

2017 RSA Town Committees

An update in relation to the RSA Town Committees and the impact of Check, Challenge, Appeal

Shortly after the publication in October 2015 of the Government Consultation paper “*Check, Challenge, Appeal – reforming business rates appeals*” the RSA Retail Panel held discussions with the VOA due to the problems we could foresee in operating the 2017 RSA Town Committee network. As a result of these discussions it was proposed that a pre-challenge discussion process be introduced to enable RSA Town Committee discussions to take place prior to any formal challenges being made.

In the Government response to the consultation published in July 2016 they confirmed their support for such a pre-challenge process which “*will allow groups of ratepayers in the same location – such as a high street or industrial estate – to provide the VOA with evidence outside the formal Challenge process regarding valuations in their area. If after discussions, the VOA and ratepayers agree that the valuations used by the VOA in the specific area are incorrect then the individual businesses who were part of the pre-Challenge clearance process will then be able to provide a much simpler set of information and evidence at Challenge stage referring to the pre-Challenge clearance agreement to adopt what has been agreed.*”

Discussions as to the detailed arrangements as to how this process is to be operated are taking place with the VOA. This process is to be called a “Group Pre Challenge Review” (GPCR) which will be open to use in other property classes as well. In order to initiate a GPCR ratepayers will need to be registered with the CCA digital service.

Unfortunately these discussions are not completed. This note is to confirm that a process is being sought and it is our intention to circulate a detailed note summarising the new arrangements. We regret the delay but still consider the Town Committee network is a good way to proceed, and recommend continued patience.