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Public Performance Report 2013/14

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Background

The Assessor for Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute is an independent statutory official who is responsible for the preparation and the maintenance of the Valuation Rolls and Council Tax Valuation Lists for East and West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute. The Assessor has also been appointed as the Electoral Registration Officer for these three areas and he is therefore required to prepare and maintain their Registers of Electors. The Assessor's service is conducted from two main offices located at the addresses above.

You can contact us by e-mail at 'assessor@dab-vjb.gov.uk'.

General Information

During the year to 31st March 2014, the Assessor had a full-time equivalent staff of 55.69 and a staffing budget of £2.10m. A total of 445 days (3.6%) were lost through illness, a decrease to the 461 days lost in 2013/14.

Council Tax List

The Council Tax List contains all domestic properties showing an allocated Council Tax band which is based on the market value of the property as at 1991. The bands shown are used by the local authorities within the Joint Board's boundaries for the production of domestic Council Tax bills. As at 31st March, 2014, the Council Tax Lists for Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute contained 142,593 subjects. Of the 1,074 houses added to the List between 1st April 2013 and 31st March 2014, the time between the date of occupation/completion and the issue of the banding notice is shown in the following table. Both the 3 month target and the 6-month target were achieved.

Year	Number	Within 3 Months		Within 6 Months	
		Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved
2013/14	1074	95%	95%	98%	98%
2012/13	1110	93%	96%	98%	99%
2011/12	988	92%	96%	98%	98.6%
2010/11	989	93%	90%	97%	98%
2009/10	940	90%	87%	96%	98%
2008/09	1084	92%	87%	97%	98%
2007/08	1128	92%	93%	97%	99%
2006/07	953	90%	93%	97%	98%
2005/06	1201	88%	89%	97%	96%
2004/05	996	85%	91%	97%	98%

The targets which we have set for 2014/15 are 95% within 3 months and 98% within 6 months.

Valuation Roll

The Valuation Roll contains the rateable values of all non-domestic properties within the area. The rateable values shown are used by the Joint Board's constituent local authorities for the production of non-domestic rates bills.

As at 31st March 2014 the Valuation Rolls for Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute contained 13,207 subjects with a total rateable value of £328.2 million. Of the 892 amendments made to the Valuation Roll between 1st April 2013 and 31st March 2014, the time between the effective date of the alteration and the issue of the Valuation Notice is shown in the following table, along with previous years' data. The performance at three and six months fell just short of targets but inline with previous years.

The targets we have set for 2014/15 are 80% within 3 months and 94% within 6 months.

Year	Number	Within 3 Months		Within 6 Months	
		Target	Achieved	Target	Achieved
2013/14	892	80%	78.4%	94%	90.5%
2012/13	1369	80%	78%	92%	91%
2011/12	930	80%	77.8%	92%	90.4%
2010/11	964	80%	79%	90%	91%
2009/10	952	75%	77%	90%	93%
2008/09	1057	80%	80%	90%	93%
2007/08	1072	80%	82%	95%	94%
2006/07	1051	75%	76%	90%	96%
2005/06	1093	66%	80%	83%	96%
2004/05	1131	52%	66%	77%	83%

Electoral Registration

The Electoral Register lists the name and addresses of everyone who is registered to vote. The Electoral Registration Officer holds a copy.

In total, we received 130,639 responses (93.84%) from the 139,215 forms issued in respect of the annual canvass. This return was up from 93.74% in 2012.

The total return by Council area was as shown below:

Constituency	2013 Canvass
Argyll & Bute Council	95.63%
East Dunbartonshire Council	95.40%
West Dunbartonshire Council	90.30%
Total for VJB Area	93.84%

Electoral Performance

The Electoral Administration Act 2006 (EAA) gave the EC powers to set standards of performance for EROs, Returning Officers (ROs) and Referendum Counting Officers (RCOs) in Great Britain.

Following the 2013 annual canvass the Electoral Commission carried out its annual electoral registration data collection and self-assessment exercise.

The self-assessment covered 10 performance standards over 4 subject areas:-

- Completeness and accuracy of electoral registration records (Standards 1–3)
- Integrity of the registration process (Standards 4–5)
- Encouraging participation in the registration process (Standards 6–8)
- Planning and organisation (Standards 9–10)

Having been assessed as performing 'Above the Standard' in 6 of the 10 standards, the Board's own performance was as illustrated.

Standard	Below	Meets	Above
Using information sources to verify and identify electors for the register	√	√	√
Maintaining the property database	√	√	√
House to house enquiries	√	√	√
Maintaining the integrity of registration and absent vote applications	√	√	
Supply and security of the register and absent voters list	√	√	√
Public awareness strategy	√	√	
Working with partners	√	√	√
Accessibility and communication of information	√	√	
Planning for rolling registration and the annual canvass	√	√	
Training	√	√	√

Other Items of Note

During the year we also:

- Continued to provide information to the Assessors Portal (www.saa.gov.uk). This website provides an on-line search facility for Valuation Roll and Council Tax entries throughout Scotland and provides for the on-line submission of Valuation Roll appeals and Council Tax banding proposals. It also provides a mapping tool for identifying the location of entries. For the 2010 Revaluation entries for most shops, offices and industrial subjects have summarised valuations available online. The Automated Appeals Logging System which allows for the receipt and acknowledgement of Revaluation continues to operate successfully.
- Continued with our preparations for the Implementation of Individual Electoral Registration which is due to take place on 19th September 2014.
- Compiled and maintained a Young Persons Register as required for the Scottish Independence Referendum which takes place on 18th September 2014
- Refresh of Personal Identifiers for over 16,000 absent voters.
- Conducted a further Customer Satisfaction Survey, with 98% (as in the previous three years) of the returns indicating that our staff were found to be professional, courteous and helpful, and 98% (up from 96% last year) of the users of the Valuation Joint Board's services expressing their satisfaction with the information and/or advice given. Satisfaction levels amongst those with protected characteristics as detailed in the Equality Act 2010 were generally similar to the overall figures.
- Published, as required, the Board's Public Sector Equality Duty providing details regarding Mainstreaming the Equality Duty, Workforce Monitoring, and the Equality Outcomes.
- Reviewed and approved a new Service Level Agreement with West Dunbartonshire Council.

A copy of the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer's Annual Report is available on request from either office and also online at <http://www.dab-vjb.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allid=89675>



Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute
Valuation Joint Board