



VALUATION TRIBUNAL FOR WALES

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

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Foreword by the President of the Valuation Tribunal for Wales

This year the Tribunal has seen a great deal of change.

Our budget faced a substantial cut, which meant that we had to be prudent in our spending. As two thirds of all expenditure is used to cover staffing costs, we implemented a major re-structure of our workforce and we have started to implement the Governing Council's five year plan.

The first major step of this was the introduction of a voluntary redundancy/early retirement scheme. As a consequence of this we had to say a sad, but fond, farewell to very long-serving, senior members of staff. Mrs. Wendy Beynon and Dr. Ann Smith were both Regional Clerks, and each had given over 30 years of service to the Tribunal in several different roles over the years. They were the backbone of our Welsh Language service provision, both being fluent Welsh speakers and active in promoting the use of the Welsh Language. They both helped greatly in our preparations with regard to Welsh Language Standards over recent years. I and the membership as well as members of staff were sorry to see them go; but we wished them all the best in their new retirements, which they began at the end of September.

As well as a new shape to our staffing structure, we also saw a new shape to the membership of the Tribunal and the Governing Council as a result of amending statutory regulations introduced in December. Details of these changes are included in this report. One of the changes has been a significant reduction in our overall membership through a voluntary stepping down scheme. I am grateful to all those who decided to 'call it a day', often after many years of experienced service, in order for the Tribunal to move on in a new streamlined form.

I am also extremely grateful to the Chief Executive, staff and members for their ability to adjust to the new framework. At times the going has been quite complex and arduous, but we have come through it collectively to enable us to continue to deliver an effective and professional service.

Overall I am convinced we are on the right track in developing a more fulfilling experience for our membership, where they will sit more often and hear more cases. I am confident that this will enrich their personal expertise and allow us as a Tribunal to continue to deliver a first-class service to the people of Wales.

Diolch i bawb sy'n ymwneud â'r gwasanaeth.

Carol Cobert

President - Valuation Tribunal for Wales

Introduction by the Chief Executive

This year has been extremely busy - with structural change to both the membership and the staff. We have nevertheless managed to deliver an increase on appeal clearances during the same period.

I am indebted to everyone who has played their part in this: the staff who have been extremely flexible and responsive to the challenges we have encountered along the way; the tribunal membership who have been fed and have absorbed a great deal of information about change by newsletter and at the information events we held in September and October; and the Governing Council who have taken tough decisions and then kept focus on a clear path ahead. All of this has enabled us to move very significantly in a very short time.

The shape to the tribunal is very different at the end of this reporting year than it was at the beginning. The challenges of the Governing Council's five-year plan have not finished yet, but we have made a very significant and successful start. This report gives the details.

Andrew Shipsides
Chief Executive – Valuation Tribunal for Wales

1 Tribunal's role and scope

1.1 There have been some amendments to the tribunal's governing statutory regulations this year. They became effective on 1 December 2017. However the amendments affect only how the tribunal is constituted; they do not affect the tribunal's core functions with regard to the types of appeals which are processed and how those appeals are handled. Details of the effects of the amendments are covered in the following section of this report. With regard to the tribunal's role and scope, this has not changed during 2017/18.

1.2 In short, the tribunal provides a free service to which business rates and council tax payers in Wales can refer grievances they have with aspects of their liabilities. These aspects are principally:

- The valuation of the property which is used to calculate the rate or council tax liability.
- Whether a person is actually liable to council tax.
- Whether the calculated council tax liability is correct, taking into account the various discounts, exemptions, reductions and premiums which apply in certain circumstances.

Before bringing an issue to the attention of the tribunal, the aggrieved person must first have tried to resolve the matter with the initial decision-making body. In a case of property valuation, that body is the Valuation Office Agency (VOA -- an executive agency of Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs). And with regard to council tax liability issues, the body is the local government authority which has issued the council tax bill (known as the billing authority).

1.3 There are other types of appeal which are referred to the tribunal occasionally. These relate to:

- Completion notices issued by billing authorities with a view to establishing a date when a property may be deemed complete for rating and council tax purposes.
- The imposition of penalties by the VOA on persons whom the VOA has determined have failed to provide information which they are legally required to give for property valuation purposes.
- A drainage rate assessment made by a local drainage board.

1.4 The tribunal's decisions in all these matters have legal force. The tribunal may review some of its rating and council tax decisions on application of a party in certain limited circumstances. Otherwise, aggrieved parties may challenge decisions in the upper courts. Valuation for rating matters may initially be pursued in the Upper Tier Tribunal (Lands Chamber), and council tax liability matters may initially be pursued in the High Court (on a point of law only). Valuation for council tax matters cannot be challenged beyond the tribunal's decision: the tribunal's decision is final in those cases.

2 Amendments to the tribunal's governing statutory regulations

2.1 The principal regulations covering the tribunal's composition and governance are The Valuation Tribunal for Wales Regulations 2010 (WSI 2010 No.713 (W 69)). Amendments were made to these regulations on 1 December 2017 by The Valuation Tribunal for Wales (Amendment) Regulations 2017 (WSI 2017 No. 941 (W 234)).

2.2 The main effects of the amendments were:

- To remove local authorities' involvement in the appointment process of tribunal members;
- To remove a specified number of members to be appointed in respect of each local authority area;
- To reduce the total number of members;
- To limit the maximum term of service on the tribunal for future appointments to ten years (ie two terms of five years each);
- To remove regionalisation which was used for the purpose of appointing members to the tribunal's Governing Council.
- To change to the composition of the Governing Council from the President plus four Regional Representatives drawn from the membership, plus one Welsh Government appointee, to the President plus three National Representatives drawn from the membership, plus up to three Welsh Government appointees.

2.3 The removal of local authorities from involvement in the appointment of the tribunal members was welcomed by the tribunal. Local authority involvement was an anachronism born out of the fact that the initial predecessor bodies of the tribunal (the Local Valuation Courts created in 1948) were themselves a development out of local rating assessment committees which were constituted and run by local authorities. The change now fully separates the tribunal from local authorities, which as billing authorities collect non-domestic rates and council tax. This separation makes it clear that the tribunal is a fully independent judicial body, which is not linked or subject to influence by any other body involved in rating or council tax matters. In line with the amending regulations the tribunal's Governing Council has now established an Appointments Panel, which henceforth will be solely responsible for all the tribunal's own appointments, including the appointment of chairpersons. The appointment of chairpersons had previously been decided by election within the full membership.

2.4 The total membership is now determined by the Governing Council within the range of 16 to 145, in accordance with the Council's assessment of need. This compares with a range previously of 186 to 236. The upper limit of the new range will progressively reduce over the next two years to 105. The Governing Council has determined that the appropriate number to deal with the anticipated workload for the next few years is 90. A programme of voluntary stepdown has been introduced in order to work towards this number. At the beginning of this year the total number of members was 147. At the end it had reduced to 104 (See Appendix C for details)

3 Organisational restructure and five year savings plan

- 3.1 The tribunal modified its staffing structure this year, driven by the twin needs to find savings within its staffing expenditure and to match its staffing establishment to the new non-regionalised tribunal structure introduced by the amending statutory regulations described in section 2 above.
- 3.2 The tribunal replaced its four Regional Clerks with two national Executive Managers. A voluntary redundancy/ early retirement scheme was introduced for this purpose, which was financed through borrowing from Welsh Government under its *Invest to Save Scheme*. The remaining staff were remodelled into national teams, rather than being designated regional resources. There is now a single administrative support team under a Finance and Executive Officer, and a single tribunal clerks team led by two senior tribunal clerks. The new structure is shown in Appendix H.
- 3.3 In addition to remodelling the staffing structure, the Governing Council also published details of its five-year savings plan to save a further 20% (in 2017/18 terms) by 2020/21. The tribunal has already made savings of 18% in cash terms (without adjustment for inflation) since 2013/14. See Appendix E for the last five years' comparative figures.
- 3.4 Appendix I shows the key steps of the Governing Council's current five year plan.

4 Workload, further appeals, and complaints

Workload

- 4.1 This year the tribunal cleared 7,900 rating appeals, 1,450 council tax valuation appeals, and a little over 100 other appeals of various types (principally council tax liability matters, including reduction scheme appeals). Details are given in Appendix A, which presents comparative figures against the previous four years, and Appendix B which provides a detailed breakdown of this year's results.
- 4.2 The tribunal achieved its Key Performance Indicator (KPI) measures for listings and for the issuing of decisions (see Appendix G, which presents all KPI outcomes). The only KPI which was not achieved this year was the percentage of review of decision requests in response to CTL decisions issued. The KPI is <5%, and the outcome was 8.5%. However the overall number of CTL decisions was low (at 35). The actual number of requests was three.

Further appeals

- 4.3 Three appeals were registered with the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) this year against VTW rating decisions, two of which were subsequently settled between the parties by consent order. One remains outstanding.
- 4.4 One council tax case was referred to the High Court. Initially the VTW was named as respondent in the matter, as the case was registered with the Court under the wrong Civil Procedure rule. The tribunal objected, and the relevant billing authority was substituted into the respondent position after a short hearing. The tribunal was awarded costs in the matter. The correctly constituted statutory appeal was scheduled of hearing after the close this reporting year. Final details will be included in the report for 2018/19.

Complaints

- 4.5 One complaint was made to the Ombudsman this year about a tribunal decision. The Ombudsman refused to investigate as the matter did not fall within the Ombudsman's purview.

5 Membership and training

Membership

- 5.1 As recorded in paragraph 2.4 above, the membership reduced to 104 this year from 147. This was largely as a result of a voluntary stepdown programme introduced by the Governing Council to match the membership number better to workload needs. The previous number was excessive and resulted in members being called infrequently to tribunal meetings, limiting the opportunities for individual members to gain and maintain hearing experience. The target for membership is currently 90, which will enable members to sit a minimum of 4 to 5 times per year.
- 5.2 The voluntary stepdown programme has increased the age profile of the membership in percentage terms. However this shift is likely to be reversed when current terms of appointment come to an end and new replacement members are sought. The stepdown programme has additionally improved the overall percentage of female members, although of course the actual number is lower than previously. Appendix C shows the current age and gender profile.

Training

- 5.3 There was a moratorium on training this year in order to release funds from for restructuring costs. It will be reintroduced in 2018/19.
- 5.4 The Governing Council did however run two “information events” for members in September and October (one in Llangollen and one in Bridgend), to give details of the Council’s five-year plan.

6 Governing Council

- 6.1 The tribunal's governance statement is on page 14 of this report.
- 6.2 As described in section 2, the composition of the Governing Council was remodelled by amending statutory regulations part way through the year. The four Regional Representatives became National Representatives. The regulations provided for a transitional period, allowing four National Representatives to be in position for a period (instead of three, as required in the future). This period of four positions came to an end in March when Mr Rhys Prytherch's term of appointment expired.
- 6.3 At the end of this reporting year, the members of the Governing Council were:
- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Miss Carol Cobert | - | President |
| Mr Anthony Clatworthy | - | National Representative |
| Mr Rheinallt Evans | - | National Representative |
| Mr Lyndon Moore | - | National Representative |
| Mr Russell Lawson | - | Welsh Government Appointee |
- 6.4 All the above National Representatives' terms of appointment will expire in 2018/19. Elections will be held to fill the vacancies. The current incumbents can stand for re-election if they wish.

7 Staffing

- 7.1 The overall level of staffing in post fell during the course of this year from 18.8 fulltime equivalent officers to 14.6. A 0.6 position remained unfilled at the end of the year.
- 7.2 The number of fluent Welsh speakers reduced to four (from five). Six members of staff have undertaken Welsh language study with the support of the VTW during the year.
- 7.3 At the end of the reporting year, the average age of staff was just over 46.5 years (slightly lower than last year); and the average length of service was a little over 18 years (one year up on last year).
- 7.4 The average number of sickness leave days per member of staff this year was 13.7. This average is artificially high as it includes very long-term sick leave for two members of staff. The average for staff not on long-term sickness absence was 3.38 (one day down on the previous year).

8 Finance

- 8.1 The tribunal's expenditure for the year was £1,112,000 (out of a budget of £1,114,000). 73% was spent on staffing costs, and 23% on other operational running costs. Nearly £27,000 from the staffing budget was paid into the redundancy scheme costs. The redundancy scheme costs constitute a separate account to the tribunal's main revenue account for the year. The revenue account is shown in Appendix D, and the redundancy scheme account is shown in Appendix F
- 8.2 The redundancy scheme total cost was a little under £202,000. The majority of this (£175,000) was sourced through borrowings from Welsh Government's *Invest to Save Scheme*. The borrowing is repayable in five equal instalments of £35,000 per year starting 2018/19. No interest is payable.
- 8.3 Appendix E shows that the tribunal made 14% savings in non-staffing running costs compared to the outturn for the previous year. Since 2013/14 the tribunal has reduced its spending on non-staffing running costs by over 43% in pure cash terms

Statements

**(required under the VTW – Welsh Government
Framework Document)**

Governance Statement

The Valuation Tribunal for Wales is governed by its Governing Council, which comprises:

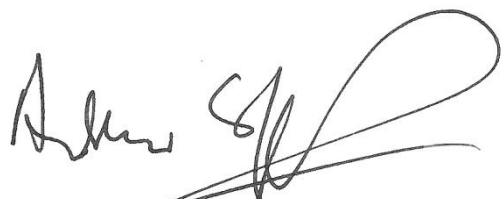
- the President of the Tribunal
- the three National Representatives
- and, if appointed, up to three persons appointed by the Welsh Government.

The Council and its composition are prescribed by The Valuation Tribunal for Wales Regulations 2010 [WSI 2010 No.713 (W69)], as amended by The Valuation Tribunal for Wales (Amendment) Regulations [WSI 2017 No. 941 (W 234)].

The President and National Representatives must be members of the Tribunal and are elected by the Tribunal membership for a term of three years. They may stand for re-election at the expiry of a term.

The collective responsibilities of the Governing Council, the individual personal responsibilities of the President, and the individual responsibilities of each National Representative and Welsh Government Appointee are detailed in the Valuation Tribunal for Wales Framework Document, which is signed under the approval of the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government by an officer of the Welsh Government and the Valuation Tribunal's Chief Executive Officer. The Tribunal's Chief Executive Officer signs on behalf of the Tribunal after receiving approval from the Governing Council.

The Tribunal's Governing Council carries out its functions in a way that is consistent with the Welsh Government's Citizen-Centred Governance Principles, which incorporate the Seven Principles of Public Life set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (the Nolan Committee).



Andrew Shippides
VTW Chief Executive

Statement of Accounting Officer Responsibilities

The Chief Executive of the Valuation Tribunal for Wales is responsible for ensuring that the Tribunal's financial resources are managed in accordance with the principles and specific financial management requirements stated in the Valuation Tribunal for Wales Framework Document and the Welsh Government and Assembly financial documents and memoranda referenced in the Framework Document.

The Chief Executive is accountable personally to the designated Additional Accounting Officer within the Welsh Government department that sponsors the Tribunal. The Additional Accounting Officer is in turn accountable to the Welsh Government and the Assembly.

The Chief Executive may delegate, to Tribunal employees, the day-to-day administration of his responsibilities but remains personally responsible and accountable for them.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Shipsides', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Andrew Shipsides
VTW Chief Executive

Appendices

- A Workload – last five years’ comparative figures**
- B Appeal Clearance Data 2017/2018**
- C Age and gender analysis of the membership (as at 31 March 2018)**
- D Valuation Tribunal for Wales Expenditure 2017/2018**
- E Total expenditure – last five years’ comparative figures**
- F Redundancy Scheme account**
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- H Remodelled Structure (from October 2017)**
- I Key structural changes in VTW five-year plan**

Workload – last 5 years’ comparative figures:

Appendix A

		Non-domestic Rating Valuation		Council Tax Valuation		All other appeals	
2013-14							
Input	Brought forward	7536		547		22	
	Received	4822		1835		100	
Cleared	Settled by parties	6599	85%	1284	76%	15	19%
	Decided by tribunal	1191	15%	403	24%	62	81%
2014-15							
Input	Brought forward	4568		695		45	
	Received	4198		1700		97	
Cleared	Settled by parties	5232	85%	1398	77%	22	22%
	Decided by tribunal	939	15%	416	23%	78	78%
2015-16							
Input	Brought forward	2595		581		42	
	Received	8719		1796		104	
Cleared	Settled by parties	1719	89%	1552	83%	59	55%
	Decided by tribunal	204	11%	312	17%	49	45%
2016-17							
Input	Brought forward	9391		513		38	
	Received	3069		1695		85	
Cleared	Settled by parties	3323	92%	1282	80%	38	49%
	Decided by tribunal	277	8%	322	20%	40	51%
2017-18							
Input	Brought forward	8860		604		45	
	Received	7061		1338		120	
Cleared	Settled by parties	6516	83%	1126	78%	34	31%
	Decided by tribunal	1291	17%	317	22%	77	69%
Carried forward		8114		499		54	

Appeal Clearance Data 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018

Appendix B

Ystadegau Apêl / Appeal statistics

01/04/17 - 31/03/18

Treth Cyngor / Council Tax	D/Y	Derbyniwyd	Datryswyd	Penderfynwyd	C/Y
	B/F	Received	Settled	Decided	C/F
Prisio / Valuation	596	1306	1111	303	488
Hysbysiad Annilyys / Invalidity Notice	8	32	15	14	11
Hysbysiad Cosb / Penalty Notice	0	1	0	0	1
Hysbysiad Cwblhad / Completion Notice	1	0	0	1	0
Atebolrwydd / Liability	15	45	8	35	17
Gostyngiad / Reduction	25	57	24	23	35
Adolygiad o benderfyniad / Decision reviews	0	7	0	7	0
Cyfanswm / Totals	645	1448	1158	383	552

Ardrethu Annomestig / Non-domestic Rating	D/Y	Derbyniwyd	Datryswyd	Penderfynwyd	C/Y
	B/F	Received	Settled	Decided	C/F
Prisio / Valuation 2017	0	3537	187	0	3350
Prisio / Valuation 2010	8773	3492	6315	1283	4667
Prisio / Valuation 2005	54	0	2	0	52
Hysbysiad Annilyys / Invalidity Notice	33	32	12	8	45
Hysbysiad Cosb / Penalty Notice	4	1	2	2	1
Hysbysiad Cwblhad / Completion Notice	0	0	0	0	0
Adolygiad o benderfyniad / Decision reviews	0	9	0	9	0
Cyfansymiau / Totals	8864	7071	6518	1302	8115

Prif gyfanswm / Grand totals	9509	8519	7676	1685	8667
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Age and gender analysis of the membership (as at 31 March 2018)

Age	Under 30		30 -39		40-49		50-59		60-69		70-79		Over 80		Total	
Gender	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Total	0	0	0	0	3	1	9	6	17	7	35	13	12	1	76	28
Percentage of total membership	0.0%		0.0%		3.8%		14.4%		23.1%		46.2%		12.5%		73.1%	26.9%

Note

- 1 The total membership has reduced from 147 last year to 104, largely through a voluntary stepping-down scheme.
- 2 The total number of members who are serving local authority council members is 13 - a reduction of 46% on last year, and significantly below the maximum proportion allowed by the tribunal's governing statutory regulations prior to their amendment in December 2017 (which stipulated a maximum of one third of the total). The amended regulations do not stipulate a proportion.

Valuation Tribunal for Wales Expenditure 2017-2018 (£s)

Maes gwariant Area of expenditure	2017/18		2016/17	
	Swm / Amount	Canran / Percentage	Swm / Amount	Canran / Percentage
Costau staff (ac eithrio pensiynau) Staff costs (excluding pensions)	648,133	58.29%	695,909	57.82%
Costau pensiynau / Pension costs	155,756	14.01%	147,878	12.29%
Is-gyfanswm / Subtotal	803,889	72.30%	843,787	70.11%
Costau swyddfeydd / Office accommodation	87,201	7.84%	100,705	8.37%
Gwariant ar gyfriaduron / Computing	132,967	11.97%	142,479	11.84%
Gweinyddiaeth ganolog / Central administration	47,911	4.31%	40,414	3.36%
Tribiwnlysoedd / Tribunals	23,960	2.15%	30,000	2.49%
Llywodraethu / Governance	7,808	0.70%	19,021	1.58%
Hyfforddiant aelodau / Membership training	5,592	0.50%	20,106	1.67%
Hyfforddiant staff / Staff training	2,528	0.23%	7,072	0.59%
Is-gyfanswm / Subtotal	307,967	27.70%	359,796	29.89%
Cyfanswm / Total	1,111,856		1,203,584	

Nodyn: Mae costau staff yn cynnwys cyfraniad o £26,750 i Gynllun Diswyddo TPC. Ariannwyd cost y Cynllun Diswyddo Swydd o £201,750 yn bennaf gan fenthycia £175,000 gan raglen *Buddsoddi i Arbed* Llywodraeth Cymru. Mae'r benthyciad yn ddi-log ac mae'n bosibl ei ad-dalu dros bum mlynedd (ar £35,000 y flwyddyn, gan ddechrau yn 2018/19). Cyfrifir gwariant yr arian benthyciad ar wahân i'r cyfrif referniw blyneddol uchod. Bydd ad-daliadau benthyciad yn rhan o gyfrifon referniw yn y dyfodol.

Note: Staff costs include a contribution of £26,750 into the VTW's Redundancy Scheme. Redundancy Scheme cost of £201,750 was mostly financed by a £175,000 borrowing from Welsh Government's *Invest to Save* programme. The loan is interest free and repayable over five years (at £35,000 per year, starting in 2018/19). Expenditure of the loan monies is accounted for separately from the above annual revenue account. Loan repayments will form part of future revenue accounts.

Cyfanswm gwariant – ffigurau cymharol y pum blynedd ddiwethaf

Total expenditure – last five years' comparable figures

Blwyddyn ariannol	Cyfanswm gwariant blynyddol (£)	Canran arbedion o'i gymharu gyda 2013/14	Costau staffio blynyddol (£)	Canran y cynnydd neu lleihad ar y flwyddyn flaenorol	Costau cynnal ac eithrio staffio (£)	Canran y lleihad ar y flwyddyn flaenorol
Financial year	Total annual spend (£)	Percentage saving compared to 2013/14	Annual staff costs (£)	Percentage increase or decrease on previous year	Non-staffing running costs (£)	Percentage decrease on previous year
2013-14	1,358,330		811,711		546,619	
2014-15	1,305,586	3.88%	826,208	+1.79%	479,378	-12.30%
2015-16	1,249,787	7.99%	839,169	+1.57%	410,618	-14.34%
2016-17	1,203,584	11.39%	843,787	+0.55%	359,796	-12.38%
2017-18	1,111,856	18.15%	803,889	-4.73%	307,967	-14.41%

Nodiadau

Y dyraniad cyllid ar gyfer 2018/19 yw £1,074,000. Os yw gwariant yn unol â'r gyllideb, bydd cyfanswm yr arbedion o'i gymharu â 2013/14 yn 21%.

Mae'r tabl yn dangos gostyngiad cyffredinol mewn costau nad ydynt yn staffio o £ 238,652 (hy 43.7%)

Notes

The funding allocation for 2018/19 is £1,074,000. If spending is in line with the budget, the overall saving compared to 2013/14 will be 21%.

The table shows an overall decrease in non-staffing running costs of £238,652 (ie 43.7%)

Cyfrif cynllun Diswyddo

Redundancy Scheme account

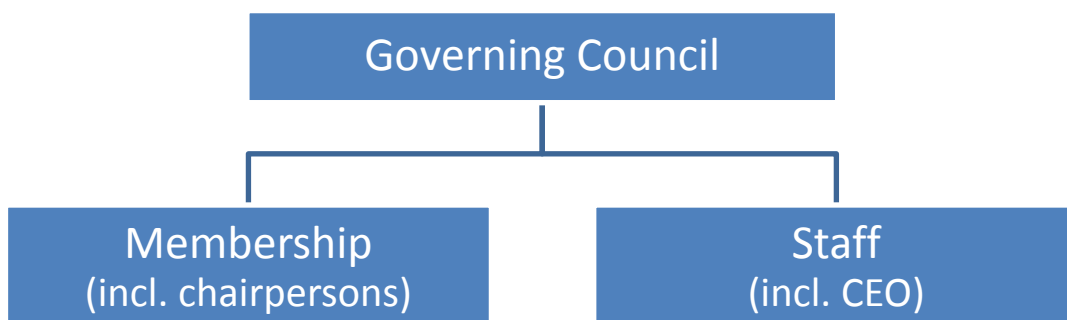
Cyfanswm Cost y cynllun Overall cost of scheme	£201,750
Cyllid / Funding:	
Cyllideb / Budget 2017-18	£ 26,750
Benthyca o gynllun Buddsoddi i Arbed Invest to Save borrowing	£175,000
	<hr/>
	£201,750
	<hr/>
Balans y cyfrif / Account balance	£0
	<hr/> <hr/>

Key Performance Indicators --- outcomes table

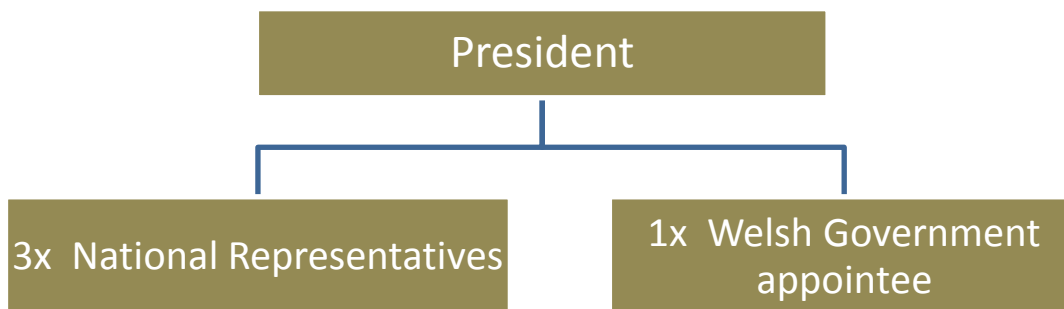
Performance measure	2017/18 target	2017/18 outcome	Target for 2018/19	Reason for any target change / or further detail/information
Non-domestic rating hearing notices to be issued to parties within 8 weeks of VOA programming's target date.	90%	95.5%	90%	8201 out of 8587 listed
Council Tax appeals (valuation and liability) to be cleared within 12 months on lodging with the tribunal	95%	>99%	95%	3 CTV >12mths old 4 CTL & CTR >12mths old (out of 2107 cases available for listing)
Written reasons for decision to be issued within 28 days of the end of the appeal hearing	95%	97.6%	95%	41 issued after 21 days (out of 1685 decisions)
NDR review of decision requests as a percentage of NDR decided cases	<0.5%	<0.1%	<0.5%	9 requests from 1291 decisions
CTV review of decision requests as a percentage of CTV decided cases	<2.0%	0.1%	<2.0%	4 requests from 317 decisions
CTL review of decision requests as a percentage of CTL decided cases	<5.0%	8.5%	<5.0%	3 requests from 35 decisions
Decisions referred to higher courts.	<0.5%	<0.1%	<0.5%	4 (out of 1685 decisions)
Decisions subject to party complaint	<1.0%	<0.1%	<1.0%	1 (out of 1685 decisions)
Number of well-founded claims made to the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales against the tribunal	zero	zero	zero	
Number of well-founded Welsh Language Standards compliance issues raised against the tribunal	zero	zero	zero	
The annual average figure per employee for sickness absence not to exceed 5 working days for the central 80% of the full staff distribution.	<5 days	3.38	<5 days	

Remodelled structure (from October 2017)

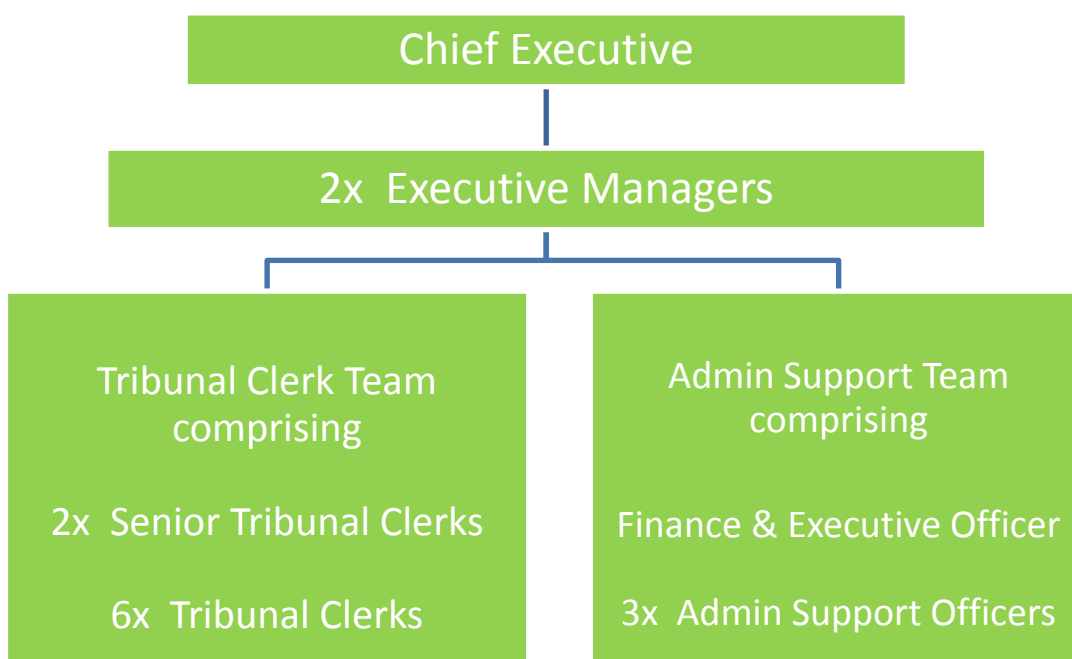
Overall Structure



Composition of Governing Council



Staffing Structure



Key structural changes in VTW five-year plan

Notes

- The aim is to reduce progressively the annual budgeted spend-cost for the tribunal service from £1,114,000 to £886,000 (in 2017/18 terms - ie without adjustment for inflation).
- All 2017/18 events have been achieved

2017/18	<p>Remodel whole staffing structure (redundancies)</p> <p>Reduce membership (to as close to 90 as possible)</p> <p>Increase efficiency of listing program (fewer meetings/ bigger lists)</p> <p>Reduce number of outside venues used/ increase use of Newport hearing centre</p> <p>Relocate team in Swansea to smaller office accommodation within Penllergaer building</p>
2018/19	<p>Bed down Year 1 reforms</p> <p>Continue membership reductions</p>
2019/20	<p>Leave shared IT system arrangements with VOA and VTS/ establish full VTW independence for all IT arrangements</p> <p>Relocate Newport office to more cost effective location, utilising existing break-clause opportunity</p> <p>Establish homeworking for Swansea staff at the end of current MOTO agreement if Penllergaer closes (or if Penllergaer does not close and homeworking is more cost-effective).</p>
2020/21	No structural changes or opportunities
2021/22	Utilise key retirement(s) to downsize executive management team from three to two. (No redundancy cost option).