

This report covers the twelve month period from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022, during which time the two divisional offices of TVJB generally remained closed to the public due to the global pandemic caused by Covid-19.

By adapting our working practices for remote working, TVJB has maintained service delivery for all three functions of Electoral Registration, Non-Domestic Rating and Council Tax.

What is a complaint?

TVJB regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf. Complaints are considered under TVJB's two stage Complaints Handling Procedure.

A complaint may include:

- failure or refusal to provide a service
- inadequate quality or standard of service, or an unreasonable delay in providing a service
- dissatisfaction with one of our policies or its impact on the individual
- failure to properly apply law, procedure or guidance when delivering services
- failure to follow the appropriate administrative process
- conduct, treatment by or attitude of a member of staff or contractor (except where there are arrangements in place for the contractor to handle the complaint themselves); or
- disagreement with a decision, (except where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision, or an established appeals process followed throughout the sector).

A complaint is not:

- a routine first-time request for a service
- a request for compensation only
- issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal (if you decide to take legal action, you should let us know as the complaint cannot then be considered under this process)
- disagreement with a decision where there is a statutory procedure for challenging that decision (such as for freedom of information and subject access requests), or an established appeals process followed throughout the sector
- a request for information under the Data Protection or Freedom of Information (Scotland) Acts
- a grievance by a staff member or a grievance relating to employment or staff recruitment
- a concern raised internally by a member of staff (which was not about a service they received, such as a whistleblowing concern)
- an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision
- abuse or unsubstantiated allegations about our organisation or staff where such actions would be covered by our Unacceptable Actions Guidelines ; or
- a concern about the actions or service of a different organisation, where we have no involvement in the issue (except where the other organisation is delivering services on our behalf)

Complaints Trends:

17 complaints were received during 2021/22 – 9 relating to our electoral function, 4 related to non-domestic rating, 2 related to council tax, 1 related to our telephone system and 1 related to the style of letters TVJB issue.

The attached Appendix, as required by the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman, details the number/percentage of complaints closed at each stage, the average time in working days to issue a full response and the complaint outcomes at each stage.

No complaints were referred to the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman during 2021/22.

Actions To Improve Service Delivery:

Complaint outcomes are reported to the TVJB Governance Working Group and the TVJB Policy & Strategy Management Team. Learning outcomes are discussed and actions are agreed to improve service delivery.

46.2% of Stage 1 complaints were upheld and a further 38.4% of Stage 1 complaints were resolved during 2021/22, with the following actions taken to improve service delivery:

- Reminder to staff on TVJB policy regarding acceptable response timeframes.
- Review of incoming mail processing and checking procedures.
- Review and revision of annual electoral canvass email communication.
- Review of tablet software used in door to door electoral canvass to offer additional options for advice/support in completion of application to register forms.
- Alteration to style of letters to avoid assumption of gender identity, where possible.

APPENDIX: SPSO Key Performance Indicators

Indicator One: Complaints received	
Total number of complaints received in the period at Stage 1 (including escalated complaints)	15
Total number of complaints received in the period at Stage 2	2
Total number of complaints received in the period	17
Indicator Two: Number of Complaints At Each Stage Closed In Full Within Set Timescales of 5 and 20 Working Days	
Total number of complaints closed in the period	16
Number of complaints closed at Stage 1 within 5 working days	13
Number of complaints closed at Stage 2 within 20 working days	2
Number of complaints closed after escalation within 20 day working days	1
Indicator Two: Percentage of Complaints At Each Stage Closed In Full Within Set Timescales of 5 and 20 Working Days	
Percentage of complaints closed at Stage 1 within 5 working days	92.9%
Percentage of complaints closed at Stage 2 within 20 working days	100%
Percentage of escalated complaints closed within 20 working days	50%
Indicator Three: Average Time in Working Days for A Full Response To Complaints	
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at Stage 1	1.77 days
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at Stage 2	4 days
Average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation	22.5 days

Indicator Four: Complaints Outcomes (upheld, partially upheld, not upheld or resolved) at Stage 1 as a percentage of all complaints	
Number of complaints upheld at Stage 1	46.2%
Number of complaints partially upheld at Stage 1	0%
Number of complaints not upheld at Stage 1	15.4%
Number of complaints resolved at Stage 1	38.4%
Indicator Four: Complaints Outcomes (upheld, partially upheld, not upheld or resolved) at Stage 2 as a percentage of all complaints	
Number of complaints upheld at Stage 2	n/a
Number of complaints partially upheld at Stage 2	n/a
Number of complaints not upheld at Stage 2	100%
Number of complaints resolved at Stage 2	n/a
Indicator Four: Complaints Outcomes (upheld, partially upheld, not upheld or resolved) after escalation as a percentage of all complaints	
Number of complaints upheld after escalation	n/a
Number of complaints partially upheld after escalation	n/a
Number of complaints not upheld after escalation	100%
Number of complaints resolved after escalation	n/a