

TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD



**Report on Issue of Customer Questionnaires
by
Tayside Valuation Joint Board
Year 2007-08**

Contents

Introduction	3
Results of Questionnaires Returned	4
Comments from Questionnaires	12
Conclusions	13
Recommendations	13
Copy of questionnaire	15

INTRODUCTION

1 GENERAL

This is the second 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, and this report relates to the year from June 2007 to June 2008.

Total number of questionnaires issued	=	159
Total number of questionnaires returned	=	44

This gives an overall return of 27.7%, which, from examination of similar surveys, is considered to be an acceptable level although poorer than the previous 39% return.

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
1	28	11	4

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>If you have phoned the office:</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u> <u>2007/08</u>	
<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>31</p> <p>3</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>34</p>	<p>91%</p> <p>9%</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>28</p> <p>5</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>33</p>	<p>85%</p> <p>15%</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>4</p> <p>1</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>5</p>	<p>80%</p> <p>20%</p>

<u>If you have visited the office:</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u> <u>2007/08</u>	
3A. How convenient did you find the opening hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very convenient • Fairly convenient • Not very convenient • Not at all convenient <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	4 3 0 0 <hr/> 7	57% 43% 0% 0%
3B. Was there ease of access to the building? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	6 1 <hr/> 7	86% 14%
3C. Was there sufficient provision of facilities and information about our services available? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	7 0 <hr/> 7	100% 0%

<u>If you have received a visit from a member of our staff:</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u> <u>2007/08</u>	
4A. Did we make an appointment for a visit? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p> If yes , were we punctual? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p> If no , would an appointment have been preferred? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	27 3 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 30 27 0 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 27 2 1 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 3	90% 10% 100% 0% 67% 33%
4B. Was the time of our visit convenient to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	30 0 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 30	100%
4C. Did we properly identify ourselves? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	30 0 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 30	100% 0%
4D. Was the purpose of the visit clearly explained? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	30 0 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 30	100% 0%

Comment: It is not our normal practice to make appointments for carrying out routine survey work.

<u>If your contact with the office was by letter, E-mail or Fax</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u> <u>2007/08</u>	
5A. Was it acknowledged in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-5 days • 6-10 days • Longer than 10 days <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 10px;">Total:</div>	6 2 5 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 13	46% 15% 39%
5B. Was this time acceptable to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 10px;">Total:</div>	11 2 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 13	85% 15%

<u>Appeal/Proposal:</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u> <u>2007/08</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"> • 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>6</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>0</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>11</p>	<p>55%</p> <p>9%</p> <p>9%</p> <p>9%</p> <p>18%</p> <p>0%</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>8</p> <p>3</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>11</p>	<p>73%</p> <p>27%</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>5</p> <p>5</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>10</p>	<p>50%</p> <p>50%</p>

<u>Appeal/Proposal:</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u> <u>2007/08</u>	
<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>5</p> <p>0</p> <p>0</p> <p>0</p> <hr/> <p>5</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>0%</p> <p>0%</p> <p>0%</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>7</p> <p>3</p> <hr/> <p>10</p>	<p>70%</p> <p>30%</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>11</p> <hr/> <p>11</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>0%</p>

<u>Overall impression:</u>	<u>Number of Responses 2006</u>	
<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;">25 15 3 0</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">43</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">58% 35% 7% 0%</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 13 3 0</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">43</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">63% 30% 7% 0%</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;">23 17 2 1</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">43</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">53% 40% 5% 2%</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;">0 2</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">0% 100%</p>

<u>Overall impression:</u>	<u>Number of Responses 2007/08</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"> • Very Satisfied • Satisfied • Dissatisfied • Very Dissatisfied <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>0</p> <p>0</p> <p>0</p> <p>0</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p>0</p>	<p>0%</p> <p>0%</p> <p>0%</p> <p>0%</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>28</p> <p>10</p> <p>3</p> <p>0</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p>41</p>	<p>68%</p> <p>24.5%</p> <p>7.5%</p> <p>0%</p>

Comments from Customer Questionnaires

The following is a list of all comments noted in the comments and suggestions box. The feedback is provided anonymously, therefore there has been no follow up possible. 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

- Everything was dealt with efficiently.
- I couldn't believe how excellent the service I received was!
- My query seems too trivial to warrant this questionnaire!
- Not really in favour of these surveys – are they really value for money? Would rather my council tax was not spent on such a survey.
- I was delighted with the prompt service I received from your office.
- Initial dealings were protracted as the Assessor did not reply to me when he said he would. Months later, on receipt of a tribunal notice, I contacted the Assessor's office and was dealt with in a professional and competent manner. If the matter had initially been dealt with in a professional manner the workload on the Assessor's office would have been reduced as would costs.
- I wait to see if I am happy with the revaluations once they are done..
- Unlike many offices I have dealt with this was of excellent standard from start to finish.
- Couldn't fault the service. Problem dealt with in a few weeks with a positive outcome.
- Highly surprised at the speed this was dealt with. Completely resolved within a month of proposal. Excellent!
- Overall I was very pleased with the service provided.
- The worker who dealt with my council tax issue was friendly, helpful and genuinely concerned about getting a quick and satisfactory solution. At every stage he explained the options and timescales to me.
- When I initially appealed I was sent a letter dismissing my right to appeal which was incorrect. Had I not been aware of my rights then I could have missed out. I was the one who realised your offices mistake and informed yourselves.
- We were dealt with very quickly and given very good information.

- A clear outline of the procedural steps and an indication of typical timescales would be of great help.
- First class service, friendly and very helpful staff.

In addition there were two comments which appear to relate to payment rather than valuation matters and one comment which was related solely to the unfairness of the council tax as a means of raising local revenue.

CONCLUSIONS

In line with the recommendation made in the 2006–07 Report, the number of questionnaires issued was increased by around 40%. As before a pre-paid return envelope was provided. The reduced return rate of c 28% may be expected from the increased number issued.

It is noted that the majority of forms returned relate to contact on Council tax matters. This may be due to the recent media campaigns urging taxpayers to query their council tax bandings.

Sections 5B and 6B indicate some dissatisfaction in relation to time taken to respond to correspondence or to settle appeals/proposals. This may be partly due to the increased number of council tax enquiries and partly because timescales for dealing with appeals can vary depending upon the type of property.

Section 7 generated generally favourable responses with 92.5% of customers stating that they were “very satisfied” (68%) or “satisfied” (24.5%) with the service. This is a very encouraging response. As can be seen from 7C the main cause of dissatisfaction was the time taken to deal with an enquiry.

In Section 8, 19 out of 44 customers took the opportunity to make comments, the majority of which were positive, although some criticisms were expressed. The comments are reproduced as part of this report.

It is very encouraging to note that, in spite of the small increase in returns expressing dissatisfaction, the overall level of satisfaction that customers have with the services we provide remains high.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Consideration should be given to again extending the sample base, by targeting other users of the services, such as Finance Departments specifically and Council Departments generally.

RECOMMENDATIONS (cont)

Following the recommendations in last year's report, staff were advised to identify themselves when dealing with telephone enquiries. A few callers have indicated that they were not aware of the name of the person they were speaking to, and staff should be reminded to identify themselves in these circumstances.

The majority of concerns raised relate to the time taken to respond to correspondence. The department have recently introduced an electronic mail logging system to track correspondence received. Line managers should be reminded to log all correspondence on to the system and to monitor its progress to ensure timeous responses are issued.

Staff should continue to be advised of the importance of customer service and of their individual roles in providing the best possible quality of service delivery.