



Management Team Minutes **Tuesday 13th July 2021 at 9.30am**

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

**Action
Req'd
by:**

1.0 APOLOGIES

Divisional Assessor (Revaluation Team).

2.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The previous minute was approved subject to minor amendments.

3.0 MATTERS ARISING

3.1 ICT (Item 7.4)

The PAO will update the IT Strategy after the new core system is in place.

PAO

3.2 General – Mobile Telephones (Item 4.1)

The PAO circulated an email with information relating to mobile telephone tariffs. Those concerned will reply with their comments.

3.3 Records Management and Retention (Item 9.11)

The HOVS is progressing with the IAR and Business Classification Scheme checks.

The Assessor has completed the PUR. This will be forwarded to the Keeper of the Records by end of August 2021.

3.4 Policies/Procedures (Item 9.16)

The HOVS reviewed the Civil Penalty Notice v4.0.

4.0 PERSONNEL

4.1 General

The recruitment process has commenced on the portal for Valuer/Snr Valuer/Principal Valuer posts. The closing date is 18 July 2021.

The Assessor has produced Update No 18. The Management Team will review the document prior to issue.

MT

One of the Valuers is currently off on long term sickness absence and recovering well.

The long-term sickness absence of a member of the admin team continues.

A request for flexible working was received from one of the Technical Team but this request was rejected.

Staff continue to utilise services from Occupational Health.

Staff are encouraged to use annual leave during the summer if they have not already taken a proportion of their annual leave previously during the year.

4.2 Mileage and Expenses

External "drive-bys" are currently being undertaken by technical staff.

The driving licence and insurance checks are currently being undertaken.

4.3 Absence Statistics

The absence statistics remain low.

4.4 Training and PDR's

PDRs should be progressing for all staff.

Congratulations were given to two of the trainee valuers who have passed recent exams.

4.5 Blended Model

Technical staff are now returning to work in the office one or two days a week and have recommenced some external survey drive-bys.

Discussion took place on the Burns House demolition. The DA (ST) will ensure that this entry is deleted from the roll.

DA(ST)

5.0 REPORTS

5.1 Non Domestic

Local practice notes for 2023 will be considered by the DA's.

DA's

The VAC took place on 24 June 2021 and 4 of the 5 cases were lost. Non Covid-19 appeals are now on the October/November VAC Hearings.

AIN Rent Questionnaires were discussed. The Management Team will meet to discuss the issue of the RQ's. The OM will arrange a meeting.

OM

The DA (ST) reported that the back log of Self-Catering Unit Forms (amended) were issued last week. The DA (ST) further reported that the team have reverted back to using actual files. TSU are currently printing non domestic reports and valuation sheets for the Revaluation Team currently held electronically.

The survey team are currently out on site to establish completions.

Performance

There are some concerns over the KPIs. However, with survey work now commenced there may be an improvement.

TARGET	60	85	15
ACTUAL	74	81	19

Self-Catering Unit statistics were discussed.

The DA (ST) reported on a pilot exercise within the section where the Property Assistant will support the valuers.

Discussion took place regarding Ayrshire Archives and the recent move of documents to a private company. The Assessor confirmed that she would seek clarification on any costs from SAC.

Ass

It was agreed that the team would commence downloading plans for domestic alterations.

5.2 Council Tax

It was noted that as at 1 July 2021 there was 121 invalid and 188 valid proposals.

It was agreed that once sold houses have been dealt with then work would commence on proposals.

Performance

Performance was reported as follows:

New Entries

Target	70%	90%	10%
Actual	75%	93%	7%

Point of Sales

Target	45%	65%	95%	5%
Actual	9%	49%	57%	43%

It was reported that a process is now in place and the Revaluation Team have been requested to help with sales and hopefully this will help get the backlog up to date.

A number of plans cannot be obtained from the archivist or websites. Questionnaires have been issued and returns are being received and being processed by the team.

As a result of alterations there will be a review. The Team will survey externally. Reminder letters will be issued and a new standard letter for “no change” has been drafted. This standard letter will be emailed.

The DA (ST) requested if the front page of the website could be updated to include a statement about sold house alteration band increases. This request was agreed and will be amended in due course.

It was noted that the Revaluation Team have each been allocated with 20 sold houses.

The TSU are currently helping log and acknowledge proposals. TSU are also scanning all remaining Council Tax files onto the system. Consideration will require to be given to resources for TSU although it was noted that help is being given by the electoral team.

A number of cases have been continued to the October hearing by the VAC. Counsel will be booked.

Overtime will be offered to staff for an additional allocation of sold houses.

6.0 SCOTTISH ASSESSORS' ASSOCIATION

The Assessor reported that she will be attending the Assessors' Committee meeting on 22 July 2021.

The Whisky Practice Note was approved at the last committee meeting.

Assessor is helping to compile a RICS response on Transfer to Tribunal Service.

7.0 ICT

7.1 Electoral Management System

The Scottish User Group that was set up to discuss issues arising and sharing best practice has been successful with the engagement of the EMS supplier.

A recent update was installed.

7.2 Core System

The NDR system will go live in October 2021 for user acceptance testing.

The Assessor is currently working on Spec 12 for the new system.

Client Sprint testing is concentrating on priorities which were decided via the focus group i.e. Contractors, Hotels and Industrial Valuations. It was felt that more staff should be involved and this will also test the running of the system with more users.

It was agreed that we should process as much as we can prior to "go live".

Thanks were given to the Principal Valuer (RT) and the Divisional Valuer (ST) for their input to user testing to date.

7.3 AVJB website

The website was updated to include the banner regarding Point of Sale with Domestic Alterations.

7.4 Other
Additional webcams have been purchased for technical staff.

Delivery of docking stations is awaited.

Appropriate equipment will be considered once we move to laptops within the office.

8.0 ER UPDATE

8.1 General
The canvass has commenced. Local and national data matches have been carried out and canvass forms will be issued and then followed up with ITR's as required. In addition, via maximising registration, we continue to engage with establishments (Route 3) during the canvass and previous effective engagement has proved successful.

New Performance Standards and Guidance contained within the Electoral Commission website is also on SharePoint.

8.2 Elections
A local by-election will be held on 12 August 2021 for Ward 6 – North Ayrshire – Dalry and West Kilbride.

A meeting will take place on 14 July, 2021 with the Election Project Board of North Ayrshire Council.

9.0 GOVERNANCE

9.1 Suggestions Box
There was one new suggestion regarding "Tea Break Talks" from the RIDO.

The suggestion was approved and it was agreed that this would be rolled out to all staff for participation in tea break talks on a Friday afternoon for 30-minute sessions.

9.2 Correspondence
A new mail logging system has been set up and a guidance note will be rolled in due course.

9.3 Board Meetings/Reports
The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 21 September 2021.

9.4 Budget Update
Nothing to report.

9.5 Audit – Internal/External
The PAO reported that a couple of external audit enquiries had been received.

9.6 Corporate Plan
The Assessor is currently producing a Climate Change Policy.

- 9.7 Service Plan
The next Service Plan review will take place in January 2022 if required.
- 9.8 Risk Register
The Strategic Risk Register was approved at the June 2021 Board Meeting. The next update will be due January 2022.

Risk Assessments will be reviewed as staff return to the office.

- 9.9 Business Continuity
The Business Continuity Plan was recently reviewed on 13 May 2021. The Business Continuity Strategy is being reviewed by SAC.

- 9.10 Complaints and Letters of Appreciation
A number of complaints on house point of sales with domestic alterations have been received. We are currently working on these and have additional resources to address the backlog are now in place. In addition, we have adjusted the messaging on our website to make information on that potential issue more prominent. Letters are also being issued to the appropriate properties where we require further information when it is not available on the planning and building control portals.

The Assessor will investigate the Law Society in connection with writing to all solicitors/local lawyers on house point of sales with domestic alterations possible band increases.

Ass

Two complaints have been received since last meeting. The HOVS reported that we may require to report on these more frequently and formally record.

Four letters of appreciation have been received since last reported.

- 9.11 Records Management and Retention
The DA (ST) reported that she is encouraging staff to name electronic files more appropriately. The Assessor reported that a naming convention is available on SharePoint.

- 9.12 FOI
No new requests have been received since last reported.

- 9.13 Equalities
An Equalities Partnership meeting took place on 16 June 2021 but the HOVS was unable to attend.

The HOVS attended the SAC Equalities Champion Group on 22 June 2021.

- 9.14 Health and Safety
The Health and Safety Group met on 1 July 2021. An email was subsequently issued to all staff highlighting the main points together with mental health awareness.

Staff should be encouraged to undertake a DSE Self-Assessment when moving work station or working from home. Completed forms should be sent to the Office Manager.

A fire drill will take place in due course.

Three volunteers have agreed to help carry out the fire safety checks which are now carried out on a monthly basis.

The fleeces have now been received. The PPE will be administered by the HOVS, Technical Officer and PA. A record will be kept of all equipment, when new equipment is ordered and received, when issued and details of issue to staff. We will require to consider a convenient permanent place to store the PPE.

The Health and Safety Minutes from this meeting have been placed on SharePoint.

9.15 Elected Member Enquires

Nine elected member enquiries have been received since last reported.

9.16 Policies and Procedures – new/reviews/updates

Corona Virus Office Capacity Guidance is being looked at by the Assessor.

Self-Catering Unit Guidance – Forms and Processing has been placed on SharePoint together with When is a sale not a sale Guidance.

Sold House Guidance was approved and will be placed on SharePoint.

The folders within the Operational Instructions/Processes button have been reviewed. A folder has been created for Technical Guidance Notes and the guidance has been renamed to help find the relevant document during a search.

9.17 Customer Questionnaire

The PAO will speak to the RIDO in order to progress a new process to modernise and transform how we interact with service users.

PAO

9.18 Property Matters

The furniture stored within one of the back building ground floor rooms is being cleared out. Only a few items will be kept.

Council Tax files, plan chests etc have been moved to the ground floor. The spare room is now available to accommodate staff.

A review of the photocopies will take place in order to reduce our requirements.

Works have been completed on the roof and downpipes. The HOVS is unable to check works on the roof/chimney head as the windows have been painted closed.

The sills should have been cut out, replaced and painted. The HOVS and OM will discuss and investigate with SAC.

**HOVS/
OM**

The asbestos panel has been removed from the back door.

Weeds within the car park areas have been sprayed but it is unclear if the front basement area has been sprayed.

An issue was raised in connection with parking at the gates to the car park. Staff should make sure that they park appropriately and use other available spaces and not park at the gates if possible.

An inventory of all office furniture will be undertaken. The DA (ST) will consider if additional furniture is required.

OM

It was agreed that senior staff will relinquish their PC's for laptops and docking stations.

10.0 AOCB

No other competent business.

11.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Management Team Meeting will take place on 14 September 2021.