

MINUTE of MEETING of CENTRAL SCOTLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD held within HILLSIDE HOUSE, LAURELHILL, STIRLING on FRIDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2007 at 10 a.m.

PRESENT: Depute Provost McLaren; Councillors Blackwood, Goss, Hughes, C MacDonald, McNeil, Nimmo, Paterson and Simpson.

CONVENER: Councillor Simpson.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Balsillie, Biggam and Patrick.

ATTENDING: Assessor; Assistant Assessors (I McGregor and R Taylor); Treasurer and Assistant to the Clerk (B Douglas).

VJB9. MINUTE

There was submitted (circulated) and **APPROVED** Minute of Meeting of Central Scotland Valuation Joint Board held on 22 June 2007.

VJB10. REVENUE BUDGET 2007/08 – REVIEW AS AT 31 JULY 2007

There was submitted Report (circulated) by the Treasurer advising Members of the forecast outturn for the financial year ending 31 March 2008.

NOTED the contents of the Report.

VJB11. DISCLOSURE SCOTLAND POLICY

There was submitted Report (circulated) dated 30 August 2007 by the Assistant Assessor outlining the proposed process for the disclosure checking of members of the Valuation Joint Board staff and attaching as an appendix, the proposed Central Scotland Valuation Joint Board Disclosure Scotland Policy.

AGREED to approve the Report and the contents of the attached Policy.

VJB12. DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS 2007/08

There was submitted Report (circulated) dated 29 August 2007 by the Clerk proposing dates and venues for ordinary meetings of the Valuation Joint Board for 2007/08.

AGREED:-

(1) to approve the proposed dates and venues for ordinary meetings of the Board to June 2008 as detailed in the Report; and

- (2) to note that special meetings of the Board may be convened as necessary outwith the planned timetable.

VJB13. PRESENTATION ON THE ASSESSOR'S FUNCTIONS

The Assessor gave a presentation on the role of the Assessor's office and its functions.

The presentation covered the following areas:-

Specific Duties

- Valuation for Non Domestic Ratings
 - all properties unless excepted by law
 - 5 yearly revaluation
- Valuation and Banding for Council Tax (all domestic properties)
- Registration of Eligible Electors (resident; over 18; UK, EU, Commonwealth nationals)

Core Activities

- Valuation Roll (survey and value new properties, survey and value changes to existing properties)
- Council Tax List (survey and band new houses; survey and re-banding after improvement and sale)
- Electoral Register (annual canvass and rolling register; absent voter's list)

Statutory Posts

- Each function is a statutory duty on the Assessor personally (not the Board)
- The Assessor is appointed by the Valuation Joint Board to carry out the Valuation functions
- Depute Assessors are also appointed by the Board and have the same statutory rights and duties
- Assessor and Depute Assessor must by law be Chartered Surveyors
- The Assessor is appointed by the 3 Councils to carry out the Electoral Registration Function

Answerable to?

- The Assessor is answerable to the Valuation Joint Board for the running of the Service, but not for the valuations or whether a registration is correct or not
- The Assessor is answerable to the Scottish Courts for the valuations and registrations

The Valuation Joint Board's responsibilities

- To ensure that the Assessor and Electoral Registration Office is adequately funded to carry out the statutory duties
- To scrutinise that the Assessor is using those funds properly and fully carrying out the duties
- To provide governance and leadership in terms of the Best Value regime
- To be the final decision making body in staff discipline or staff grievance/complaint

Scottish Assessors Association

- An association of all 14 Scottish Assessors and members of their senior staff
- The SAA is non-statutory but is recognised by both Scottish and UK governments as an important source of advice
- The SAA performs several important functions including the harmonisation of valuation practice throughout Scotland
- Coordination of Electoral Registration practice and point of contact with Government and Electoral Commission
- Allows sharing of resources and expertise between Assessors' offices
- Allows Assessors to combine to deal with national organisations in a consistent way (UK Information Commissioner, Scottish Information Commissioner, Electoral Commission, Credit Reference Agencies, Ministry of Justice/Scotland Office, Scottish Government, Valuation Office Agency, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation, Boundary Commissions, Political Parties, ONS)
- SAA Portal – an example of joint working and resource sharing
 - allows direct access to many Assessors' services via the internet
 - 75% of all Council tax appeals are now made on-line
 - also allows on-line non domestic appeals
 - allows on line return of rental information
 - provides rateable value history for any property
 - provides nationally agreed practice notes explaining how Assessors have valued each type of property

NOTED the contents of the presentation.