

TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD



Report on Issue of Customer Questionnaires by Tayside Valuation Joint Board

Year 2011/12

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INTRODUCTION

1 GENERAL

This is the sixth 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 i.e. June 2011 – June 2012.

Total number of questionnaires issued	=	134
Total number of questionnaires returned	=	35

This gives an overall return of 26% which is an improvement on the 20.6% which was experienced in 2010/11. By way of comparison, 136 questionnaires were issued last year, 28 of which were returned.

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

Electoral Registration	Council Tax	Valuation for Non-Domestic Rates	Other/ More than one
6	24	5	0

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

Results of Questionnaires Returned

If you have phoned the office:	Number of Responses 2011/12	
<p>2A Did you get through to a person who could deal with your query?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>21</p> <p>-</p> <hr style="width: 50px; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>21</p>	<p>100%</p>
<p>2B Were you aware of the name of the person who spoke to you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p> <p>If No, would knowing the name have been helpful to you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>19</p> <p>3</p> <hr style="width: 50px; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>22</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <hr style="width: 50px; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>3</p>	<p>86%</p> <p>14%</p> <p>33.3%</p> <p>66.6%</p>

If you have visited the office:	Number of Responses 2011/12	
<p>3A How convenient did you find the opening hours?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very convenient • Fairly convenient • Not very convenient • Not at all convenient <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>6</p> <p>3</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <hr style="width: 50px; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>9</p>	<p>66.6%</p> <p>33.3%</p>
<p>3B Was there ease of access to the building?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>7</p> <p>-</p> <hr style="width: 50px; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>7</p>	<p>100%</p>
<p>3C Was there sufficient provision of facilities and information about our services available?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>6</p> <p>-</p> <hr style="width: 50px; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>6</p>	<p>100%</p>

If you have received a visit from a member of our staff:	Number of Responses 2011/12	
<p>4A Did we make an appointment for a visit?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p> <p>If Yes, were we punctual?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p> <p>If No, would an appointment have been preferred?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>20 5 <hr/>25</p> <p>19 1 <hr/>20</p> <p>4 1 <hr/>5</p>	<p>80% 20%</p> <p>95% 5%</p> <p>80% 20%</p>
<p>4B Was the time of our visit convenient to you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>23 1 <hr/>24</p>	<p>96% 4%</p>
<p>4C Did we properly identify ourselves?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>24 - <hr/>24</p>	<p>100%</p>
<p>4D Was the purpose of the visit clearly explained?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>24 - <hr/>24</p>	<p>100%</p>

Comment: It has not historically been our normal practice to make appointments for carrying out routine survey work. However, the making of an appointment is now expected by many customers and the practice of “cold calling” has led to some criticism – see the “Comments from customer questionnaires” below.

If your contact with the office was by letter, E-mail or Fax:	Number of Responses 2011/12	
5A Was it acknowledged in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-5 days • 6-10 days • Longer than 10 days <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	4 2 1 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 7	57% 29% 14%
5B Was this time acceptable to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	6 1 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 7	86% 14%

Comment: In some cases staff may respond to a written enquiry by telephone which may delay a formal written acknowledgement. A mail logging system is in operation which allows monitoring of response times.

Appeal/Proposal:	Number of Responses 2011/12	
<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"> • Up to 3 months • 3 to 6 months • 6 to 12 months • 12 to 18 months • 18 months + • Don't know/Can't remember <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4 1 1 - - - <hr/>6</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">66.6% 16.7% 16.7% </p>
<p>6B Was this time acceptable to you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4 1 <hr/>5</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">80% 20%</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"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2 2 <hr/>4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">50% 50%</p>
<p>6D Did the office do so?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always • Usually • Rarely • Never <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2 - - - <hr/>2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">100%</p>
<p>6E Do you feel a sufficient, clear and understandable explanation was given during your appeal discussions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5 1 <hr/>6</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">83% 17%</p>
<p>6F Following your appeal/proposal, was it upheld?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4 1 <hr/>5</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">80% 20%</p>

Overall impression:	Number of Responses 2011/12	
<p>7A How would you assess the helpfulness and friendliness of the people you dealt with?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent • Good • Fair • Poor <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">27 5 1 - <hr/>33</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">82% 15% 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"> • Excellent • Good • Fair • Poor <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">27 4 2 - <hr/>33</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">82% 12% 6%</p>
<p>7C How satisfied were you with the time taken to deal with your enquiry?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Satisfied • Satisfied • Dissatisfied • Very Dissatisfied <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">25 3 3 - <hr/>31</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">80% 10% 10%</p>
<p>7D If you were unhappy about the service you received, did you complain?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2 1 <hr/>3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">66.6% 33.3%</p>
<p>7E If you complained, how satisfied were you with the way we dealt with your complaint?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Satisfied • Satisfied • Dissatisfied • Very Dissatisfied <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2 - - - <hr/>2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">100%</p>
<p>7F Overall, how satisfied were you with the service you received from us?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Satisfied • Satisfied • Dissatisfied • Very Dissatisfied <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">26 4 <hr/>30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">87% 13%</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

- The lady that I spoke to at the electoral office was very helpful.
- Satisfied with service, but we would have liked to know sooner what our banding was to be. In our case it was (a wait of) 8 months.
- Still don't agree that the house (should be) banded as G.
- I would like to say that ...X.... has been very helpful and told us about various things we weren't aware of.
- Very impressed with helpful way everybody listened to our concerns. Very good and wish all local authority departments were as helpful and efficient. Well done!
- Objection to "cold calling" for property inspection but thereafter found dealings to be reasonable and professional. Comments properly received and noted.
- Not really sure how banding is allocated. House smaller, more remote but same band as previous house.
- No issues, very helpful.
- We still haven't received an answer to our application.
- Inconsiderate to expect a householder to deal with a council official without any warning. However, your representative was both polite and professional.
- I found ...Y... to be extremely helpful in explaining the banding of our property and how the appeal would be dealt with.

CONCLUSIONS

For 2011/12, although the number of questionnaires issued was two less than the previous year the response rate of 26% shows a return to the average response rate expected from surveys such as this.

On this occasion 24 of the forms returned are connected with council tax, 5 with non-domestic rates and 6 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” (87%) or “satisfied” (13%) with the service. This is a very encouraging response. As can be seen from the analysis, three people did express dissatisfaction with our service in respect of valuers “cold calling” for property inspections. The subsequent comments indicate that the responders were satisfied with the subsequent actions and this is borne out by no one expressing anything but overall satisfaction.

11 out of 35 customers took the opportunity to make comments. The majority of the comments were positive, although some criticisms relating to “cold calling” were made, as noted above. Where dissatisfaction regarding final outcome is noted or a request is made for information, these matters are followed up if possible. However, because the return can be made anonymously, it is not always possible to do so. Additionally, one person used the comment facility to query the council tax band of his property. 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 no recorded complaints.

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 2011/12 was carried out on the same basis as in previous years. Although there has been a small reduction in the number of forms issued there has been a better response rate with some useful comments made. 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, possibly after the bulk of the appeals arising from the 2010 Revaluation have been settled. Given that large numbers of appeals have continued to be received in the last two years it is recommended that the issuing of questionnaires to professional agents be considered at a later date.

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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