Summary Minutes of the 164th Valuation Tribunal Service Board Meeting held on Wednesday 20 May 2026 at 10:30 am held via MS Teams

Present: Suzanne McCarthy (Board Chair); Stephen Chappell (Member); Sarah Guerra (Member); Clive Quantrill (Member); Kevin Sadler (Member) and Frazer Stuart (VTE Vice President, *ex-officio* Member).

In attendance: Lee Anderson (Interim Chief Executive); Keung Wong (Finance Director); Nick Pellegrini (MHCLG sponsoring Team – observer) and Nicola Hunt (Board Secretary).

Welcome, Apologies, Declarations of Interest, Confirmation of Minutes
Apologies for absence were recorded from Chiew Yin Jones (Member).

The Chair reported that she had been appointed Independent Chair of the Standards Committee of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2026 were confirmed as an accurate record.

Actions had been completed as required.

Interim CEO's Report/Chair & Interim CEO Meetings
A list of the Chair's and Interim CEO's meetings with external parties during the period 25 March to 15 May 2026 was circulated and noted by the Board.

Review of Business Plan Achievements 2025-26
The report reflected the year-end position as of 31 March 2026. The most significant development related to the performance measure concerning member sitting days. The objective had been met in 2025-26, with 37% of members sitting for 10 days or more, compared to 31% in the previous year.

Draft Business Plan 2026-27
The Board reviewed the draft Business Plan. The document remained largely unchanged from the version presented to the Board in March, but the incomplete sections had now been finalised, such as the finance details and appeal volumes. Updated performance indicators had also been included, and the KPIs had been passed to the Minister Baroness Taylor. The Board approved the Business Plan in principle, subject to the incorporation of the points raised during discussion. Authority was delegated to the Chair to review and approve the final version on behalf of the Board.

Finance Committee Update
Draft Minutes of the Meeting on 23 March 2026. The Committee Chair had provided an oral update of matters discussed at the last Finance Committee meeting to the Board at the meeting on 24 March. The draft minutes had not yet been

approved by the Committee but were circulated to the Board for information. The Board noted the draft minutes.

Finance Committee Assurance Report 2025-26. The Committee Chair advised that the Finance Committee Assurance Report 2025-26 had been approved at the Committee's meeting on 23 March. The Board formally approved the report.

Finance Update
Management Accounts to 30 April 2026. In presenting the management accounts to 30 April, Keung Wong reported that the total resource funding forecast for the year to date was £6,023k, against the budget of £6,040k, with a forecast underspend of £17k.

CCA Paper. Keung Wong presented an overview of transaction costs associated with managing CCA appeal fees. Currently, two fee levels were in place: £150 per appeal for smaller businesses and £300 for larger ones. The paper set out the statutory requirements under regulations for managing appeals and included both historical workload received and workload projections for the next three years.

Operations Update
Appeal Workload Analysis & KPIs for 2025-26. The current position was strong, with only two measures rated amber (NDR appeals determined within six months and undisputed invoices paid within five working days). It was noted the change for NDR appeals to be determined within 12 months instead of six would be better because parties did not usually want their appeals to be listed immediately. The Board noted that invoice processing was carried out by Finance Shared Services Division (FSSD) and not VTS staff, who work to an internal target of 90%. Therefore, the VTS target had been aligned to this level going forward.

While performance remained slightly below last year's levels, there had been clear and consistent quarter-on-quarter improvement. Overall, the year was considered positive from a performance perspective, demonstrating strong delivery and effective management of workload despite the challenges faced. Kevin Sadler acknowledged the team's hard work and resilience and considered that the figures clearly reflected the progress achieved.

System Enhancement Business Case 2026–27
This business case reflected the continued investment in system development over several years, with a clear emphasis on maintaining and improving these systems. The current level of investment was considered modest, and represented a lean, efficient approach. The Board approved the business case.

Complaints Annual Report 2025-26
A very small number of complaints were received in relation to the thousands of appeals that were dealt with. During the year only 31 formal complaints were received, of which four were escalated to Stage 2 of the process. The complaints were varied, covering issues such as dissatisfaction with decisions, delays and staff conduct. The Board felt every expression of dissatisfaction was an opportunity to learn and thanked Lee Anderson for the report.

Data Protection & Security Annual Report 2025-26
Lee Anderson, as Senior Information Risk Owner, presented the report on behalf of the Data Protection Officer. It covered the 2025-26 period and included preparations for the new Data Protection Bill and a phased approach to compliance between June 2025 and June 2026. It highlighted that the number of Freedom of Information and Subject Access Requests received exceeded the number of complaints. They represented a significant portion of operational work and were extremely resource intensive to deal with.

The organisation maintained a strong approach to data breach management, with a robust framework in place and appropriate engagement with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Lee was pleased to report that there had been no ICO escalations during the year, but he recognised the need to remain vigilant. It was confirmed that the VTS did not pay compensation in relation to data protection matters. The Board acknowledged the significant effort underpinning data protection and information security arrangements and approved the report.

Health & Safety Statement 2026-27
This statement set out the responsibilities of the VTS under the Health and Safety at Work Act. It was noted that the statement was not specifically focussed on building-related matters, and provided general guidance to staff, which applied to both home-based and office-based workers. The Board approved the statement.

Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
The document had undergone its annual review by the Executive. The Board acknowledged that the VTS continued to maintain strong engagement with external stakeholders, which had built credibility over time, but thought it would be useful to carry out a deep dive to focus on refreshing the stakeholder approach and to strengthen how impact was measured. The Board noted the document.

Strategic Risk Register
Lee Anderson presented the Risk Register and highlighted the ten live risks, categorised as six green, three yellow and one amber.

Chair's Report
Update on new CEO. The Chair reported that Amelia Wright would join the VTS on 15 June 2026. She would also undertake the role of Accounting Officer.

Progress on Appointment of VTE President. The Chair would be part of the panel to appoint the new VTE President. Mock interviews would take place next week and final interviews in July. It was hoped the successful candidate would be in post by the end of the year.

Update on Recruitment of VTE Chair Board Members. The Chair confirmed that the appointment of new Board Members was progressing.

Audit & Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) Update
Draft Minutes from the Meeting on 27 April 2026. The draft minutes of the Committee's meeting on 27 April had not yet been approved by the Committee but were circulated to the Board for information. The Board noted the draft minutes.

ARAC Assurance Report 2025-26. The ARAC Assurance Report for 2025-26 had been previously circulated. The Committee Chair explained that it set out the work completed during the year and had been approved at the Committee's meeting on 27 April. The Board formally approved the report.

Performance Committee Update
Committee Terms of Reference (TOR). The Committee had met on 12 May and reviewed its TOR, which were formally approved by the Board. The minutes of the last meeting would be submitted to the Board at the July meeting.

VTE Vice President's Report
Frazer Stuart referred to his previously circulated report. The main point to note was the recruitment of new VTE Members. The mock assessments went well and feedback had been positive.

Interim CEO
On behalf of herself and the Board, the Chair expressed thanks to Lee Anderson for the excellent way he carried out the role of Interim CEO. He had been very helpful and supportive, and a pleasure to work with. She was pleased to note that Amelia Wright would be joining a very well-run organisation.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 29 July 2026.