ATT Welcome: A little turbulence!

Welcomes

24 October 2022

Hello, and welcome to the Deputy President's page for November. This month I've had first-hand experience of the problems of publishing and deadlines.

The original version of this article contained comments on the tax cuts in the (first) mini Budget – comments which would have been completely out of date by the time you read this in November. A fortunate twist of fate in terms of the timing of the reversal of the changes has meant that I'm getting the opportunity to have a second attempt at it.

Having said that, with things changing as quickly as they are, it could well be the case that most of this is out of date when you read it. The original version contained a comment, made in jest, that read 'the current incumbents of numbers 10 and 11 Downing Street (assuming they haven't changed by the time this goes to print)...' As I write now, one of them *has* changed and, according to recent headlines, it might not be long before the other one changes as well.

I think it was Harold Macmillan (a former Conservative occupier of numbers 10 and 11 Downing Street) who, in answer to the question of what he was most afraid of replied, 'Events, dear boy, events.' Given the changes we've had recently, that seems very relevant today.

But on a serious note, one of things that is essential for tax policy is the need for stability and some sort of certainty. ATT members are at the sharp end of helping clients to comply with their obligations and to plan for the future. That is becoming more and more difficult with all of the announcements of changes, and reversals and contradictory headlines. One can only hope that the end of the recent turmoil has heralded a return to a more stable policy agenda.

Having said that, spare a thought for the providers of payroll software, who will now be on their third iteration of national insurance calculations for this current tax year. Quite how the general public are expected to understand all of the changes, and

when they apply from, is a mystery to me. Whatever happened to the debate on tax simplification?

But headlines aside, it was a pleasure for me to be present at a ceremony in September where we were able to recognise two people who have given an enormous amount of time and effort in service to the ATT over the years. Firstly, Michael Steed was presented with the Council Award. This is awarded to members who have made an exceptional contribution that supported the ATT's charitable objectives over one or more years.

Michael has been actively involved in the Association for many years. As well as being a Council member, he has made an exceptional contribution to the ATT Technical Steering Group and the ATT Conferences. Michael and I go back many years and he had the dubious honour of being a student in one of my classes when he was studying for his ATT examinations in 1992. Thankfully, he passed – and, as they say, the rest is history.

Secondly, Patricia Caputo was awarded a Council Certificate of Appreciation. The Certificate of Appreciation is awarded to people who have made a 'Direct contribution to the ATT'.

Patricia received the award in recognition of her commitment to the Mid Anglia Branch. For many years, she took on the lion's share of running the branch and was instrumental in promoting the ATT and making it the successful branch it is today. This involved putting in many hours of work and hosting the majority of the technical seminars that have been held during the years.

It is very pleasing to be able to recognise service such as this, so many congratulations to them both on their awards.

That's it for this month, but before I sign off I need to continue my theme of mentioning something on education in every article. Just a reminder therefore that our upcoming series of courses entitled 'Sharpen your Tax Skills' run in conjunction with the AAT will be held on 7,9 and 25 November featuring Rebecca Benneyworth and the ATT Tax Technical team.