



Management Team Minutes **Wednesday 20 January 2021 at 9.30am**

Present:- Assessor & ERO, Head of Valuation Services, Divisional Assessor (Revaluation Team), Divisional Assessor (Survey Team), Principal Admin. Officer and Office Manager.

**Action
Req'd
by:**

1.0 APOLOGIES

None.

2.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The previous minute was approved subject to minor amendments.

3.0 MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Health & Safety (Item 3.11)

The Health and Safety Group met on 14 December 2020.

3.2 Reports – Council Tax (Item 5.2)

The HOVS reported that a meeting had been arranged in connection with the Secretary to the VAC's request for involvement with Written Representations and discussions are ongoing.

3.3 AVJB Website (Item 7.3)

Progress is being made on the Accessibility Procedures for the website.

3.4 Service Plan (Item 9.7)

The Service Plan was presented to the Board Meeting in January 2021.

3.5 Records Management and Retention (Item 9.11)

Work is progressing on the Business Classification Scheme and the Information Asset Register.

3.6 Health and Safety (Item 9.14)

The HOVS arranged for the Health and Safety Group to meet.

3.7 Property Matters (Item 9.18)

The HOVS will circulate information on the SAC Climate Change Policy.

HOVS

4.0 PERSONNEL

4.1 General

It is hoped that a new Principal Valuer will commence with the Board on 1 March 2021. It was noted that the Assessor would like the new Principal Valuer to be present in the office.

The Assessor reported that she is reviewing a Contingency Planning document for the blended model. As part of the review the Assessor would like the management team to consider the allocation of rooms and the rotation of staff within these rooms. The DA's will manage this task. When considering team and work allocation a "buddy system" should be introduced similar to that within the clerical team.

DA's

Consideration is being given to placing an advert for Divisional Valuer/Principal Valuer/Valuer position. The HOVS will contact SAC HR regarding producing an advert to target appropriate candidates.

HOVS

It was reported that the Revaluation Team will require to be involved with training of the Trainee Valuers. Those Trainee Valuers nearing their APC may require to move to the Revaluation Team to gain experience of analysis and court work.

The BSDO will now have an involvement with the Evalu8 Project Board and will be tasked with the portal update element of Evalu8.

A member of the team has returned from sickness absence.

The OM reported that she had made the Joint Staffing Watch for Quarter 4 with FTE of 42.99.

The Employee Opinion Survey results for 2020 were positive. The return rate was 56.8% up from last year's 41.8%.

4.2 Mileage and Expenses

Nothing to report.

Overtime will continue to the end of the financial year.

4.3 Absence Statistics

The absence statistics for December 2020 for short and long-term absence remain low.

4.4 Training and PDR's

The new PDRs and guidance documents are on SharePoint. These should be undertaken before 31 March 2021 and recorded within the PDR recording document located within the training button on SharePoint.

5.0 REPORTS

5.1 Non Domestic

Some discussions have taken place regarding the outstanding Covid appeals.

The Running Roll Non Domestic Authorisation Sheet has been updated.

The new AIN's will require to be adapted for AVJB. The OM and PA will undertake this task.

The DA (ST) raised the issue of agents not being able to access their offices to obtain information for RQ's issued in December 2020.

Discussion took place on items contained within the Assessors' Committee Bullet and Action Points.

The Assessor and the HOVS will be meeting with SAC on 28 January to discuss Civil Penalties.

Discussion took place on survey cards. The DA (ST) will discuss survey cards with her team.

The DA (RT) reported on appeals as follows:

2017 revaluation – 151 remaining – all cited or continued (this figure includes LT referrals)

2017 running roll – 301 remaining – all cited or continued

30 - revaluation appeals have been referred to the Lands Tribunal

6 - running roll appeals referred to Lands Tribunal

1774 Covid appeals

Citations will be issued around May and June 2021 with a staggered issue.

The Assessor reported that we are doing our best in regard to performance and the Board are aware of the serious issues experienced during the past year.

5.2 Council Tax

It was noted that work is continuing on new and sold houses. The numbers of council tax proposals have increased again. These will be looked at after the cut off.

The PAO, DA (ST), DV and BSDO met on 19 January 2021 to discuss authorisation. Help and advice given has allowed a better understanding of spreadsheets and it is hoped that this will alleviate issues that have been experienced.

Performance

Performance is good. Valid and Invalid proposals will require to be dealt with. It was stated that we may require to have a different approach to deal with the proposals and all the team may require to be involved.

6.0 SCOTTISH ASSESSORS' ASSOCIATION

The Assessor reported that guidance is awaited on various matters. Hopefully over the next couple of months we will give guidance on AIN's.

7.0 ICT

7.1 Electoral Management System

The Scottish Users Group met and have produced a list of all known issues. The [REDACTED] who is the Chair of the group will pass on the list of all known issues to Democracy Counts. The RIDO will prepare and maintain a collective list of recorded issues and review with the other E8 Scottish users.

The PAO reported that as part of our risk management we are trialling EMS over a Citrix connection, however this has given some issues. Ways to solve the issues are currently being investigated.

ICT are testing speed issues of those currently working from home.

It was noted that the front cover for the electoral registers was agreed by all Scottish users.

7.2 Core System

The Assessor reported that the “go live” for NDR will be April 2021 and September 2021 for Council Tax.

The BSDO will have more involvement in the new core system especially with transfer files.

A meeting was held with the Portal Project Managers, Democracy Counts and offices that are moving to the new system.

7.3 AVJB website

The website has been updated after the last Board meeting by SAC.

The Accessibility check will be done on the website and the HOVS will produce an Accessibility Statement.

The PAO updated the website to refresh and reduce some of the wording.

The PAO also reported that he has been in discussion with SAC web team regarding designing a web form. An online form can be created for recipients of the HNL to request an absent vote. The Core can then be accessed and a file can be downloaded from all those who have responded, and updated in E8.

7.4 Other

SAC ICT will be working over the weekend to help increase the speed of remote access.

8.0 ER UPDATE

8.1 General

The OM will arrange weekly ER/TSU meetings in order to highlight any issues prior to the election.

OM

- 8.2 Elections
Work is ongoing for the Scottish Parliamentary Election on 6 May 2021. HNL's will be issued shortly.

Approximately 5,000 Postal Vote Refresh requests were issued.

The PAO and RIDO continue to meet with the 3 authorities Returning Officer representatives every 2 weeks.

The ERO, PAO and RIDO have attended various Election meetings organised by the 3 authorities.

9.0 GOVERNANCE

- 9.1 Suggestions Box
There was one new suggestion asking if a tab to the SAA Portal Private area could be added to the AVJB – Intranet home page. The suggestion was referred to the BSDO to implement.

BSDO

- 9.2 Correspondence
It was noted that the SAA will respond to a recent FOI request confirming that the request cannot be upheld as the information requested was personal data.

- 9.3 Board Meetings/Reports
The last Board Meeting took place on 13 January 2021.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 2 March 2021 and will be held remotely.

- 9.4 Budget Update
There are no current issues with the budget.

- 9.5 Audit – Internal/External
The three councils' requests for NFI audit data from Electoral Registration data will be supplied by 26 January 2021.

- 9.6 Corporate Plan
Nothing to report.

- 9.7 Service Plan
Nothing to report.

- 9.8 Risk Register
The Corporate Risk Register will be updated to incorporate the risks associated with Covid-19.

- 9.9 Business Continuity
The HOVS is currently updating the Business Continuity Plan.

- 9.10 Complaints and Letters of Appreciation
There were no complaints received since last reported. The HOVS is currently working on the SPFO Complaints Handling Procedure.

Four notes of appreciation have been received since last reported.

9.11 Records Management and Retention

Nothing to report.

9.12 FOI

One FOI request has been received since last reported.

9.13 Equalities

The HOVS currently working on the Equalities Mainstreaming Report.

The Equality Monitoring form was issued to all staff and are being returned to the PA.

9.14 Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Group met on 17 December 2020 and the draft minute has been placed on SharePoint.

Tasks were allocated but those that can be undertaken are limited due to the number of staff present within the office.

Staff are reminded that they can carry out a DSE form and submit at any time.

9.15 Elected Member Enquires

Ten elected member enquiries have been received since last reported.

9.16 Policies and Procedures – new/reviews/updates

Nothing to report.

9.17 Customer Questionnaire

Nothing to report.

9.18 Property Matters

The HOVS will circulate information on the SAC Climate Change Policy.

HOVS

The Water Cooler maintenance has been postponed due to current restrictions.

10.0 AOCB

There was no other competent business.

11.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on 9 March 2021.