

# **TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD**



**Report on Issue of Customer Questionnaires  
by  
Tayside Valuation Joint Board  
Year 2010/11**

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# INTRODUCTION

## 1 GENERAL

This is the fifth twelve month period during which users of our services have been asked to provide feedback on the service they received.

The decision was taken to issue customer satisfaction questionnaires as a result of Tayside Valuation Joint Board's commitment to Best Value and creating a customer focus. A copy of the questionnaire is attached to this report.

## 2 QUESTIONNAIRES WERE ISSUED TO THE FOLLOWING

- 1 Customers who have telephoned the office.
- 2 Customers who have visited the office.
- 3 Customers who have received a visit from a member of staff.
- 4 Customers who have made contact with the office by letter, E-mail or Fax.
- 5 Customers who have settled an appeal/proposal.

It was accepted that customers may have had contact by one or more of the above and this is reflected in the results.

The questionnaire was issued to a random sample of customers on a regular basis over a period of one year ie June 2010 – June 2011.

Total number of questionnaires issued	=	136
Total number of questionnaires returned	=	28

This gives an overall return of 20.6%, which is the lowest response rate encountered since the survey began in 2006/07. The total number of forms issued compares with 154 issued in 2009/10.

The number of customers who stated which service their contact with the office related to is as follows:

<b>Electoral Registration</b>	<b>Council Tax</b>	<b>Valuation for Non-Domestic Rates</b>	<b>Other/ More than one</b>
1	18	7	2

This report analyses the data returned by customers, lists comments made and offers recommendations as a result of this data.

## Results of Questionnaires Returned

<u><b>If you have phoned the office:</b></u>	<u><b>Number of Responses</b></u> <u><b>2010/11</b></u>	
<p>2A Did you get through to a person who could deal with your query?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>23</p> <p>0</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>23</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>0%</p>
<p>2B Were you aware of the name of the person who spoke to you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p> <p>If <b>No</b>, would knowing the name have been helpful to you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>19</p> <p>4</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>23</p>  <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>3</p>	<p>83%</p> <p>17%</p>  <p>33.3%</p> <p>66.6%</p>

**Comment:** The responses indicate that customers telephoning the office have a positive experience.

<u>If you have visited the office:</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u> <u>2010/11</u>	
3A How convenient did you find the opening hours?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very convenient .....</li> <li>• Fairly convenient .....</li> <li>• Not very convenient .....</li> <li>• Not at all convenient .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	4 1 - - <hr/> 5	80% 20%  
3B Was there ease of access to the building?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	7 0 <hr/> 7	100% 0%
3C Was there sufficient provision of facilities and information about our services available?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	5 1 <hr/> 6	83% 17%

<u>If you have received a visit from a member of our staff:</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u> <u>2010/11</u>	
<p>4A Did we make an appointment for a visit?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p> <p>If <b>Yes</b>, were we punctual?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p> <p>If <b>No</b>, would an appointment have been preferred?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>17</p> <p>2</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>19</p> <p>16</p> <p>-</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>16</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>1</p>	<p>89%</p> <p>11%</p> <p>100%</p> <p>50%</p> <p>50%</p>
<p>4B Was the time of our visit convenient to you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>19</p> <p>-</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>19</p>	<p>100%</p>
<p>4C Did we properly identify ourselves?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>19</p> <p>-</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>19</p>	<p>100%</p>
<p>4D Was the purpose of the visit clearly explained?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>19</p> <p>-</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>19</p>	<p>100%</p>

**Comment:** It is not our normal practice to make appointments for carrying out routine survey work; however the incidence of staff being required to make appointments is increasing.

<u>If your contact with the office was by letter, E-mail or Fax:</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u> <u>2010/11</u>	
5A Was it acknowledged in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1-5 days .....</li> <li>• 6-10 days .....</li> <li>• Longer than 10 days .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	4 1 2 <hr/> 7	57% 14% 29%
5B Was this time acceptable to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	7 - <hr/> 7	100%

**Comment:** In some cases staff may respond to a written enquiry by telephone which may delay a formal written acknowledgement.

<u>Appeal/Proposal:</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u> <u>2010/11</u>	
<p>6A How long did it take to settle your appeal/proposal from the time you made it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 3 months .....</li> <li>• 3 to 6 months .....</li> <li>• 6 to 12 months .....</li> <li>• 12 to 18 months .....</li> <li>• 18 months + .....</li> <li>• Don't know/Can't remember .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>4 1 - - - <u>1</u> 6</p>	<p>66.6% 16.7%    16.7%</p>
<p>6B Was this time acceptable to you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>5 1 <u>6</u></p>	<p>83% 17%</p>
<p>6C When dealing with the office did we undertake to contact you within a specified period?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>4 1 <u>5</u></p>	<p>80% 20%</p>
<p>6D Did the office do so?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always .....</li> <li>• Usually .....</li> <li>• Rarely .....</li> <li>• Never .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>1 3 - <u>4</u></p>	<p>25% 75%</p>



<u>Appeal/Proposal:</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u> <u>2010/11</u>	
6E Do you feel a sufficient, clear and understandable explanation was given during your appeal discussions?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: right;">Total:</div>	5 - <hr/> 5	100%
6F Following your appeal/proposal, was it upheld?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: right;">Total:</div>	5 - <hr/> 5	100%

<u>Overall impression:</u>	<u>Number of Responses 2010/11</u>	
<p>7A How would you assess the helpfulness and friendliness of the people you dealt with?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent .....</li> <li>• Good .....</li> <li>• Fair .....</li> <li>• Poor .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">23 6 - 1 <hr/>30</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">77% 20%  3%</p>
<p>7B How would you assess the competence and efficiency of the people you dealt with?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent .....</li> <li>• Good .....</li> <li>• Fair .....</li> <li>• Poor .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">21 6 - 1 <hr/>28</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">75% 21%  4%</p>
<p>7C How satisfied were you with the time taken to deal with your enquiry?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very Satisfied .....</li> <li>• Satisfied .....</li> <li>• Dissatisfied .....</li> <li>• Very Dissatisfied .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">21 4 1 - <hr/>26</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">81% 15% 4%</p>
<p>7D If you were unhappy about the service you received, did you complain?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes .....</li> <li>• No .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">1 1 <hr/>2</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">50% 50%</p>

<u>Overall impression:</u>	<u>Number of Responses 2010/11</u>	
<p>7E If you complained, how satisfied were you with the way we dealt with your complaint?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very Satisfied .....</li> <li>• Satisfied .....</li> <li>• Dissatisfied .....</li> <li>• Very Dissatisfied .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <hr/> <p>-</p>	
<p>7F Overall, how satisfied were you with the service you received from us?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very Satisfied .....</li> <li>• Satisfied .....</li> <li>• Dissatisfied .....</li> <li>• Very Dissatisfied .....</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <hr/> <p>27</p>	<p>66.66%</p> <p>33.33%</p>

## Comments from Customer Questionnaires

The following is a list of all comments noted in the comments and suggestions box.

Most of the feedback is provided anonymously, therefore there has been no follow up possible. Where customers provided their name and address in relation to a critical comment a full written response to the comments was made.

Where the member of staff was identified in the comments the appropriate line manager was informed in order that the staff member could be complimented, or otherwise, on the service provided. Staff names have been blanked out of the comments listed below.

### LIST OF COMMENTS

- Whilst I am happy with the service I received on the telephone, my query is still unresolved. I am desperate to pay my council tax but you have not yet banded my property.
- Our chief concern has been with the delay in receiving our council tax banding and the consequent setting up of payments to Angus Council. You will see that we are, overall, satisfied with the service we received once we got through to the Assessor's office.
- I would like to thank you all for your help, also to [REDACTED] who dealt with it and told me what was happening along the way.
- [REDACTED] was extremely helpful with every part of the valuation process. Thank you.
- We felt the response to our valuation request was dealt with very quickly and good information was provided all the way through. Thank you very much indeed for such a good response.
- Excellent professionalism shared by both the rating gentlemen.
- On my first visit I felt the person I dealt with spoke down to me and his interpersonal skills were very poor – had he looked into my enquiry he would have easily found out that my grounds were justified. I followed up with a second visit and was dealt with with courtesy and respect by [REDACTED] and my enquiry was to my gain.
- Very approachable, straight forward and helpful staff.
- Some difficulty finding out about the appeal process although when contact was made the staff were helpful.
- I contacted Dundee City Council regarding the change of circumstances in January and was told it would take a while before somebody from your office would be able to come out. It took six months until we received any notification regarding the valuation or the new rates we would have to pay. This seems like a very long time to me.

- Paperwork (return of rental information) a bit hard to follow for the layman. Received a reminder to return a form that was quite “stern” - had not realised how important a reply was.
- Person who dealt directly with my query was excellent. Office staff however I felt were a bit snooty and tried hard to offer me a resolution to my council tax query before I had the chance to speak to the officer who could help. Office staff need to know their place, once you get past them service was superb.
- I was very happy with the help I received and confident that the person would do as promised.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

For 2010/11, the number of questionnaires issued decreased by around 12%. A pre-paid return envelope was provided but even so the return rate has been disappointing at 20.6%. This rate of return is at the lower end of rates achieved for similar surveys.

On this occasion 18 of the forms returned are connected with council tax, 7 with non-domestic rates and only 1 relating to electoral registration. The return pattern mirrors proportionately the numbers issued to customers under the three headings.

Section 7 continues to generate predominantly favourable responses. Although some dissatisfaction was expressed this did not prevent 100% of customers stating that they were "very satisfied" (66.66%) or "satisfied" (33.33%) with the service. This is a very encouraging response. As can be seen from the analysis, one person did report poor service although this seems to have been offset by subsequent contact.

13 out of 28 customers took the opportunity to make comments. This is a similar percentage response to that of 2009/10. The majority of the comments were positive, although some criticisms relating to delays in the council tax banding process were made. The comments are reproduced as part of this report.

It is very encouraging to note that the overall level of satisfaction that customers have with the services we provide remains high.

It should be noted that, in addition to the opportunity to comment via the customer questionnaires, our customers can also make use of the Board's Complaints Procedure to express dissatisfaction with any aspects of our service. During the period covered by this report there were two occasions when complaints were made. One complaint was considered by the Assessor to be justified in part and the other not. Both were resolved after investigation and providing the complainants with written responses.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff should be made aware of the existence of the report and given the opportunity to read it. In addition, it should continue to be made available to the public and all stakeholders by publishing it on the Board's website.

The survey for 2010/11 was carried out on the same basis as in previous years. The decline in the number of forms issued has been noted, particularly in regard to electoral registration. It is recommended that staff be reminded of the value of the feedback obtained from the survey and asked to ensure forms are issued whenever possible.

It was recommended previously that consideration be given to extending the sample base by developing questionnaires suitable for sending to ratepayers agents. It may be appropriate to consider such a questionnaire for issue after the bulk of the appeals arising from the 2010 Revaluation have been settled.

Management should continue to stress to staff the importance of customer service and of their individual roles in providing the best possible quality of service delivery.

# TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD



## HAVE YOUR SAY ABOUT OUR SERVICE

**This survey is to be completed anonymously. All details provided will only be used to improve our levels of service.**

Please tick the appropriate box.

### Please identify which service your contact with the office related to

Electoral Registration  Council Tax  Valuation for Non-Domestic Rates

Other  (Please specify)

### Section 1 – Divisional Office

1A Please indicate which Divisional Office your contact was with:

Angus Division   
Dundee Division   
Perth & Kinross Division

### Section 2 – If you have phoned the Office

(If you have never telephoned the office, please go to Section 3)

2A Did you get through to a person who could deal with your query?

➤ Yes .....   
➤ No .....

2B Were you aware of the name of the person who spoke to you?

➤ Yes .....   
➤ No .....

If No, would knowing the name have been helpful to you

➤ Yes .....   
➤ No .....

**Section 3 – If you have visited the Office**

(If you have never visited the office, please go to Section 4)

- 3A How convenient did you find the opening hours?
- Very convenient .....
  - Fairly convenient .....
  - Not very convenient .....
  - Not at all convenient .....

- 3B Was there ease of access to the building?
- Yes .....
  - No .....
- (If No, please comment in Section 8)

- 3C Was there sufficient provision of facilities and information about our services available?
- Yes .....
  - No .....
- (If No, please comment in Section 8)

**Section 4 – If you have received a visit from a member of our staff**

(If you have never received a visit, please go to Section 5)

- 4A Did we make an appointment for a visit?
- Yes .....
  - No .....
- If Yes, were we punctual?
- Yes .....
  - No .....
- If No, would an appointment have been preferred?
- Yes .....
  - No .....

- 4B Was the time of our visit convenient to you?
- Yes .....
  - No .....

- 4C Did we properly identify ourselves?
- Yes .....
  - No .....

- 4D Was the purpose of the visit clearly explained?
- Yes .....
  - No .....



**Section 5 – If your contact with the office was by letter, e-mail or fax**

(If you have never made contact by letter, e-mail or fax, please go to Section 6)

- 5A Was it acknowledged in:
- 1 – 5 days .....
  - 6 – 10 days .....
  - Longer than 10 days .....
- 5B Was this time acceptable to you?
- Yes .....
  - No .....

**Section 6 – Appeal/Proposal**

(If your contact did not relate to an appeal or proposal, please go to Section 7)

- 6A How long did it take to settle your appeal/proposal from the time you made it?
- Up to 3 months .....
  - 3 to 6 months .....
  - 6 to 12 months .....
  - 12 to 18 months .....
  - 18 months + .....
  - Don't know/Can't remember .....
- 6B Was this time acceptable to you?
- Yes .....
  - No .....
- 6C When dealing with the office did we undertake to contact you within a specified period?  
(If you answer No, please go to Section 6E)
- Yes .....
  - No .....
- 6D Did the office do so?
- Always .....
  - Usually .....
  - Rarely .....
  - Never .....
- 6E Do you feel a sufficient, clear and understandable explanation was given during your appeal discussions?
- Yes .....
  - No .....
- (If you wish to comment, please see Section 8)
- 6F Was the appeal/proposal successful?
- Yes .....
  - No .....

## Section 7 – Overall Impression

- 7A How would you assess the helpfulness and friendliness of the people you dealt with?
- Excellent .....
  - Good .....
  - Fair .....
  - Poor .....
- 7B How would you assess the competence and efficiency of the people you dealt with?
- Excellent .....
  - Good .....
  - Fair .....
  - Poor .....
- 7C How satisfied were you with the time taken to deal with your enquiry?
- Very Satisfied .....
  - Satisfied .....
  - Dissatisfied .....
  - Very Dissatisfied .....
- 7D If you were unhappy about the service you received, did you complain?
- Yes .....
  - No .....
- 7E If you complained, how satisfied were you with the way we dealt with your complaint?
- Very Satisfied .....
  - Satisfied .....
  - Dissatisfied .....
  - Very Dissatisfied .....
- 7F Overall, how satisfied were you with the service you received from us?
- Very Satisfied .....
  - Satisfied .....
  - Dissatisfied .....
  - Very Dissatisfied .....

## **Section 8 – Your comments and suggestions**

Please use separate sheet if required

Thank you for your comments

**Please return in the envelope provided**

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