



Public Performance Report 2008/2009

Working in partnership with Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire & Moray Councils.

Assessor's Report Electoral Registration

Having completed over 40 years service in local government, the last 12 as Assessor & ERO, this will be my final PPR to stakeholders. I will leave the department on 31 August 2009, handing over the reigns to my current Depute, Ian Milton.

Ian and all of the other members of staff have contributed to the continuous improvement in performance over the years and I pay tribute to staff, past and present who have made my job as Assessor & ERO, at least, relatively trouble free since April 1997.

This past year has seen a continuation of the

ongoing improvement in performance. With the level of activity maintained in Valuation Roll changes the 3 month performance figure has improved from last year's 65% to 70%. Council Tax new entries have fallen by almost 10% with performance dropping slightly to just over the target level of 88% due to a variety of circumstances with particular difficulties noted in relation to an increase in new houses being let rather than sold and details of occupation being slow to come in. Matters are however in hand to address this particular issue.

The annual canvass saw this year's door-to-door activity concentrated in the Aberdeen Central Constituency with improved response as a result. Last year the overall return of canvass forms was 78% but this year it rose to 88%. The improvement in Aberdeen City was even better at 83% compared to 72%. Aberdeenshire and Moray saw a return rate of 91% compared to 83% and 82% respectively in 2007/2008.

The number of "no change" registrations received by telephone and internet are both down from last year, telephone registrations being down significantly at only 2/3 of the level of the previous year. These services however are welcomed by those who use them and feedback indicates that satisfaction levels are high.

Section 69 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 placed a duty on the ERO to encourage electoral participation. Within a limited budget the strategy has been to draw attention of voters and those entitled to be registered to electoral events, such as elections and the annual canvass through increased advertising. By using material available from the Electoral Commission a range of posters has been created for display on public advertising pillars in Aberdeen, LA Billing Year Planners, magazines targeted at young people, internal and external 'bus advertising, library carrier bags and a public service website.

Corporate Governance

Work has progressed on the Board's package of Corporate Governance documentation. A range of staffing policies has now been approved and implemented. Further work remains to be done however and preparations are in hand in relation to a range of equalities issues. This is a developing area with changes in the legislative background and work is being progressed with support from Moray Council's Equal Opportunities Officer. During 2009 reports will be presented to the board to update the

existing Race and Disability Equalities Policies and to introduce a new Gender Equality Policy.

Thankfully issues in relation to these matters have not arisen within the Board either in respect of staffing or our stakeholders, but complacency is not an issue either.

An Equalities Questionnaire has been issued to staff and preparatory work on an external survey of the users of the Board's services is ongoing to cover the whole geography of our area.

Are you registered to vote?

X

Make sure of your vote

If you are not on the Electoral Register
You will not be able to vote at Elections

You can apply to vote at any time by completing a simple form and sending it to the address below

You can also apply to vote by post if this is more convenient

Contact
01224 664848
Grampian ERO
Woodhill House
Aberdeen
AB16 5GE

website

Are you registered to vote?

Bądź pewien, że możesz głosować.
Jeżeli nie jesteś w spisie wyborczym,
nie będziesz mógł głosować w wyborach.
Jeżeli potrzebujesz pomocy zadzwoń
01224 664848

Return your Household Canvass form NOW to ensure you get your say at elections.

Forms were delivered from 1 September. The new Voters' Roll will be published on 1 December - be included!

Questions?
Contact 01224 664848
Grampian ERO
Woodhill House
Aberdeen
AB16 5GE

canvass poster

Valuation Roll

A net additional £8.03M Rateable Value (RV) was included in the Roll during the year resulting from 2,520 changes. This represents increases in both value and number of changes from last year. Performance has also improved at all levels with more entries being amended in 3 months or less and the numbers of ratepayers having to wait for more than 3 or 6 months having reduced.

By 31 December 2008 all but 164 of the subjects under appeal from the 2005 Revaluation had been disposed of. The outstanding

cases were all either referred or ratepayers were seeking referral to the Lands Tribunal for Scotland. The workload on these cases will however impact in 2009 and even 2010 depending on the Tribunal's timetable.

Some cases have now been

referred back to the local Valuation Appeal committee and will require to be disposed of by November 2009. It is to be hoped that the impact of this work will not interfere too much with progress towards completion of the 2010 Revaluation.

	Key Performance Indicators			
	Number	< 3 Months	3-6 Months	> 6 Months
2008/09	2,520	70.0%	16.5%	13.5%
2007/08	2,339	64.8%	20.3%	14.9%
2006/07	2,187	59.0%	23.0%	17.9%

Council Tax

Fewer properties have again been added to the Council Tax Valuation List during the year but performance has not been maintained to match. Although almost nine out of ten taxpayers receive notification of their band within 3 months of occupation it is

taking longer to make new entries in the list. One reason for this is the increasing practice of developers to lease new houses rather than sell them. Obtaining details of these new occupiers is proving to be more difficult than when house-builders sell to new

owners. Managers however are aware of the problem and the matter is being addressed.

Difficulties have also been experienced in staffing in the Divisional offices in particular and there was some effect arising from the relocation of the Banff office. The maintenance of improved performance is however an issue which affects staff at all levels and it is to be hoped that during 2009/10 performance can be improved, particularly if the levels of activity are to remain at their currently subdued levels.

Year	Key Performance Indicators			
	Number	< 3 Months	3-6 Months	> 6 Months
2008/09	2,675	88.7%	8.7%	2.6%
2007/08	2,964	91.9%	6.3%	1.9%
2006/07	3,078	91.0%	7.7%	1.3%

Valuation Appeals

The 2005 Revaluation saw almost 5,500 appeals lodged against revised valuations amounting to £349.44M RV. By 31 December 2008, as noted above, 164 cases were outstanding, all involving the Lands Tribunal for Scotland.

Overall the loss on appeal within Grampian was minimal and showed a much improved out-turn compared to the 2000 Revaluation. From a total RV at 01/04/2005 of £515.35M some £9.81M was lost on appeal or 1.9%.

It is true to say however that almost £20M RV is still in dispute in those cases involving the Lands Tribunal

so the final out-turn will not be known for some time.

Apart from Revaluation appeals there is a constant flow of "Running Roll" appeals arising from ongoing changes to the Valuation Roll and "Material Change of Circumstances"

appeals, the numbers of which cannot be predicted. During the period to 31 December 2008 a total of 1,355 "Running Roll" appeals were lodged with over 60% being withdrawn without adjustment and loss on appeal.

Authority	Appeals	Resolved	Outstanding	RV (£M)
Aberdeen	2,864	2,854	10	9.39
Aberdeenshire	1,791	1,674	117	4.77
Moray	808	771	37	5.67
Grampian	5,463	5,299	164	19.83

If you want further information about performance, the activities of the Grampian Valuation Joint Board or the Assessor please contact:-

The Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer

Grampian Valuation Joint Board Woodhill House Westburn Road Aberdeen AB16 5GE

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