

## Being part of the CIPP family

The payroll team at Cox & Co Payroll Solutions explains why CIPP membership is so important

### The team are:

- **Steve Cox MCIPP**, business owner and managing director
- **Tracy Jerram MCIPP MCMI**, commercial director
- **Megan Cox ACIPP**, operations manager
- **Graham Lee ACIPP**, payroll manager
- **Andrea Laurova ACIPP**, payroll manager
- **Bella Cox**, payroll technician
- **Daniel Bishop**, operations technician.



### Q: Why is CIPP membership important to your business?

It's somewhat unusual in the payroll industry to find a standalone payroll bureau. Typically, payroll providers form part of a larger accountancy practice or

offer other services, such as bookkeeping, whereas Cox & Co is an independent and self-sufficient payroll and pension bureau.

Of course, autonomy has both pros and cons. For instance, here at Cox & Co, we have the freedom to cut our own path as

we don't have the constraints or pressures from other areas of the business. On the flip side though, we may not automatically have exposure to the changing landscape experienced by the wider business community via internal departmental

connections. Our autonomy means it's incredibly important that our team keep a close ear to the ground and eyes on the horizon, and we do this by providing them with the right tools and opportunities.

One way we promote and support our involvement in the profession is through membership of the CIPP. In fact, membership is so important to us that 100% of the team have individual CIPP membership, funded entirely by the company. CIPP membership provides the team with:

- the opportunity to check our understanding of legislation
- guidance on areas we're not completely familiar with
- reassurance that our solutions are correct.

CIPP services, such as the BeKnowledgeable webinars, publications, eLearning, courses and networking to name a few, all help us to develop a wider and deeper understanding of a changing payroll landscape.

It's not just the team that benefits from CIPP membership. Over the years we've noticed it has become increasingly advantageous for the business to demonstrate its affiliation to the Chartered Institute. We've found that displaying our CIPP membership and an individual's post nominal letters on emails and correspondence helps send the right message to clients and their employees. We want to promote and advertise to all stakeholders that we're proud members of an honourable profession. We feel CIPP membership is a badge of honour – one that we're rightly proud of.

**We want to promote and advertise to all stakeholders that we're proud members of an honourable profession**

### Q: Why is it important that 100% of Cox & Co staff are CIPP members?

To support CIPP membership and participation across the business, a few years ago we introduced fully funded CIPP membership to 100% of the team. We feel access to personal and professional support via membership shouldn't be for the chosen few or senior management

only. In addition, company funding of membership reduces barriers to joining as it's no longer a cost to the individual.

For us, entire team membership has two obvious positive outcomes. First, it prevents bottlenecks of technical queries. Nothing is worse than when a query must be passed to the only person in the team who has CIPP membership, so a question can be raised with the Advisory helpline. This ringfenced approach can lead to knowledge poverty in a business. Secondly, 100% membership demonstrates that we value each member of staff as a professional and that we support payroll knowledge growth equally. This helps create an environment of openness, as staff can raise questions or research independently and not feel as though they should always know the answer.

When a payroll professional practices in a bureau environment it's completely normal to work with hundreds of different organisations and thousands of employees, all with unique circumstances. This kind of extreme payroll diversity can present challenges to the team; and they're frequently required to navigate payroll problems and provide advice to an ever-widening range of situational questions. We've found that access to the CIPP Advisory helpline is a must have for our team. We know that whatever the question, each member of staff can independently and without prejudice, contact the CIPP when needed, and seek their advice.

Investing in the learning and development of our team is paramount to securing the credibility of our business and profession. And, as payroll, pensions and benefits become increasingly complex year-on-year, we feel no team member should practice alone without the support from an overarching professional body. CIPP membership provides the support and access to training that we need to accomplish this.

### Q: How do Cox & Co staff make the most of CIPP membership?

By providing each team member with individual membership, we nurture a culture of:

- self-reflective practice
- independent query raising
- access to training
- encouragement to take an interest in matters outside of day-to-day bureau life.

Daily, the team are encouraged to make full use of their CIPP membership, especially to raise queries or look for advice and guidance from the CIPP. The Advisory helpline has been a huge benefit to staff as they seek to either confirm current practice or establish the definitive answer for a client.

We feel that participating in the wider payroll network is valuable when trying to establish or build a payroll career – there are so many opportunities to get involved in the payroll community, especially with the CIPP. We actively support team members to participate in the CIPP's **#BePayroll** campaign, by posting on the social media platform LinkedIn and we've encouraged staff to take part in CIPP interviews. Other members of the team have submitted articles to be included in the *Professional* magazine and looked to the CIPP for support when they were promoting 'Payroll as a Career' in local schools. We've also provided the CIPP's editorial team with suggestions for future articles. It's this type of involvement with the CIPP that we really cherish because it helps our team develop strong links within the profession, as well as build confidence in themselves.

All staff receive *Professional* magazine every month, either online or printed. We encourage reading these during work time as this helps staff foster an interest in wider topics affecting the payroll profession across the UK and globally. The magazine is also discussed at length once a month in our **#TrainingTuesday** sessions, especially the Advisory pages which can lead to quite passionate debates. We're also frequent CIPP BeKnowledgeable webinar attendees and we go to annual payroll update courses. These events help us solidify our understanding of payroll legislation and, at times, they provide a much-welcomed hiatus in our busy payroll weeks.

Professional development really is an everyday occurrence at Cox & Co, and full team membership with the CIPP is most definitely something that everyone and the business will continue to reap the benefits of. ■