

TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD



**Report on Issue of Customer Questionnaires
by
Tayside Valuation Joint Board**

Year 2016-17

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INTRODUCTION

1 GENERAL

This is the eleventh 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 as an Appendix 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. July 2016 – June 2017.

Total number of questionnaires issued	=	328
Total number of questionnaires returned	=	96

This gives an overall return of 30% which is an improvement on the 29% which was experienced in 2015-16. By way of comparison, 216 questionnaires were issued last year, 62 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
7	49	29	11

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 2016-17	
2A Did you get through to a person who could deal with your query?	71	96%
• Yes	3	4%
• No		
Total:	74	
2B Were you aware of the name of the person who spoke to you?	56	82%
• Yes	12	18%
• No		
Total:	68	
If No , would knowing the name have been helpful to you?		
• Yes	5	28%
• No	13	72%
Total:	18	
If you have visited the office	Number of Responses 2016-17	
3A How convenient did you find the opening hours?	8	73%
• Very convenient	3	27%
• Fairly convenient		
• Not very convenient		
• Not at all convenient		
Total:	11	
3B Was there ease of access to the building?	11	100%
• Yes		
• No		
Total:	11	
3C Was there sufficient provision of facilities and information about our services available?	10	100%
• Yes		
• No		
Total:	10	

If you have received a visit from a member of our staff	Number of Responses 2016-17	
4A Did we make an appointment for a visit?		
• Yes	41	64%
• No	23	36%
Total:	64	
If Yes, were we punctual?		
• Yes	39	100%
• No		
Total:	39	
If No, would an appointment been preferred?		
• Yes	9	43%
• No	12	57%
Total:	21	
4B Was the time of our visit convenient to you?		
• Yes	57	95%
• No	3	5%
Total:	60	
4C Did we properly identify ourselves?		
• Yes	60	98%
• No	1	2%
Total:	61	
4D Was the purpose of the visit clearly explained?		
• Yes	58	98%
• No	1	2%
Total:	59	

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 some customers as the statistics above bear out.

If your contact with the office was by letter, E-mail or Fax	Number of Responses 2016-17	
5A Was it acknowledged in:	15	68%
• 1-5 days	5	23%
• 6-10 days	2	9%
• Longer than 10 days		
Total:	22	
5B Was this time acceptable to you?	21	95%
• Yes	1	5%
• No		
Total:	22	

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 2016-17	
6A How long did it take to settle your appeal/proposal from the time you made it? <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 	16	100%
Total:	16	
6B Was this time acceptable to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	16	100%
Total:	16	
6C When dealing with the office did we undertake to contact you within a specified period? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	11 3	79% 21%
Total:	14	
6D Did the office do so? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always • Usually • Rarely • Never 	11	100%
Total:	11	
6E Do you feel a sufficient, clear and understandable explanation was given during your appeal discussions? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	15	100%
Total:	15	
6F Following your appeal/proposal, was it upheld? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	14 1	93% 7%
Total:	15	

Overall Impression	Number of Responses 2016-17	
<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 	59 29 2	66% 32% 2%
	Total:	90
<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 	60 28 2 1	66% 31% 2% 1%
	Total:	91
<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 	48 36 2	56% 42% 2%
	Total:	86
<p>7D If you were unhappy about the service you received, did you complain?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	1 9	10% 90%
	Total:	10
<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 	2 4	33% 67%
	Total:	6
<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 	56 27 1	67% 32% 1%
	Total:	84

Comments from Customer Questionnaires

The following are the comments noted in the comments and suggestions box, including any that expressed criticism or dissatisfaction of the Assessor's service.

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

- Gentleman was very pleasant to speak to & form received in mail as promised.
- The information we have received has been clear and explicit.
- Very helpful and friendly staff very efficient.
- Spoke to X in Perth Office. Very helpful.
- Y was extremely helpful and courteous.
- Mr Y was the man I dealt with. He was great. Very helpful and knows his stuff.
- I was very happy and satisfied Mr A and his boss who visited me were very professional and have submitted me a very good service
- Wouldn't fault your staff in anything I am a bit slow in walking and they were very understanding and had a lot of patience with me they were excellent.
- Mr A explained everything relating to my appeal clearly and comprehensively.
- I had contact with your office to make an appointment. No problem. When the Assessor came he was very polite and explained what he was doing.
- Very positive experience - easy for members of the public to make proposals.
- My experience of dealing with the Assessors was excellent.
- I found everyone that I contact was very helpful.
- Mr B was extremely helpful and his advice greatly appreciated.
- The staff I dealt with were very courteous and friendly and obviously knew their jobs...
- Excellent service, with the appointment arranged within a matter of days and at a convenient time. The officer took on board our comments and helped to explain the approach to a domestic valuation.
- Excellent could have done with the valuation being lower but otherwise very good.
- Very polite staff.
- The assessor we spoke to on the phone was very helpful and the assessors who visited were also very helpful.
- I registered a new address, it was very straightforward.
- Registered to vote / new address via internet.
- Registered on-line and did not speak to anyone. Registration quick and easy.

Conclusions

For 2016-17 the number of questionnaires issued has increased to 328 compared with 216 the previous year. The response rate of 30% is a slight increase on the average response rate expected from surveys such as this.

On this occasion 49 of the forms returned are connected with Council Tax, 29 with Non-Domestic Rates, 7 relate to Electoral Registration and 11 cover more than one category. 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 67% of customers stating that they were "very satisfied" and 32% were "satisfied" with the service. This is a very encouraging response. As can be seen from the analysis, one person did express dissatisfaction with our service but on reading further comments made it appears that their problem lies with a Council department.

36 out of 96 customers took the opportunity to make comments. The majority of the comments were positive and it is gratifying to note that most people have a very positive experience when dealing with our staff. 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. The completed questionnaires are returned to the Assistant Assessors responsible for the administration of the Divisional offices so that feedback can be given to staff and improvements made to the service where required.

The comments received are reproduced as part of this report. Where comments were lengthy only the main statements of satisfaction/dissatisfaction have been noted.

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 2 recorded complaints. These were all dealt with satisfactorily by senior members of staff at a local level and none required further investigation by management.

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 2016-17 was carried out on the same basis as in previous years and all staff reminded to issue forms wherever possible. This has resulted in the number of forms issued increasing substantially, although the statistical outcome remains constant compared with previous years. It is recommended that staff be reminded of the value of the feedback obtained from the survey and that the policy of issuing forms to as many customers as possible be reinforced for 2017-18.

The customer questionnaire for 2016-17 was supplemented with additional questions which asked customers if they fell into any of the protected characteristic groups as defined in the Equalities Act 2010. The responses received allowed us to assess how well our service meets the needs of these sections of society.

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.

Equalities Monitoring

As noted above, the customer questionnaire for 2016-17 was supplemented with additional questions which asked customers if they fell into any of the protected characteristic groups as defined in the Equalities Act 2010.

Responses were received on 86 of the 96 forms returned. The responses indicated that those returning the forms were exclusively white (ethnic group). The gender divide was almost 50:50 male/female and the age group was predominantly over 55. Eight responses indicated that the person had a disability.

As this is the third year of gathering equalities information in respect of our customers it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions from the responses.

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

EQUALITIES MONITORING

Tayside Valuation Joint Board is committed to eliminating discrimination and providing equality in all aspects of its services. In order to ensure that this is the case, detailed monitoring of feedback requires to be carried out. Your assistance would be appreciated in providing the following information, which will be treated in the strictest confidence.

1 What is your ethnic group?

Choose one from Section A to G

A White

Scottish

Other British

Irish

Gypsy/Traveller

Eastern European (eg Polish)

B Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Group

Any mixed or multiple ethnic group

C Asian (including Scottish/British)

Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British

Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British

Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British

Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British

D African

African, African Scottish or African British

Other

E Caribbean or Black

Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British

Black, Black Scottish or Black British

F Arab

Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British

Other

G Prefer not to answer

Other (please specify)

2 How would you describe your gender?

Female

Male

Prefer not to answer

3 What is your age

16-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65-74

75 +

4 Under the terms of the Equality Act 2010, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out day-to-day tasks.

Do you consider that you have a disability? Yes No

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

Please return in the envelope provided

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