

REPORT TO: TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD – 26 AUGUST 2013

REPORT ON: BEST VALUE – PUBLIC PERFORMANCE REPORT 2012/13

REPORT BY: ASSESSOR

REPORT NO: TVJB 17-2013

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to appraise the Board of the performance levels achieved by the Assessor and his staff during financial year 2012/13, with reference to the Key Performance Indicators submitted to the Scottish Government in terms of the Best Value regime.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Board is asked to:-

- i note the information submitted by the Assessor in respect of the Key Performance Indicators,
- ii note the Performance Standards in respect of Electoral Registration,
- iii note the results of the Customer Satisfaction Survey as contained in Appendix 5, and
- iv approve the Performance Report attached as Appendix 4 to this report.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

5 BACKGROUND

5.1 At its meeting on 21 August 2000 the Board noted the agreed information to be submitted annually to the Scottish Executive (now Scottish Government) by the Assessor in relation to Key Performance Indicators. The information relates to the activities of the Assessor with regard to Valuation Roll amendments, appeal settlements, and new entries added to the Valuation List, together with details of staff costs and number of staff employed. Subsequently annual reports have been presented to the Board, detailing the actual performance of the Assessor in each year and the targets intended to be achieved in the following financial year.

5.2 Performance standards for Electoral Registration have been set by the Electoral Commission who monitor performance annually by assessing information provided by Electoral Registration Officers. Details of performance achieved in relation to Angus Council and Perth & Kinross Council are also included in this report.

5.3 Appendices 1 and 2 show the updated position in respect of Key Performance Indicators and detail the actual performance achieved in 2012/13, together with the targets set for 2013/14.

- 5.4 **Appendix 1** provides the information in relation to the non-domestic Valuation Roll. The aim is to issue Valuation Notices to ratepayers as soon as possible after the completion of alterations to non-domestic subjects, or the coming into existence of new properties. Minimising this period helps the rates collection process and allows businesses to avoid lengthy back payment periods. The time period referred to is therefore the difference between the effective date of such changes and the date of issue of the Notice.
- 5.5 The number of amendments to the Roll during 2012/13 was 1,458 compared to 1,325 in the previous year. These are amendments arising from new and altered properties. They do not include other changes, such as those arising from appeal settlements and changes to occupancy. Performance in relation to Valuation Roll maintenance improved significantly over the performance in the previous year.
- 5.6 During the course of the year, staff have been heavily involved in dealing with appeals arising from the 2010 Revaluation. In addition to the right to lodge appeals against revaluation, ratepayers are also entitled, in certain specified circumstances, to lodge appeals on the basis that there has been a material change of circumstances affecting the value of their property. Over recent years there has been an unprecedented number of appeals lodged on the basis that there has been a fall in rental values as a result of economic recession.
- 5.8 The incidence of appeal work may again impact on performance during 2013/14. The aim is to achieve 75% in 3 months and to have 88% within 6 months.
- 5.9 As at 31 March 2013, approximately 83% of appeals arising from the 2010 Revaluation had been settled. During 2012/13 1,450 revaluation appeals were settled, resulting in a loss of Rateable Value of approximately £6.2m. This represents 1.5% of the total Rateable Value, measured against an estimated loss of 2.5%.
- 5.10 The Rateable Values of outstanding appeal subjects are generally at a much higher level than those already settled and it is estimated that the total Rateable Value of the roll may be reduced by 2.5% during 2013/14 as a result of appeal settlements. The statutory final date for dealing with 2010 Revaluation appeals is 31 December 2013.
- 5.11 In addition to Revaluation appeals, other appeals are received regularly against altered values, new entries and perceived changes of circumstances relating to particular subjects. During 2012/13 approximately 2,649 such appeals were settled. The number of additional appeals received during 2011/12 was 401.
- 5.12 **Appendix 2** provides the information in relation to the Council Tax Valuation List. During the year 1,194 new entries were added to the list, a reduction of 190 from the previous year, continuing a trend that reflects a decrease in the number of new houses being built.
- 5.13 The aim in relation to the Council Tax List is to raise entries as quickly as possible following completion or occupation of the new dwellings in order to minimise any backdating of payments.
- 5.14 During the year 96.7% of taxpayers received notification of their banding within 6 months of the property being completed. This is a reduction of 0.8% from the previous year and falls just short of the target of 98%. For 2013/14 the aim is to deal with 98% of new houses within 6 months and 90% of those within 3 months.
- 5.15 The ability to achieve targets relies to some extent on the co-operation of house owners and occupiers. Staff continue to encounter difficulties in gaining access to some properties and in obtaining information timeously from taxpayers.

- 5.16 The statistical information in Appendices 1 and 2 will be provided to the Scottish Government as required and will be published in the local press and on the Board's website.
- 5.17 **Appendix 3** provides a summary of performance in relation to standards for Electoral Registration set by the Electoral Commission. Our performance met or exceeded all standards set,
- 5.18 Canvassers are employed to visit households which have failed to respond to enquiry forms. During the 2012 canvass of electors there were visits to 15,349 households, a decrease of approximately 4,000 visits over the previous year. This decrease reflects the more extensive use of data matching techniques to confirm the presence of electors.
- 5.19 **Appendix 4** comprises an annual Performance Report incorporating the performance statistics and additional information in relation to other aspects of the Assessor's duties. This will be made available on the Board's website.
- 5.20 **Appendix 5** provides a report and analysis of the Customer Satisfaction Survey carried out during 2012/13. This will be made available and discussed with staff. It will also be published on the Board's website.
- 5.21 The Assessor will continue to report to the Board all future Best Value developments as they occur.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Clerk and the Treasurer to the Board have been consulted on this report.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

ALASTAIR KIRKWOOD
Assessor

August 2013

TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Key Performance Indicators

VALUATION ROLL		
Total No of Entries at 1 April 2012	18,679	
Total RV at 1 April 2012	£418.8m	
No of Amendments to Roll (2012/13)	1,458	
Total No of Entries at 31 March 2013	18,756	
Total RV at 31 March 2013	£416.4m	
Amendments within time periods expressed as a % of the total number of amendments for the year		
2011/12	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	55%	62%
3-6 months	24%	23%
Over 6 months	21%	15%
2012/13	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	76%	62%
3-6 months	13%	23%
Over 6 months	11%	15%
2013/14	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	N/A	75%
3-6 months	N/A	13%
Over 6 months	N/A	12%
Adjustment to Valuation Roll arising from Revaluation Appeal Settlements expressed as a % of the total RV		
2011/12	Actual	Estimated
	0.8%	1.0%
2012/13	1.57%	2.5%
2013/14	N/A	2.5%

TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Key Performance Indicators

COUNCIL TAX		
Total No of Entries at 1 April 2012	205,171	
Adjustment to Band "D" Equivalent at 1 April 2012	189,266	
New Entries added during year (2012/13)	1,194	
Total No of Entries at 31 March 2013	205,282	
Adjustment to Band "D" Equivalent at 31 March 2013	190,197	
New Entries within time periods expressed as a % of the total number of new entries for the whole year		
2011/12	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	88%	90%
3-6 months	9.5%	8%
Over 6 months	2.5%	2%
2012/13	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	87.3%	90%
3-6 months	9.4%	8%
Over 6 months	3.3%	2%
2012/13	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	N/A	90%
3-6 months	N/A	8%
Over 6 months	N/A	2%

GENERAL	
Figure showing costs of all permanent staff including Salaries, NI contributions, Superannuation and Overtime payments	
As at 31 March 2011	£2.90m
As at 31 March 2012	£2.45m
As at 31 March 2013	£2.50m
Number of full time equivalent Staff employed	
As at 31 March 2011	70
As at 31 March 2012	64
As at 31 March 2013	67.5

SUMMARY OF ELECTORAL REGISTRATION PERFORMANCE 2012 Angus Council and Perth & Kinross Council

Performance Standards set and assessed by the Electoral Commission

Completeness and accuracy of electoral registration records	
Performance standard 1: Information sources	Above the standard
Performance standard 2: Property database	Above the standard
Performance standard 3: House-to-house inquiries	Meets the standard
Integrity	
Performance standard 4: Integrity	Above the standard
Performance standard 5: Supply and security	Above the standard
Participation	
Performance standard 6: Public awareness	Meets the standard
Performance standard 7: Working with partners	Meets the standard
Performance standard 8: Accessibility and communication	Meets the standard
Planning and organisation	
Performance standard 9: Planning	Meets the standard
Performance standard 10: Training	Meets the standard

Full details are available on the Electoral Commission website at www.electoralcommission.org.uk.



Tayside Valuation Joint Board PERFORMANCE REPORT 2012/13

INTRODUCTION

The Assessor for Tayside Valuation Joint Board is an independent statutory official who is responsible for compiling and maintaining the Valuation Rolls and Council Tax Valuation Lists for Local Authorities of Angus, Dundee City and Perth & Kinross.

The Tayside Assessor is also the Electoral Registration Officer for Angus Council and Perth & Kinross Council and in that capacity prepares and maintains the Registers of Electors (Voters' Rolls) for these Council areas.

The purpose of this report is to provide some background information on the services delivered and details of performance levels achieved.

In June 2013 the former Assessor, Mr John Galbraith, FRICS, retired after 43 years service to the Board and its predecessor authorities. I record my thanks to John Galbraith and his management team for their endeavours over the previous years and, in particular, during the year 2012/13 which has resulted in the high levels of performance achieved.

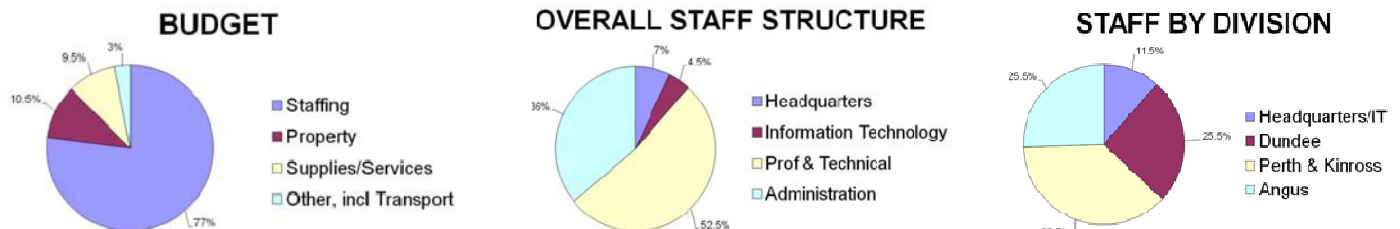
BUDGET & STAFFING

The Board's Revenue and Capital funding is provided by the three constituent Councils. Draft budgets are prepared by the Assessor in consultation with the Board Treasurer and are presented annually to the Board for approval. Actual and committed expenditure is monitored closely throughout the Financial year and the position is reported to the Board every 3 months.

For 2012/13 the approved net revenue budget was £2.85m.

The Board's unaudited final accounts indicate that spending was again within budget. The net amount underspent will be returned to the 3 constituent Councils.

The number of full time equivalent staff employed during 2012/13 was 67.5, against a budgeted structure of 69. The following charts give an indication of breakdown of budget headings and the staff structure.



VALUATION ROLL

The Valuation Roll contains entries for non-domestic properties within the area and shows Rateable Values which are used by the constituent local authorities to calculate non-domestic rates charges.

The Revenue departments of each of the Councils are advised of changes to the Valuation Roll on a weekly basis. This helps to minimise any delay in the rates collection process.

Performance is measured by how quickly we respond to property changes by amending the Valuation Roll. Performance achieved over the past 3 years and the effect of changes to the Valuation Roll during 2012/13 are detailed below.

Performance in relation to Valuation Roll maintenance has improved over the level achieved in the previous year, the details are set out in the table below. The targets set for 2012/13 were 62% within 3 months and 85% within 6 months. These targets have been amended for 2012/13 to 75% within 3 months and 88% within 6 months.

Year	Number of Amendments	% of amendments within time periods		
		Within 3 months	Within 6 months	More than 6 months
2010/11	1,577	68%	86%	14%
2011/12	1,325	55%	79%	21%
2012/13	1,458	76%	89%	11%

Local Authority Area	Total No of Subjects		Rateable Value	
	31/3/12	31/3/13	31/3/12	31/3/13
Angus	4,804	4,777	£77,688,367	£77,552,072
Dundee City	5,697	5,731	£194,480,560	£189,247,460
Perth & Kinross	8,178	8,248	£146,592,825	£149,577,225
Total	18,679	18,756	£418,761,752	£416,376,757

Valuation Appeals

During the course of the year staff have been heavily involved in dealing with appeals arising from the 2010 Revaluation. In addition to the right to lodge appeals against revaluation, ratepayers are also entitled, in certain specified circumstances, to lodge appeals on the basis that there has been a material change of circumstances affecting the value of their property. Over recent years there has been an unprecedented number of appeals lodged on the basis that there has been a fall in rental values as a result of economic recession. A summary of appeal progress as at 31 March 2013 is shown below.

The loss of Rateable Value arising from 2010 Revaluation Appeals settled during 2012/13 amounts to £6,225,785 which is 1.5% of the total Rateable Value in the Valuation Roll. The statutory date for disposal of 2010 Revaluation appeals is 31 December 2013.

	Appeals Received	Appeals Settled	Settled Appeals Rateable Value		Appeals Outstanding	
			Original RV	Settled RV	Appeals	RV
2010 Revaluation	6,017	5,015	£190,060,440	£179,979,940	1,002	£114,875,568
2010 Running Roll	2,914	1,589	£89,820,880	£89,319,890	1,325	£106,490,985
2011 Running Roll	3,014	1,255	£62,670,750	£62,360,625	1,759	£148,062,745
2012 Running Roll	401	45	£1,910,200	£1,824,900	356	£34,488,835

COUNCIL TAX VALUATION LIST

The Council Tax Valuation List contains all domestic properties and for each subject shows a Valuation Band which is used as a basis for calculating Council Tax charges.

Performance is measured in relation to the speed at which new properties are added to the Valuation List. The ability to achieve targets relies to some extent on the co-operation of house owners and occupiers in responding to our enquiries and allowing access to their properties. There has been a slight reduction in performance from the previous year, with 96.7% of properties being entered on the Valuation List within 6 months, compared with 97.5% in 2011/12. 40 properties were outwith the 6 month period compared with 34 in 2011/12.

The tables below detail the number of entries in the Valuation List and the performance achieved over the past 3 years.

The target set for 2012/13 was to deal with 98% of new houses within 6 months and 90% of those within 3 months. These have been retained as the target for 2013/14.

Year	Angus	Dundee	Perth & Kinross	Total
2010/11	56,176	76,544	72,191	204,911
2011/12	56,428	76,710	72,573	205,171
2012/13	56,634	76,356	72,930	205,920

Year	Number of New Entries	% of total new entries within the time period		
		With 3 months	Within 6 months	Over 6 months
2010/11	1,509	83%	94%	6%
2011/12	1,384	88%	97.5%	2.5%
2012/13	1,194	87.3%	96.7%	3.3%

ELECTORAL REGISTRATION

Registration of electors continued on a rolling basis throughout the year. The annual canvass of all electors was carried out from September to November 2012, prior to the publication of the Register of Electors on 1 December 2012. Where there have been no changes to the electors registered at a household, electors may choose to confirm the position by using a free telephone service, the internet or SMS text message. While the telephone service has been available for the past 4 years, the internet and text messaging facilities were introduced for the first time in 2011. Returns made by these three options represented approximately 20% of all returns made. Other records available to the Electoral Registration Officer were used to confirm and ascertain relevant information where returns were not made.

After this data matching household visits to follow up non-responses were made to 15,349 properties, a reduction of approximately 4,000 (20.5%) from the previous year.

The electorate as at 1 December 2012 for Angus and Perth & Kinross was 199,831 — an increase of 4,386 from 1 December 2011. 18,103 electors (9.06%) exercised their right not to have their names included in the edited version of the register, resulting in an Edited Register total of 181,728.

Performance standards for Electoral Registration have been set by the Electoral Commission. Our performance met or exceeded standards set in all categories. Full details of the performance of Electoral registration Officers in Great Britain during 2012 are available at the Commission's website <http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk>.

CONTACT DETAILS

The Assessor's service operates from three offices:-

Headquarters & City of Dundee Division
Whitehall House
35 Yeaman Shore
DUNDEE
DD1 4BU
Tel: 01382 221177

Angus Division
Ravenswood
New Road
FORFAR
DD8 2ZA
Tel: 01307 462416

Perth & Kinross Division
Robertson House
Whitefriars Crescent
PERTH
PH2 OLG
Tel: 01738 630303

If you require any further information on this performance report please contact:-

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TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD



**Report on Issue of Customer Questionnaires
by
Tayside Valuation Joint Board
Year 2012-13**

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INTRODUCTION

1 GENERAL

This is the seventh 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 2012 – June 2013.

Total number of questionnaires issued	=	471
Total number of questionnaires returned	=	120

This gives an overall return of 25.5% which is very similar to the 26% which was experienced in 2011-12. By way of comparison, 134 questionnaires were issued last year, 35 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	63	36	15

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

If you have received a visit from a member of our staff:	Number of Responses 2012/13	
<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>68 13 <hr/>81</p> <p>66 1 <hr/>67</p> <p>6 6 <hr/>12</p>	<p>84% 16%</p> <p>98.5% 1.5%</p> <p>50% 50%</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>76 2 <hr/>78</p>	<p>97% 3%</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>78 - <hr/>78</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>76 1 <hr/>77</p>	<p>99% 1%</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 2012/13	
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-right: 20px;">Total:</div>	16 2 4 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 22	73% 9% 18%
5B Was this time acceptable to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <div style="text-align: right; margin-right: 20px;">Total:</div>	19 1 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 20	95% 5%

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 2012/13	
<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>16 - - - 1 - <hr/>17</p>	<p>94% 6%</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>16 1 <hr/>17</p>	<p>94% 6%</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>15 5 <hr/>20</p>	<p>75% 25%</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>11 1 - 1 <hr/>13</p>	<p>84% 8% 8%</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>13 1 <hr/>14</p>	<p>93% 7%</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>14 2 <hr/>16</p>	<p>87.5% 12.5%</p>

Overall impression:	Number of Responses 2012/13	
<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;">84 33 - 1</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">118</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">71% 28% - 1%</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;">79 35 - 1</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">115</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">69% 30% - 1%</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;">83 29 1 1</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">114</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">73% 25% 1% 1%</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;">1 1</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">50% 50%</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;">1 - - -</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">1</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;">86 27 - 1</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">114</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">75% 24% - 1%</p>

COMMENTS FROM CUSTOMER QUESTIONNAIRES

The following are some typical comments noted in the comments and suggestions box, including the few that expressed criticism or dissatisfaction.

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

- "X" provided an excellent service. Responded quickly and was polite and courteous.
- The Perth team were very helpful and professional. ...customer focussed approach.
- If certain questions (related to council tax billing) were asked by the Assessor it would save others getting involved and therefore time and money.
- Efficient, friendly and helpful!
- Help and assistance second to none – Well done!
- Helpful and understanding staff.
- It was a joy to deal with someone who knows their job and is committed to an excellent level of service.
- Very professional, informative and a tremendous help.
- Filling in surveys is a complete waste of time!
- Your staff are the best I have encountered in any project I have been involved in.
- Why did the Assessor need to measure the extension when it was as per approved plans?
- Efficient service.
- Appointments should always be made – no exceptions.
- Very satisfied with the response.
- Everyone I spoke to was very helpful.
- Very poor service.
- Only issue – it took three months to give us a council tax band.
- Very pleased with friendliness of staff and their helpfulness.

CONCLUSIONS

For 2012-13, although the number of questionnaires issued was increased substantially to 471 compared with 134 the previous year, the response rate of 25.5% continues to be at the level of the average response rate expected from surveys such as this.

On this occasion 63 of the forms returned are connected with council tax, 36 with non-domestic rates, 6 relate to electoral registration and 15 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 99% of customers stating that they were "very satisfied" (75%) or "satisfied" (24%) with the service. This is a very encouraging response. As can be seen from the analysis, a number of people did express dissatisfaction with our service in respect of valuers "cold calling" for property inspections. Although one person did make that point in the comments section it is clear from the forms that subsequent actions by our staff are viewed positively.

39 out of 120 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 in 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. One or two of the comments related to the actions of employees in other departments. A selection of typical 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 2012/13 was carried out on the same basis as in previous years and all staff were reminded to issue forms wherever possible. The result has been a significantly larger number of returns to analyse which has proved useful in providing a more meaningful basis for the conclusions and recommendations. 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 continued for 2013/14.

The possibility of extending the sample base by developing questionnaires suitable for sending to ratepayers agents remains to be considered.

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?
(If you wish to comment, please see Section 8)
- Yes
 - No
- 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

Floor 6, Whitehall House
35 Yeaman Shore
DUNDEE DD1 4BU
Tel: 01382 221177 Fax: 01382 315600
Website address: www.tayside-vjb.gov.uk

TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Key Performance Indicators

VALUATION ROLL		
Total No of Entries at 1 April 2012	18,679	
Total RV at 1 April 2012	£418.8m	
No of Amendments to Roll (2012/13)	1,458	
Total No of Entries at 31 March 2013	18,756	
Total RV at 31 March 2013	£416.4m	
Amendments within time periods expressed as a % of the total number of amendments for the year		
2011/12	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	55%	62%
3-6 months	24%	23%
Over 6 months	21%	15%
2012/13	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	76%	62%
3-6 months	13%	23%
Over 6 months	11%	15%
2013/14	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	N/A	75%
3-6 months	N/A	13%
Over 6 months	N/A	12%
Adjustment to Valuation Roll arising from Revaluation Appeal Settlements expressed as a % of the total RV		
2011/12	Actual	Estimated
	0.8%	1.0%
2012/13	1.57%	2.5%
2013/14	N/A	2.5%

TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Key Performance Indicators

COUNCIL TAX		
Total No of Entries at 1 April 2012	205,171	
Adjustment to Band "D" Equivalent at 1 April 2012	189,266	
New Entries added during year (2012/13)	1,194	
Total No of Entries at 31 March 2013	205,282	
Adjustment to Band "D" Equivalent at 31 March 2013	190,197	
New Entries within time periods expressed as a % of the total number of new entries for the whole year		
2011/12	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	88%	90%
3-6 months	9.5%	8%
Over 6 months	2.5%	2%
2012/13	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	87.3%	90%
3-6 months	9.4%	8%
Over 6 months	3.3%	2%
2012/13	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	N/A	90%
3-6 months	N/A	8%
Over 6 months	N/A	2%

GENERAL	
Figure showing costs of all permanent staff including Salaries, NI contributions, Superannuation and Overtime payments	
As at 31 March 2011	£2.90m
As at 31 March 2012	£2.45m
As at 31 March 2013	£2.50m
Number of full time equivalent Staff employed	
As at 31 March 2011	70
As at 31 March 2012	64
As at 31 March 2013	67.5

SUMMARY OF ELECTORAL REGISTRATION PERFORMANCE 2012 Angus Council and Perth & Kinross Council

Performance Standards set and assessed by the Electoral Commission

Completeness and accuracy of electoral registration records	
Performance standard 1: Information sources	Above the standard
Performance standard 2: Property database	Above the standard
Performance standard 3: House-to-house inquiries	Meets the standard
Integrity	
Performance standard 4: Integrity	Above the standard
Performance standard 5: Supply and security	Above the standard
Participation	
Performance standard 6: Public awareness	Meets the standard
Performance standard 7: Working with partners	Meets the standard
Performance standard 8: Accessibility and communication	Meets the standard
Planning and organisation	
Performance standard 9: Planning	Meets the standard
Performance standard 10: Training	Meets the standard

Full details are available on the Electoral Commission website at www.electoralcommission.org.uk.



Tayside Valuation Joint Board PERFORMANCE REPORT 2012/13

INTRODUCTION

The Assessor for Tayside Valuation Joint Board is an independent statutory official who is responsible for compiling and maintaining the Valuation Rolls and Council Tax Valuation Lists for Local Authorities of Angus, Dundee City and Perth & Kinross.

The Tayside Assessor is also the Electoral Registration Officer for Angus Council and Perth & Kinross Council and in that capacity prepares and maintains the Registers of Electors (Voters' Rolls) for these Council areas.

The purpose of this report is to provide some background information on the services delivered and details of performance levels achieved.

In June 2013 the former Assessor, Mr John Galbraith, FRICS, retired after 43 years service to the Board and its predecessor authorities. I record my thanks to John Galbraith and his management team for their endeavours over the previous years and, in particular, during the year 2012/13 which has resulted in the high levels of performance achieved.

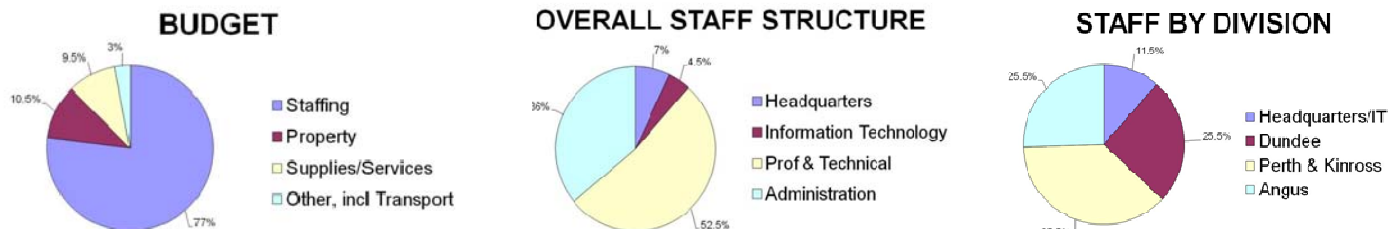
BUDGET & STAFFING

The Board's Revenue and Capital funding is provided by the three constituent Councils. Draft budgets are prepared by the Assessor in consultation with the Board Treasurer and are presented annually to the Board for approval. Actual and committed expenditure is monitored closely throughout the Financial year and the position is reported to the Board every 3 months.

For 2012/13 the approved net revenue budget was £2.85m.

The Board's unaudited final accounts indicate that spending was again within budget. The net amount underspent will be returned to the 3 constituent Councils.

The number of full time equivalent staff employed during 2012/13 was 67.5, against a budgeted structure of 69. The following charts give an indication of breakdown of budget headings and the staff structure.



VALUATION ROLL

The Valuation Roll contains entries for non-domestic properties within the area and shows Rateable Values which are used by the constituent local authorities to calculate non-domestic rates charges.

The Revenue departments of each of the Councils are advised of changes to the Valuation Roll on a weekly basis. This helps to minimise any delay in the rates collection process.

Performance is measured by how quickly we respond to property changes by amending the Valuation Roll. Performance achieved over the past 3 years and the effect of changes to the Valuation Roll during 2012/13 are detailed below.

Performance in relation to Valuation Roll maintenance has improved over the level achieved in the previous year, the details are set out in the table below. The targets set for 2012/13 were 62% within 3 months and 85% within 6 months. These targets have been amended for 2012/13 to 75% within 3 months and 88% within 6 months.

Year	Number of Amendments	% of amendments within time periods		
		Within 3 months	Within 6 months	More than 6 months
2010/11	1,577	68%	86%	14%
2011/12	1,325	55%	79%	21%
2012/13	1,458	76%	89%	11%

Local Authority Area	Total No of Subjects		Rateable Value	
	31/3/12	31/3/13	31/3/12	31/3/13
Angus	4,804	4,777	£77,688,367	£77,552,072
Dundee City	5,697	5,731	£194,480,560	£189,247,460
Perth & Kinross	8,178	8,248	£146,592,825	£149,577,225
Total	18,679	18,756	£418,761,752	£416,376,757

Valuation Appeals

During the course of the year staff have been heavily involved in dealing with appeals arising from the 2010 Revaluation. In addition to the right to lodge appeals against revaluation, ratepayers are also entitled, in certain specified circumstances, to lodge appeals on the basis that there has been a material change of circumstances affecting the value of their property. Over recent years there has been an unprecedented number of appeals lodged on the basis that there has been a fall in rental values as a result of economic recession. A summary of appeal progress as at 31 March 2013 is shown below.

The loss of Rateable Value arising from 2010 Revaluation Appeals settled during 2012/13 amounts to £6,225,785 which is 1.5% of the total Rateable Value in the Valuation Roll. The statutory date for disposal of 2010 Revaluation appeals is 31 December 2013.

	Appeals Received	Appeals Settled	Settled Appeals Rateable Value		Appeals Outstanding	
			Original RV	Settled RV	Appeals	RV
2010 Revaluation	6,017	5,015	£190,060,440	£179,979,940	1,002	£114,875,568
2010 Running Roll	2,914	1,589	£89,820,880	£89,319,890	1,325	£106,490,985
2011 Running Roll	3,014	1,255	£62,670,750	£62,360,625	1,759	£148,062,745
2012 Running Roll	401	45	£1,910,200	£1,824,900	356	£34,488,835

COUNCIL TAX VALUATION LIST

The Council Tax Valuation List contains all domestic properties and for each subject shows a Valuation Band which is used as a basis for calculating Council Tax charges.

Performance is measured in relation to the speed at which new properties are added to the Valuation List. The ability to achieve targets relies to some extent on the co-operation of house owners and occupiers in responding to our enquiries and allowing access to their properties. There has been a slight reduction in performance from the previous year, with 96.7% of properties being entered on the Valuation List within 6 months, compared with 97.5% in 2011/12. 40 properties were outwith the 6 month period compared with 34 in 2011/12.

The tables below detail the number of entries in the Valuation List and the performance achieved over the past 3 years.

The target set for 2012/13 was to deal with 98% of new houses within 6 months and 90% of those within 3 months. These have been retained as the target for 2013/14.

Year	Angus	Dundee	Perth & Kinross	Total
2010/11	56,176	76,544	72,191	204,911
2011/12	56,428	76,710	72,573	205,171
2012/13	56,634	76,356	72,930	205,920

Year	Number of New Entries	% of total new entries within the time period		
		With 3 months	Within 6 months	Over 6 months
2010/11	1,509	83%	94%	6%
2011/12	1,384	88%	97.5%	2.5%
2012/13	1,194	87.3%	96.7%	3.3%

ELECTORAL REGISTRATION

Registration of electors continued on a rolling basis throughout the year. The annual canvass of all electors was carried out from September to November 2012, prior to the publication of the Register of Electors on 1 December 2012. Where there have been no changes to the electors registered at a household, electors may choose to confirm the position by using a free telephone service, the internet or SMS text message. While the telephone service has been available for the past 4 years, the internet and text messaging facilities were introduced for the first time in 2011. Returns made by these three options represented approximately 20% of all returns made. Other records available to the Electoral Registration Officer were used to confirm and ascertain relevant information where returns were not made.

After this data matching household visits to follow up non-responses were made to 15,349 properties, a reduction of approximately 4,000 (20.5%) from the previous year.

The electorate as at 1 December 2012 for Angus and Perth & Kinross was 199,831 — an increase of 4,386 from 1 December 2011. 18,103 electors (9.06%) exercised their right not to have their names included in the edited version of the register, resulting in an Edited Register total of 181,728.

Performance standards for Electoral Registration have been set by the Electoral Commission. Our performance met or exceeded standards set in all categories. Full details of the performance of Electoral registration Officers in Great Britain during 2012 are available at the Commission's website <http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk>.

CONTACT DETAILS

The Assessor's service operates from three offices:-

Headquarters & City of Dundee Division
Whitehall House
35 Yeaman Shore
DUNDEE
DD1 4BU
Tel: 01382 221177

Angus Division
Ravenswood
New Road
FORFAR
DD8 2ZA
Tel: 01307 462416

Perth & Kinross Division
Robertson House
Whitefriars Crescent
PERTH
PH2 OLG
Tel: 01738 630303

If you require any further information on this performance report please contact:-

Alastair Kirkwood BSc, MRICS (Dip Rating), IRRV (Hons), AEA
Assessor for Tayside and Electoral Registration Officer, Angus and Perth & Kinross
Whitehall House, 35 Yeaman Shore, DUNDEE DD1 4BU

Tel: 01382 315601 E-mail: Alastair.Kirkwood@tayside-vjb.gov.uk Website: www.tayside-vjb.gov.uk

TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD



**Report on Issue of Customer Questionnaires
by
Tayside Valuation Joint Board
Year 2012-13**

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INTRODUCTION

1 GENERAL

This is the seventh 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 2012 – June 2013.

Total number of questionnaires issued	=	471
Total number of questionnaires returned	=	120

This gives an overall return of 25.5% which is very similar to the 26% which was experienced in 2011-12. By way of comparison, 134 questionnaires were issued last year, 35 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	63	36	15

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

If you have received a visit from a member of our staff:	Number of Responses 2012/13	
<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>68 13 <hr/>81</p> <p>66 1 <hr/>67</p> <p>6 6 <hr/>12</p>	<p>84% 16%</p> <p>98.5% 1.5%</p> <p>50% 50%</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>76 2 <hr/>78</p>	<p>97% 3%</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>78 - <hr/>78</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>76 1 <hr/>77</p>	<p>99% 1%</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 2012/13	
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-right: 20px;">Total:</div>	16 2 4 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 22	73% 9% 18%
5B Was this time acceptable to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <div style="text-align: right; margin-right: 20px;">Total:</div>	19 1 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 20	95% 5%

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 2012/13	
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 <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	16 - - - 1 - <hr/> 17	94% 6%
6B Was this time acceptable to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	16 1 <hr/> 17	94% 6%
6C When dealing with the office did we undertake to contact you within a specified period? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	15 5 <hr/> 20	75% 25%
6D Did the office do so? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always • Usually • Rarely • Never <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	11 1 - 1 <hr/> 13	84% 8% 8%
6E Do you feel a sufficient, clear and understandable explanation was given during your appeal discussions? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	13 1 <hr/> 14	93% 7%
6F Following your appeal/proposal, was it upheld? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	14 2 <hr/> 16	87.5% 12.5%

Overall impression:	Number of Responses 2012/13	
<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;">84 33 - 1</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">118</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">71% 28% - 1%</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;">79 35 - 1</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">115</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">69% 30% - 1%</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;">83 29 1 1</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">114</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">73% 25% 1% 1%</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;">1 1</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">50% 50%</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;">1 - - -</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">1</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;">86 27 - 1</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">114</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">75% 24% - 1%</p>

COMMENTS FROM CUSTOMER QUESTIONNAIRES

The following are some typical comments noted in the comments and suggestions box, including the few that expressed criticism or dissatisfaction.

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

- "X" provided an excellent service. Responded quickly and was polite and courteous.
- The Perth team were very helpful and professional. ...customer focussed approach.
- If certain questions (related to council tax billing) were asked by the Assessor it would save others getting involved and therefore time and money.
- Efficient, friendly and helpful!
- Help and assistance second to none – Well done!
- Helpful and understanding staff.
- It was a joy to deal with someone who knows their job and is committed to an excellent level of service.
- Very professional, informative and a tremendous help.
- Filling in surveys is a complete waste of time!
- Your staff are the best I have encountered in any project I have been involved in.
- Why did the Assessor need to measure the extension when it was as per approved plans?
- Efficient service.
- Appointments should always be made – no exceptions.
- Very satisfied with the response.
- Everyone I spoke to was very helpful.
- Very poor service.
- Only issue – it took three months to give us a council tax band.
- Very pleased with friendliness of staff and their helpfulness.

CONCLUSIONS

For 2012-13, although the number of questionnaires issued was increased substantially to 471 compared with 134 the previous year, the response rate of 25.5% continues to be at the level of the average response rate expected from surveys such as this.

On this occasion 63 of the forms returned are connected with council tax, 36 with non-domestic rates, 6 relate to electoral registration and 15 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 99% of customers stating that they were "very satisfied" (75%) or "satisfied" (24%) with the service. This is a very encouraging response. As can be seen from the analysis, a number of people did express dissatisfaction with our service in respect of valuers "cold calling" for property inspections. Although one person did make that point in the comments section it is clear from the forms that subsequent actions by our staff are viewed positively.

39 out of 120 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 in 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. One or two of the comments related to the actions of employees in other departments. A selection of typical 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 2012/13 was carried out on the same basis as in previous years and all staff were reminded to issue forms wherever possible. The result has been a significantly larger number of returns to analyse which has proved useful in providing a more meaningful basis for the conclusions and recommendations. 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 continued for 2013/14.

The possibility of extending the sample base by developing questionnaires suitable for sending to ratepayers agents remains to be considered.

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?
(If you wish to comment, please see Section 8)
- Yes
 - No
- 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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