) tenants voted 'No'.

Roddons Housing Association is the proposed new Housing Association that will be part of the Circle Anglia Group. Tenants of Fenland District Council have voted to transfer their homes to Roddons Housing Association. The vote means that Roddons will be able to deliver its promises to tenants that include 500 new affordable homes in the first five years, plus handyman, decorating and gardening services for elderly and disabled tenants and a dedicated warden in each sheltered scheme.

Speaking after the results were delivered, Ron Butcher, a Wisbech tenant and Chairman of Roddons Housing Association Shadow Board that will manage the housing stock when it transfers said:

"We worked hard to get an offer that would give the best deal to tenants. I am really pleased that tenants have voted for the transfer to go ahead – it will mean a better future for tenants because Roddons can deliver more improvements to homes and better services. It's now up to us to deliver the promises – to introduce the new services, build more, affordable homes and modernise housing in Fenland."

Mike Ward of Circle Anglia, the parent group who will support Roddons feels tenants have made the right decision:

"Now that the ballot has been decided we can get on with transferring the housing so that Roddons can start delivering the services and improvements that tenants want. The future of Fenland's housing is in safe hands."

Cllr. Kit Owen, Portfolio Holder for Housing at the Council, said:

"The Council wants the best for its tenants which is why we recommended the transfer to Roddons, who will be able to offer more improvements to homes, increased services and build more affordable homes."

Tim Mills, Director of Housing and Development at the Council said that the vote was 'clear cut' and that tenants had made their choice from the correct information. He added:

"You cannot underestimate the involvement of tenants... (They are) running the show."

We believe that as Independent Tenants Advisor we have empowered the tenants to take this leading role. The handover from the council to Roddons Housing Association is planned to take place in autumn 2007.

Adrian Waite

More information on the Fenland stock transfer is available on the 'AWICS' website on: www.awics.co.uk/fenlandita.

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'AWICS' publishes Annual Report 2005/06

The 'AWICS' Annual Report for 2005/06 was published in September 2006. the text follows:

'AWICS' is passionate about public services. That is why I decided to enter local government service in 1981. That is why I founded 'AWICS' as an ethical management consultancy to provide support to those who provide public services – in all parts of Britain and also abroad! We want to make a real contribution to improving public services because they are so important to the fabric of our society.

Our mission statement is 'Independence, Integrity, Value'. We approach our work from an independent standpoint – not burdened with our own preconceptions and objectives – but with a genuine wish to help the client to achieve their objective. Our consultants are of the highest calibre. We observe the highest standards of integrity that should be expected of any consultant working with public services. We offer both 'quality' and 'value for money'.

We are not the largest management consultancy. However, we are big enough to make a difference – but small enough to care!

This report covers the year 2005/2006, the seventh year of trading and another very successful one.

Turnover was £119,972 during the year compared with £80,164 during the previous year. This represents an increase of £39,808 or 50%. Gross profit was £70,710 during the year compared with £42,664 during the previous year. This represents an increase of £28,046 or 66%. The increased profit arose from an increase in turnover combined with a less than proportionate increase in costs.

It is now clear that 'AWICS' has been able to sustain this level of turnover and profitability into 2006/2007.

During the year we had one full-time and seven part-time employees. We also had six associate consultants.

Our increasing numbers of clients include national government departments, local authorities and others who provide public services.

The services that we have provided include:

- Consultancy
 - National Government
 - Local Government
- Training
 - Regional Seminars
 - In-house training
 - Lecturing
- Independent Tenants Advice
- Publications

And we made a real contribution to improving public services in many areas. The following illustrate just a few of the projects to which we have contributed during the year:

Consultancy – National Government

Regional Government Offices had to evaluate the housing stock options appraisals that were submitted to them by local authorities and this included evaluating the financial analysis that had been undertaken by Councils and their consultants to ensure that their data was robust, their assumptions reasonable, and their submissions compliant with the guidance issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

We were engaged by the Government Offices for London, Eastern England, Southwestern England and the East Midlands to carry out the financial evaluations of the housing stock options appraisals of a number of local authorities. We are continuing to work with regional government offices in 2006/07.

Consultancy – Local Government

We offer a wide range of consultancy services to local authorities principally on management, financial and housing issues. For example, we assisted Cambridge City Council with the implementation of rent restructuring; Southwark Borough Council with the financial analysis required for their housing stock options appraisal; South Derbyshire District Council with housing revenue account business planning; and Warrington Borough Council with a 'health check' of their housing revenue account. We are continuing to work with local authorities on housing and other issues during 2006/07.

Training – Regional Seminars

In February 2006 we launched a series of regional seminars on 'All You Want to Know about Local Authority Housing Finance'. These were attended by representatives of national government, local government (including Members and officers), arms length management organisations, private companies and voluntary organisations. During 2006/07 we are expanding our programme of regional seminars with an autumn series on 'Sustainable Housing Business Plans and the Efficiency Agenda', a spring series on 'Housing Association Finance' and another spring series of 'All You Want to Know about Local Authority Housing Finance'.

Training – In-house courses

We continued to provide in-house training courses to a wide range of authorities including: Bristol City Council, Derby Homes, Portsmouth City Council, Slough Borough Council and Southampton City Council. In-house training courses are available on a wide and increasing range of management, financial and housing topics.

Training – Lecturing

I was pleased to accept speaking engagements during the year for the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland. Subjects covered included housing finance, the local government statement of recommended practice (SORP) and efficiency and effectiveness in social housing.

Independent Tenants' Advice

We were successful in tendering for the position of Independent Tenants' Adviser at Fenland District Council during their Housing Stock Options Appraisal that was completed in June 2005. Our role was to ensure that the tenants of Fenland were empowered to take a decision on the future of their homes and neighbourhoods and were able to do so from a position of knowledge. We worked with the Tenants' Forum, Tenants' Associations and the tenant body at large to ensure that everyone understood all the issues and could participate in all the decisions.

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We did this through holding meetings, visiting housing estates and sheltered housing schemes, issuing newsletters, working through the press and other media and providing a freephone service for tenants with questions and issues to discuss. We advised the tenant-led Options Appraisal Working Group that managed the whole process and provided training to members of the Working Group and other active tenants. We identified the needs and aspirations of tenants for their homes and neighbourhoods through a survey, carrying out workshops and analysing the issues that were raised on the freephone service.

We provided tenants with a critical analysis of information that was provided by the Council and the Lead Consultant, and supported the Tenants' Forum in lobbying successfully for changes in the Council's financial strategies. At the conclusion of the process, the Options Appraisal Working Group identified stock transfer as the option that was most likely to deliver the improvements that tenants were seeking and we managed a consultation with all tenants in the district on this conclusion. The consultation was managed through a real-time internet-based data analysis system that we developed that provided not only the totals in support and against each option but a sophisticated analysis at geographical and tenant-type level. On a high turnout, 52% of tenants who responded supported the conclusion that stock transfer should be pursued.

The Council is now developing its stock transfer option and we were re-engaged as Independent Tenants' Advisor by the Tenants' Forum in October 2005. Our role is to ensure that the tenants of Fenland are empowered to take a decision on the future of their homes and neighbourhoods and are able to do so from a position of knowledge. We work with the Tenants' Forum, Tenants' Associations and the tenant body at large to ensure that everyone understands all the issues and participates in all the decisions. We do this through holding meetings, visiting housing estates and sheltered housing schemes, issuing newsletters, working through the press and other media and providing a freephone service for tenants with questions and issues to discuss. We advise the tenant-led Transfer Options Development Group that manages the whole process on matters including the selection of the housing association partner. We also advise tenant members of the Shadow Board of the new Roddons Housing Association. This work continues in 2006/07 with a ballot of tenants expected in November 2006.

Publications

During the year we published a 100 page guide entitled 'All You Want to Know about Local Authority Housing Finance'. During 2006/07 we will broaden our range of publications and have already published 'Sustainable Housing Business Plans and the Efficiency Agenda'.

Our contribution to making improvements in public services has therefore been significant. Our potential to do even more in the future is even greater.

I also believe in the importance of making a voluntary contribution where appropriate. I am a member of the Housing and European Panels of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

This annual report is designed to give you a flavour of what 'AWICS' is about. We also have a website and welcome enquiries at our office. Both addresses are shown below.

Adrian Waite
Managing Director
September 2006

National Council of Voluntary Organisations accredits 'AWICS' as consultancy for voluntary sector

The National Council of Voluntary Organisations has made 'AWICS' an approved consultancy for 2007. We have enjoyed this status since 2005.

National Council of Voluntary Organisations Approved Consultants have to demonstrate a commitment to providing a high quality service and share the National Council of Voluntary Organisations' service values. Consultants are assessed against five standards:

- ❖ Operational Standards – NCVO approved consultants demonstrate a commitment to providing a high quality service and have clear policies on client confidentiality, a commitment to diversity and an established code of practice and ethics.
- ❖ Contract capability – NCVO approved consultants have the personnel, the expertise and the resources to deliver a high quality service on any work they contract for.
- ❖ Delivery process – NCVO approved consultants plan the delivery process of each piece of work, with effective procedures and systems for achieving a positive outcome.
- ❖ Delivery and output evaluation – NCVO approved consultants actively seek feedback on both the process and the outcomes of their work.
- ❖ Continuous improvement – NCVO approved consultants know their strengths, are self critical and seek to develop themselves and their services, taking into account the views of users and clients.

Consultants are asked to submit evidence that demonstrates that they meet each of the five standards. They also provide a list of recent voluntary sector clients from which NCVO randomly selects two referees to assess their performance against the standards. NCVO approved status means that a consultant or consultancy has demonstrated a commitment to providing a high quality service.

'AWICS' is listed in the following service categories:

- ❖ Development of Plans & Strategies
- ❖ Management of growth, decline, closure and change
- ❖ Management of mergers/collaborative working & partnership working
- ❖ Management and development of services
- ❖ Developing boards and good governance practice

The National Council of Voluntary Organisations recognises the experience of 'AWICS' in:

- ❖ Capacity Building
- ❖ Economic Development
- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Training
- ❖ Government departments
- ❖ Local authorities
- ❖ Public Bodies

Voluntary bodies are becoming increasingly important as partners of local authorities and other government agencies in the delivery of local services. While at Copeland Borough Council I was responsible for managing the Council's relationships with the voluntary sector and managed a significant increase in the level of Council funding for voluntary bodies, range of services provided by voluntary bodies and partnership working. As a management consultant I have been asked by the National Council of Voluntary Organisations to speak at conferences on financial matters that affect voluntary bodies.

We welcome continued recognition as an approved consultant by the National Council of Voluntary Organisations.

Adrian Waite

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All You Want To Know About Housing Association Finance

We are running a series of seminars that will offer an introduction to Housing Association Finance during April and May 2007.

Do you think that a working knowledge of housing association finance would put you and your colleagues in a position of advantage?

Whether you are in a Housing Association, Local Authority or a Government Office; whether you are a Housing Manager, Tenant Representative, Board Member, or even a member of the Finance Team; whether you are in an established housing association or in a local authority carrying out a stock transfer, you could benefit from one of our courses at which you will learn "All You Want To Know About Housing Association Finance"

What the Course will cover:

- Accountability, Regulation and Control
- Company Accounts and technical accounting
- Revenue Financing Regime
- Financial Management in a Registered Social Landlord
- Capital Finance and Development and sources of Capital Finance
- Business and Financial Planning and the Efficiency Agenda
- Financing of Stock Transfers
- Treasury Management

Delegates will gain an overview of the finances of registered social landlords and will keep up to date with developments in housing association finance.

The course is accompanied by a very useful booklet entitled:

"All You Want To Know About Housing Association Finance"

Many people – board members, tenants and officers would benefit from this course.

Venues and Dates

London – Kensington Close Hotel – 19th April 2007

Warrington – Rhinewood County House Hotel – 24th April 2007

Glasgow – Tulip Hotel – 22nd May 2007

(The session in Glasgow will make specific reference to the situation in Scotland)

How to reserve your place

- **By Phone:** Please telephone us on 017683-52347 or 54005
- **By Fax:** Fax us on 017683 54005
- **On line:** You can download a booking form from www.awics.co.uk/services/housingassociationcourse.asp, fill it in electronically and forward to: Adrian.waite@awics.co.uk
- **By post:** Complete this form and send it to:
AWICS Ltd, Appleby Business Centre, Appleby in Westmorland, Cumbria. CA16 6QH.

Delegate fees:

The cost of this seminar is £240 in London and £210 at other venues plus VAT making a total of £282 in London and £246.75 at other venues. The fee includes lunch* and booklet – 'All you Want to Know about Local Authority Housing Finance'

AWICS launches Euro-website

'AWICS' is celebrating the New Year by launching a new euro-website that will complement our existing United Kingdom website. The Euro-website can be accessed at www.awics.eu.

The website contains a home page, a page about 'AWICS', a page devoted to services that are provided, free briefing papers and details of how to contact 'AWICS'. The free briefing papers address issues including:

- European Charter on Housing
- European Monetary Union – History and Benefits
- European Monetary Union and the United Kingdom

While we are based in England, we are pleased to open our 'EU' website and to provide services for the benefit of those who provide public services across Europe.

Forthcoming Training Courses

All You Want to Know about Local Authority Housing Finance

London : Kensington Close Hotel - 13th February and 13th March 2007

Wakefield : Cedar Court Hotel – 1st March 2007

Lichfield: Little Barrow Hotel – 7th March 2007

Warrington: Rhinewood Country House Hotel – 22nd March 2007

All You Want to Know about Housing Association Finance

London: Kensington Close Hotel – 19th April 2007

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Glasgow: Tulip Hotel – 22nd May 2007

All You Want to Know about Welsh Local Authority Housing Finance

Cardiff: Jury's Hotel – 9th May 2007

All You Want to Know about Scottish Local Authority Housing Finance

Glasgow: Tulip Hotel – 23rd May 2007

All You Want to Know about Local Authority Finance

Planned for June-July 2007

Details are available from: www.awics.co.uk/services/trainingandlectures.asp

Services on offer!

'AWICS' also offers a wide range of management consultancy and training courses in management and financial topics. These include: Business and Best Value Reviews, Advice on Procurement, Housing Finance, Housing Stock Options Appraisals, Independent Tenants' Advice, Housing Association finance, Public Authority accounting, Advice to voluntary bodies, Performance Management, Lecturing and Training. For further information, please contact Adrian Waite on: Adrian.Waite@awics.co.uk or 017683-52347 or 54005.

Note: Any views that are expressed in this newsletter are those of the author of the article and do not necessarily reflect the views of 'AWICS' or of Adrian Waite.

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