



Valuation Tribunal Users' Group

Minutes of the Meeting held at Black Lion House on 28 April 2014

Present:	Professor Graham Zellick QC (Chairman)	VTE
	Jon Bestow	VTE
	Tony Masella	VTS
	Lee Anderson	VTS
	Mark Higgin	RICS
	Blake Penfold	RICS
	Ian Charman	RSA
	Andrew Hetherton	RSA
	Richard Guy	IRRV
	Jerry Schurder	IRRV
	Peter Scrafton	IRRV
	Michael Pearce	VOA
	Mary Hardman	VOA
	Peter O'Connell	FSB
	Cain Ormondroyd	PEBA

In attendance: Amy Dusanjeh Secretary

1 Apologies for absence

- 1.1 Anne Galbraith (VTS), Carla Maria-Heath (LGA), Martin McTague (FSB) and Louise Freeth (IRRV) tendered their apologies.
- 1.2 Mr Ormondroyd and Mr Charman were welcomed to their first meeting.

2 Membership

- 2.1 Mr Charman had succeeded Mr John Elcox.

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2014

- 3.1 The minutes were confirmed.
- 3.2 Mr Penfold queried whether any progress had been made regarding permission to appeal to the Upper Tribunal. The President explained that he was unaware of any developments. He had left the matter in the hands of the

President and Deputy President of the Lands Chamber if they wished to press the matter.

4 Recruitment of Tribunal Members

4.1 The Registrar had produced a report on existing and future membership numbers taking into account retirements, assumed resignations, workload and hearing days over the next four years. The report revealed a need for recruitment.

4.2 There was discussion about how appointments would be made, either via the Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) or otherwise if the Secretary of State removed the VTE from the JAC's remit. The President had informed the JAC that the VTE might need to recruit.

4.3 There was discussion about the criteria to be employed when selecting the new members. The President confirmed that no qualifications were prescribed and that there would have to be separate appointments for chairmen and members.

5 Draft Practice Statements:

PS A11 Council Tax Reduction Appeals - Revised draft 1

5.1 The need to enter judgment for appellants in cases where respondent Billing Authorities were not submitting their evidence had prompted further changes to the Practice Statement. The President felt these BAs should be reported to the appropriate public body as their behaviour was not satisfactory.

Proposed Addition to PS A7-1 – Draft 2

5.2 The proposed addition was noted.

6 Draft Documents

Notice Striking Out Proceedings

6.1 This document was noted.

President's Draft Guidance: Bundles for the Tribunal

6.2 This document was noted.

Whether Statements of Case are Public Documents

6.3 This document was noted, with a proposed alteration regarding cases where a hearing was pending.

7 The Government's Proposed Reforms to NDR Challenges

7.1 The Government had not yet issued its comments on the consultation responses.

7.2 The Rateable Value Information Sheet (RVIS) to be issued by the VOA was discussed. It was confirmed that the format had not evolved following discussions between the VOA and professional representatives. The matter remained a matter for the VOA, but if the RVIS was not satisfactory, the President felt the new process would not work. The President hoped that agreement could be reached in order to avoid problems.

7.3 The Group awaited the Government's final proposals.

8 Listing of NDR Appeals

8.1 Mr Anderson set out the current position and a possible way forward. The President hoped that improvements could be made to the current listing policy and took the view that it was wrong that parties were attending hearings to make postponement/adjournment applications when there was no capacity on the day to hear the appeal if the application were refused. He pointed out that cases should not be postponed/adjourned merely because facts had not been agreed.

8.2 He stated that the following two points should underpin any system:

- A party should not have to prepare for a hearing when their case was unlikely to be heard on the specified day;
- A party should not have to attend a hearing when they were unlikely to be heard.

9 Any other business

9.1 Mr Guy and Mr Pearce sought clarification on the process of submitting statements of case following a postponement or a strike out notice. It was pointed out that both issues were covered in Practice Statement A7-1.

10 Date of next meeting

10.1 Members would be consulted about the date of the next meeting.

28 July 2014

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President