

The Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board

Assessor and
Electoral Registration Officer
Frank W Finlayson

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Depute Assessor / Depute Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer

Post: Depute Assessor / Depute Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer (ERO)
Location: Moray House, 16-18 Bank Street, Inverness
Hours: 35 hours per week
Grade: Depute Assessor – PO31-34
Depute Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer – PO35-38
Salary: Depute Assessor £73,581.23 to £78,804.64
Depute Assessor & ERO £80,624.64 to £86,193.84
Contact: Frank Finlayson, Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer by e-mail:
assessor@highland.gov.uk

Job Purpose

- Support the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) in ensuring the statutory duties imposed on the Assessor and ERO in respect of valuation and electoral registration are fully and competently discharged, including maintenance of the Valuation Roll, Council Tax Valuation List and Register of Electors
- Deputise for the Assessor in terms of section 27 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994, section 84 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and will be appointed as a statutory depute Electoral Registration Officer in accordance with s52 (2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983.
- Provide leadership, vision and direction and encourage a positive organisational culture which delivers continuous improvements in performance and service delivery

Further Information

Each of the 32 local Councils within Scotland is a valuation authority and responsible for appointing an Assessor. The Assessor is responsible for assigning a value to properties for tax purposes:

- The Council Tax list records the Council Tax band of every home in Highland and Western Isles
- The Valuation Roll records the owners, occupiers and rateable values of business premises.

The Electoral Registration Officer compiles the Electoral Register which lists the names and addresses of everyone registered to vote in all UK and Scottish Parliament elections and in Local Government elections.

The Highland & Western Isles Valuation Joint Board is made up of 10 elected members:

- 8 from the Highland Council
- 2 from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (The Western Isles Council)

The Board appoints and is responsible for the administrative oversight of the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer.

Employees of the Highland & Western Isles Valuation Joint Board are required to undertake a basic Disclosure check.

Special Conditions of the post: The postholder must be able to work flexibly and outwith office hours as required.

Salary placing will normally be at the first point of the scale.

Employee Benefits

The Highland & Western Isles Valuation Joint Board is committed to their employees and offers an excellent benefit package that can include:

- Competitive salary with an incremental scale and annual pay review.
- 21 days paid holiday plus 14 Public paid holidays (pro rata for part-time staff), rising to 26 days paid holiday (pro rata for part-time staff) after 5 years continuous service at the commencement of the next leave year.
- Pension Scheme, including employer's contribution of 19.5%.
- For members of the Local Government Pension Scheme there is an opportunity to join the Shared Cost AVC Scheme
- A genuine commitment to the health and wellbeing of our employees.
- Family Friendly staff policies (including maternity, shared parental, adoption and ordinary parental leave).
- A relocation package up to an overall maximum of £6,500 is available for this post.

If you are interested in working for the Highland & Western Isles Valuation Joint Board and being part of a team providing a first-class service, please view the job description and person specification below.

1. Job Description – Key Duties and Responsibilities

The post holder will carry out the following key duties and responsibilities:

1. Ensure that the statutory duties imposed on the Assessor and ERO in respect of valuation and electoral registration are fully and competently discharged in accordance with the strategic direction of the Assessor & ERO
2. Ensure that the statutory timetables regarding valuation for rating, council tax and electoral registration purposes are strictly adhered to.
3. Represent the Assessor at the Scottish Assessors' Association (SAA), as and when required and to be an Ordinary Member of the SAA

4. Ensure compliance with relevant standing orders and financial regulations and other relevant procedures as directed by the Assessor & ERO
5. Ensure continuous service improvement and best value by effective service planning, efficient resource deployment and robust performance and risk management.
6. Provide professional advice on valuation and electoral registration matters.
7. Facilitate detailed and highly complex valuations of all types of property.
8. Prepare cases for hearing by the Upper Tribunal or the Court of Session
9. Act as expert witness at appeal hearings and brief Counsel.
10. As a Chartered Surveyor, act as formal advocate and conduct Non-domestic and Council Tax appeals for the Assessor at hearings of The First-tier Tribunal for Scotland Local Taxation Chamber
11. Develop and promote diversity and inclusion in terms of service delivery, policy development, partnership working and staff management.
12. Maintain and develop good employee relations in partnership with staff and trade unions.
13. Deal with escalated complaints from council tax/ratepayers or their agents.
14. Ensure compliance with all of the Board's HR and Health & Safety policies, procedures, and relevant statutory provisions.
15. Prepare policy documents and reports for presentation at Board meetings.
16. Act as depute for Assessor at Board meetings in the Assessor's absence.
17. Provide effective leadership of the Service's managers and employees.
18. Management of IT provision and liaison with IT partners.
19. Alongside the Assessor and Business Manager prepare the organisation's budget and monitor budget reports throughout the year and acting as a budget holder on behalf of the Assessor.
20. In conjunction with the Assessor and Business Manager assist with procurement of new systems and services for the Board, including preparation of business cases and contracts for signing, evaluation framework documentation, liaising with suppliers and completion of data processing impact assessments as required.
21. Advise on efficiencies within the operation of the valuation team.
22. Advise the designated records manager on retention periods and all matters pertaining to the upkeep of the department's records management plan.

23. Understand and apply legislation in connection with data protection and freedom of information. Provide guidance and advice to the Assessor in relation to data protection and act as a data protection officer.

24. Be fully conversant with non-domestic rating, council tax and electoral registration law.

2. Additional Information

The post is defined as being politically restricted and will, therefore, be restricted in terms of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, as amended by the Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004, and by the Local Government Officers (Political Restrictions) Regulations 1990.

3. Person Specification – Essential Attributes

Education/Qualifications

- Full professional member or fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

Experience

- Senior management experience in a similar organisation
- Successfully managing change in a complex organisation
- Effective partnership working across professional, service and organisational boundaries.

Knowledge and Skills

- Proven leadership skills which foster a positive organisational culture
- Able to understand, interpret and manage complex financial and budgetary information.
- Able to identify and manage risk, exploit opportunities, provide solutions and deal effectively with poor performance.
- Strong analytical skills and negotiating skills.
- Persuasive and influential partnership and presentation skills

Personal Attributes

- Political sensitivity and able to operate effectively within the democratic process.
- High standards of professional integrity
- Leadership skills with clear sense of direction
- Able to work under budget pressures and time constraints.

Technical Abilities

- Excellent knowledge of all property transactions, law and values within a particular specialisation in Valuation for Rating law and practice
- Excellent knowledge of legislation governing Valuation and Council Tax
- Excellent knowledge of legislation governing Electoral Registration

4. Person specification – Desirable Attributes

- Experience of working in a political environment and have an appreciation of the political relationships and environment within and beyond the Board.
- Association of Electoral Administrators Certificate or Diploma in Electoral Administration
- Data Protection Qualification
- Experience of supporting employees to achieve professional qualifications.
- Experience of acting as an expert witness before the Lands Tribunal for Scotland

Candidates should demonstrate on their application how they meet the essential criteria.

5. Health and Safety

Health & Safety is an integral part of any role within the Highland & Western Isles Valuation Joint Board. As such we would expect that all employees:

- Undertake a continual program of Risk Assessment in relation to their role.
- Have an understanding of the importance of Health and Safety in the workplace and familiarise themselves with the Valuation Joint Board's Health & Safety Procedures.

