

REPORT TO: TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD – 28 AUGUST 2023

REPORT ON: BEST VALUE – PUBLIC PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022/23

REPORT BY: ASSESSOR

REPORT NO: TVJB 16-2023

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to appraise the Joint Board of the performance levels achieved by the Assessor and his staff during financial year 2022/23, and to present the Board's Annual Public Performance Report.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Joint Board is asked to:-

- approve the Joint Board's Annual Public Performance Report for the year 2022/23 (Appendix 1),
- note the information submitted by the Assessor to the Scottish Government in respect of the Key Performance Indicators concerning the Valuation Roll and Council Tax Valuation List (Appendix 2), and
- note the position concerning the Customer Satisfaction Survey (Appendix 3).

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 The Joint Board is subject to the terms of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 which relates to Best Value and Accountability and includes, amongst other things, the requirement to report to the public on its performance in conducting its functions. The Joint Board's Annual Performance Report 2022/23 is attached as Appendix 1.

5.2 In relation to the Joint Board's functions in respect of the Valuation Roll and Council Tax Valuation List, the Annual Performance Report draws upon information which is submitted annually to the Scottish Government by the Assessor with respect to Key Performance Indicators. These Key Performance Indicators relate 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. The information submitted to the Scottish Government for the year 2022/23 is attached as Appendix 2.

- 5.3 In addition to the above, the Assessor undertakes an analysis of the levels of Customer Satisfaction via a Customer Satisfaction Survey each year. The result of the analysis carried out during 2022/23 is attached as Appendix 3.
- 5.4 These Reports will be made available to and discussed with staff. They will also be published on the Board's website. 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.

ROY CHRISTIE
Assessor

August 2023



Tayside Valuation Joint Board PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022/23

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.

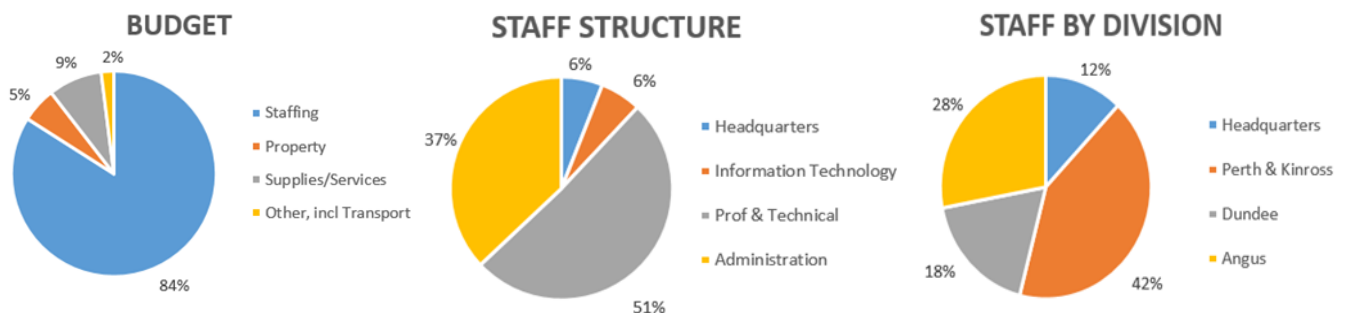
I would take this opportunity to record my grateful thanks to all staff for their contributions to the satisfactory levels of performance achieved throughout another particularly busy year.

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 2022/23 the approved net revenue budget was £2.79m. The Board's unaudited final accounts indicate that spending was very slightly over budget.

The number of full time equivalent staff employed during 2022/23 was 64.7, against a budgeted structure of 70. 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 2022/23 are detailed below.

Year	Number of Amendments	% of amendments within time periods			Local Authority Area	Total No of Subjects		Rateable Value	
		Within 3 months	Within 6 months	More than 6 months		31/03/22	31/03/23	31/03/22	31/03/23
2020/21	1,216	62.90%	83.60%	16.40%	Angus	5,676	5,684	£79,143,745	£78,931,950
2021/22	1,392	77.10%	87.90%	12.10%	Dundee City	6,218	6,302	£188,713,780	£189,370,120
					Perth & Kinross	10,244	10,154	£160,744,004	£160,953,374
2022/23	1,342	63.10%	74.20%	25.80%	Total	22,138	22,140	£428,601,529	£429,255,444

Performance in relation to Valuation Roll maintenance decreased from the levels achieved in the previous year. The target was to process 72.5% of alterations within 3 months and 88% within 6 months. Performance was below these targets. The targets set for 2023-24 are unchanged at 72.5% <3 months, 88% <6 months & 12% > 6 months.

VALUATION APPEALS

During the course of the year staff have been dealing with both Revaluation appeals and Running Roll appeals. A summary of appeal progress as at 31 March 2023 is shown below. Years 2019/20 and 2020/21 include a substantial number of additional appeals that relate to the Covid-19 pandemic. Legislation has been passed to prevent matters relating to Covid-19 that arose on or after 2 April 2020 being reflected in the Valuation Roll. It remains to be seen how fully effective these measures will be.

	Appeals Received	Appeals Settled	Settled Appeals Rateable Value		Appeals Outstanding	
			Original RV	Settled RV	Appeals	RV
2010 Revaluation	6,017	6,012	£330,436,768	£308,406,575	5	£113,900
2010/11 Running Roll	2,920	2,919	£229,545,190	£226,486,900	1	£103,000
2011/12 Running Roll	3,016	3,016	£235,968,895	£234,404,870	0	£0
2012/13 Running Roll	470	470	£59,231,235	£55,930,085	0	£0
2013/14 Running Roll	238	235	£33,473,325	£31,271,145	3	£128,500
2014/15 Running Roll	314	312	£32,467,300	£29,866,060	2	£59,300
2015/16 Running Roll	154	153	£12,261,400	£11,337,320	1	£71,400
2016/17 Running Roll	161	160	£17,366,625	£15,979,330	1	£38,400
2017 Revaluation	6,255	6,187	£326,503,601	£305,424,425	68	£5,068,075
2017/18 Running Roll	610	607	£34,109,065	£30,558,845	3	£30,875
2018/19 Running Roll	246	244	£30,878,830	£28,287,975	2	£40,850
2019/20 Running Roll	2,852	2,237	£175,455,215	£173,930,865	615	£52,982,015
2020/21 Running Roll	2,723	2,435	£172,596,709	£172,077,859	288	£24,075,470
2021/22 Running Roll	161	120	£15,357,365	£14,370,415	41	£2,559,390
2022/23 Running Roll	83	23	£4,298,625	£4,198,175	60	£9,453,875

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. The number of Council Tax entries in each Council area are detailed below.

Performance in relation to Council Tax 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. Performance in relation to Valuation List maintenance decreased from the levels achieved in the previous year. The target was to process 93.0% of new entries within 3 months and 98% within 6 months. Performance achieved was marginally below target. The targets set for 2022-23 are changed to 75% <3 months, 80% <6 months & 20% > 6 months.

Year	Angus	Dundee	Perth & Kinross	Total
2020/21	59,419	77,164	77,018	213,601
2021/22	59,847	77,591	77,723	215,161
2022/23	60,107	78,002	78,637	216,746

Year	Number of New Entries	% of total new entries within the time period		
		Within 3 months	Within 6 months	Over 6 months
2020/21	1,482	88.1%	97.4%	2.6%
2021/22	1,976	92.5%	97.8%	2.2%
2022/23	1,892	91.9%	97.4%	2.6%

ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA 2022/23

Scottish Local Government Elections took place as scheduled on 5 May 2022. A national media campaign was initiated jointly by Electoral Registration Officers across Scotland in order to provide as much information and guidance as possible for the electorate prior to the elections. In February 2022 a Household Notification Letter (HNL) detailing the electors registered at each address was issued to each home across Angus and Perth & Kinross. This letter identified the deadlines for new applications to register to vote and for postal and proxy votes and invited applications at an early date. The number of postal voters in Angus and Perth & Kinross rose from 57,632 on 1 March to 59,945 on 5 May 2022, an increase of 2,313. Staff covered both offices throughout polling day and all appropriate procedures were delivered as agreed with the relevant Returning Officers.

2022 Canvass

The annual canvass of electors commenced in June 2022. Under current procedures the electorate in both Angus and Perth & Kinross were data matched against the UK Government's Digital Service records. If an entire household matched, a Route 1 notification letter was issued to that household to confirm the named electors registered at that address. Households receiving a Route 1 notification letter did not need to respond to the letter unless they had a change to report. This accounted for 79% of households in Angus and Perth & Kinross and significantly reduced the number of reminder forms and door to door visits that would have been required under the previous procedures. Of the properties which received a Route 1 notification letter some 23,641 households responded advising of changes which resulted in either a review of the elector being carried out for removal, or a new registration form being issued to any new potential electors.

Route 2 Canvass Forms (similar to the Household Enquiry Form) were issued to the remaining 28,560 households. These households were required to respond confirming that the elector details held were correct or to report any changes. Where no reply was received a Route 2 Canvass Reminder Form was issued. Where contact details were available attempts were made to contact non-responders by telephone or by email.

Door to door canvassers were engaged to visit any households that did not respond to a Route 2 Canvass Form or to contacts made by telephone and/or email. All canvassers continued to use a tablet instead of taking paper forms. The benefits from using the tablets were the mapping system, which automatically pinpoints the homes to be visited, a reduction in the weight of items to be carried and real time updates to reflect any changes to the list of outstanding properties to be visited.

An individual Invitation to Register form (ITR) was issued to all new electors identified unless the elector had already submitted an online application. Additional efforts were made to encourage the use of text, email or internet service.

CONTACT DETAILS

The Assessor's service operates from two offices:-

Headquarters & East Division
William Wallace House
Orchard Loan
Orchardbank Business Park
FORFAR
DD8 1WH
Tel: 01307 499910

West Division
Robertson House
Whitefriars Crescent
PERTH
PH2 0LG
Tel: 01738 630303

If you require any further information on this performance report please contact:- Roy Christie DipSurv, MRICS, AEA (Cert-Scotland) Assessor for Tayside and Electoral Registration Officer, Angus and Perth & Kinross, William Wallace House, Orchard Loan, Orchardbank Business Park, FORFAR DD8 1WH

TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Key Performance Indicators

VALUATION ROLL		
Total No of Entries at 1 April 2022	22,138	
Total RV at 1 April 2022	£429m	
No of Amendments to Roll (2022/23)	1342	
Total No of Entries at 31 March 2023	22,140	
Total RV at 31 March 2023	£429m	
Amendments within time periods expressed as a % of the total number of amendments for the year		
2020/21	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	62.9%	60.0%
3-6 months	83.6%	90.0%
Over 6 months	16.4%	10.0%
2021/22	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	77.1%	72.5%
3-6 months	87.9%	88%
Over 6 months	12.1%	12%
2022/23	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	63.1%	72.5%
3-6 months	74.2%	88%
Over 6 months	25.8%	12%

TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD

Key Performance Indicators

COUNCIL TAX		
Total No of Entries at 1 April 2022	215,161	
Adjustment to Band "D" Equivalent at 1 April 2022	209,812	
New Entries added during year (2022/23)	1,892	
Total No of Entries at 31 March 2023	216,746	
Adjustment to Band "D" Equivalent at 31 March 2023	211,760	
New Entries within time periods expressed as a % of the total number of new entries for the whole year		
2020/21	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	88.1%	93%
3-6 months	97.4%	98%
Over 6 months	2.6%	2%
2021/22	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	92.5%	93%
3-6 months	97.8%	98%
Over 6 months	2.2%	2%
2022/23	Actual	Estimated
0-3 months	91.9%	93%
3-6 months	97.4%	98%
Over 6 months	2.6%	2%

GENERAL	
Figure showing costs of all permanent staff including Salaries, NI contributions, Superannuation and Overtime payments	
As at 31 March 2021	£2.91m
As at 31 March 2022	£2.95m
As at 31 March 2023	£3.07m
Number of full time equivalent Staff employed	
As at 31 March 2021	66.5
As at 31 March 2022	66.5
As at 31 March 2023	64.7

TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD



**Report on Issue of Customer Questionnaires
By**

**Tayside Valuation Joint Board
Year 2022-2023**

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Introduction

1 GENERAL

This is the seventeenth twelve-month period during which users of our services have been asked to provide feedback on the service they received. The decision to issue customer satisfaction questionnaires annually flows from the Joint Board's commitment to Best Value and creating a customer focus.

Customer questionnaires are usually issued to a random sample of customers on a regular basis over a period of one year i.e. July 2022 – June 2023. Questionnaires are targeted towards:

- 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.

The period has seen the service emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic with some amended work practices in place which have reduced the amount of face to face contact with the public.

Total number of questionnaires issued	=	496
Total number of questionnaires returned	=	73

This gives an overall return of 14.7%, a broadly similar rate to the 12.79% returned last year, and still down on the level of return pre-pandemic.

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
20	30	8	15

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

Results of Questionnaires Returned

NB: All figures rounded to nearest whole%. Accordingly some totals may not add to 100%

If you have phoned the office	Number of Responses 2022-23	
2A Did you get through to a person who could deal with your query? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	53 4	93% 7%
Total:	57	
2B Were you aware of the name of the person who spoke to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	36 14	72% 28%
If No , would knowing the name have been helpful to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	12 2	86% 14%
Total:	14	
	50	
If you your contact with the office was by letter or email	Number of Responses 2022-23	
3A Was it acknowledged in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 – 5 Days • 6 – 10 Days • Longer than 10 Days 	24 10 4	63% 26% 11%
Total:	38	
3B Was this time acceptable to you <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No 	33 1	97% 3%

Comment: Whilst delay beyond 10 days is not, generally, an acceptable practice, in some cases, staff may respond to a written enquiry by telephone that may delay a formal written acknowledgement. A mail logging system remains in operation to allow monitoring of response times.

If you have visited the office	Number of Responses 2022-23	
4A 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>	1 2 0 0	33% 67%
4B Was there ease of access to the building? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	1 0	100%
4C 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>	1 0	100%

If you have received a visit from a member of our staff	Number of Responses 2022-23	
<p>5A 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 been preferred?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • No answer given <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>6</p> <p>9</p> <hr/> <p>15</p> <hr/> <p>6</p> <hr/> <p>4</p> <p>1</p> <p>4</p> <hr/> <p>9</p>	<p>40%</p> <p>60%</p> <hr/> <p>100%</p> <hr/> <p>44%</p> <p>12%</p> <p>44%</p>
<p>5B 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>9</p> <p>1</p> <hr/> <p>10</p>	<p>90%</p> <p>10%</p>
<p>5C Did we properly identify ourselves?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p>9</p> <p>1</p> <hr/> <p>10</p>	<p>90%</p> <p>10%</p>
<p>5D 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>10</p> <p>1</p> <hr/> <p>11</p>	<p>91%</p> <p>9%</p>

Appeal/Proposal	Number of Responses 2022-23	
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>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">60%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">20%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">20%</p>
6B Was this time acceptable to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">60%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">40%</p>
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>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">60%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">40%</p>
6D Did the office do so? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always • Usually • Rarely • Never <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">100%</p>
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>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">80%</p> <p style="text-align: center;">20%</p>
6F Was the appeal/proposal successful? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">100%</p>

Overall Impression		Number of Responses 2022-23	
7A How would you assess the helpfulness and friendliness of the people you dealt with? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent • Good • Fair • Poor <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	50	72%	
	17	24%	
	2	3%	
	1	1%	
	70		
7B How would you assess the competence and efficiency of the people you dealt with? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent • Good • Fair • Poor <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	53	76%	
	14	20%	
	1	1%	
	2	3%	
	70		
7C How satisfied were you with the time taken to deal with your enquiry? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Satisfied • Satisfied • Dissatisfied • Very Dissatisfied <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	42	59%	
	23	32%	
	4	6%	
	2	3%	
	71		
7D If you were unhappy about the service you received, did you complain? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	1	5%	
	18	95%	
	19		
7E If you complained how satisfied were you with the way we dealt with your complaint? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Satisfied • Satisfied • Dissatisfied • Very Dissatisfied <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>			
	n/a		
7F Overall, how satisfied were you with the service you received from us? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Satisfied • Satisfied • Dissatisfied • Very Dissatisfied <p style="text-align: right;">Total:</p>	44	70%	
	16	25%	
	2	3%	
	1	2%	
	63		

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

- *I have found all of my dealings with PKC to be very satisfactory both with local taxes team and the Valuation Board. Staff have been very courteous, helpful and informative. Thank you.*
- *Super quick and helpful response. Thank you.*
- *I had been appealing over many years to have my Council Band lowered. It was only when I was able to speak to someone that there was progress. Prior to this it was by letter email.*
- *Thank you in clarifying doubts on Council Tax.*
- *The people were very friendly and helpful on the end of the phones.*
- *Business-like, professional, helpful. Overall excellent.*
- *I was very impressed with the care and attention given to my query when I first made contact. The Assessor who visited my property was very helpful and knowledgeable. He also took the time to signpost me to another council department to assist with another query I had. A very good service, thank you.*
- *Having moved into a new build I had to get council tax sorted. Found the lady I spoke to very helpful.*
- *Extremely helpful and informative. I couldn't have asked for a better service. Thank you very much.*
- *Have always found service at Electoral Registration – and also Council Tax – to be excellent. Calls answered and allocated to the correct department quickly and staff involved always courteous and helpful. Even on the phone it is 'service with a smile'.*
- *I received a follow up email which was unexpected with guidance, advice and information. This was very helpful and I was impressed and delighted with the level of support and friendliness and helpfulness of the person I spoke to, who was XXXX. Terrific in all aspects. Give XXXX a raise in salary, he is a great example of superior customer service. Best in class.*
- *I phoned the Electoral Registration twice and both times spoke to courteous, friendly and professional people who took time to help and were a pleasure to speak to.*
- *Very friendly and efficient and very nice not to get transferred to a computer! Prefer to speak to human being. Thank you for your service.*
- *Thank you, all my queries and requests were dealt with efficiently and the service provided was excellent. How refreshing it was to speak to an advisor very quickly without a long wait on the phone and for the name of the valuer*

for my region to be named and who phoned me back to discuss my requests. Excellent service by XXX. Much appreciated.

- I would suggest you update your automatic email response. It assumes we are still living under Covid restrictions. Also this survey could have been done online for some.*
- Having previously dealt with another council I was delighted and surprised at how quickly I got through to someone and with their helpful attitude. Everything that was promised was done promptly. Couldn't have been better.*
- I only contacted your office to change my address on my postal vote which was done but I had to fill out the form twice. Your office phoned / lettered me saying they never received first one.*
- The Electoral office has always been very helpful. My husband and I were service voters, which always creates extra issues. Staff have always been prompt, helpful and knowledgeable, following up with emails or calls.*
- XXXX handled my query and was very polite, efficient and helpful. I could not have asked for a better service. Thank you and well done.*
- XXX was very knowledgeable and gave appropriate advice. Also made sure to follow up to reassure all had gone through which was appreciated. Put "satisfied" at 7C because first time I called I was left on hold 45 mins and had to call back as had been forgotten / system didn't work. Other than that it's been great.*
- We used the service via online application. No problems encountered, all good.*
- Got passed to 3 different people before my query was answered. The communication with homeowners of new build properties needs to be better.*
- Excellent service – keep it up.*
- Takes far too long – and why are you wasting money on paper and postage when most people want to be contacted by email. I am still awaiting further information as to what my council tax is and what rebate I will get now that my band has changed.*
- The overall process took more effort than it should or could have. The inability to make a known change forward made a lot of extra work and delay in moving things on. This was then further amplified by the way the change was signalled to other relevant parties causing yet further effort and hassle. The delay between action by the VJB to the change appearing on the SAA website cost us bin collection and hassle with ending the commercial water supply.*
- I telephoned and emailed several times to register for Council Tax having moved from another area, the staff and the local office were always polite and responsive to enquiries but ultimately the response required was via valuations teams which took approx. 5 months. Sorted now though.*
- I was trying to pay rates but couldn't because I couldn't get this reference number. I and you could have saved a lot of time if that information was included in the correspondence.*
- The way Council Tax bands are assessed dearly needs reformed. To assess the bands based on house values 32 years ago is archaic and flawed. The cynic in me would conclude that the system remains this way as it is confusing and inaccessible to the layman. In addition the back-dating*

of council tax band increase by almost a year without warning and no flexibility is financially crippling.

- *We bought a new build and I thought the problem was 'user error' i.e. me. The ladies I dealt with were both friendly and happy to help. Got registered for bins, council tax and votes. Thank you for being so helpful and welcoming. Once in touch with Angus everything went smoothly and quickly. Thank you.*
- *The lady was very helpful with my query.*
- *Extremely friendly response on the phone. The process of valuation was explained clearly. Only drawback was being I was told it was on the list for next week and it was almost two months until I heard my banding. It didn't matter though.*
- *Applied for Council Tax after purchasing a new house after submitting details online & receiving an acknowledgement I heard nothing. Due to a friend working for the council I was updated (that the fact it was a new build was delay).*

Conclusions

For 2022-23 the total number of questionnaires issued and returned is higher but the return rate has remained consistent with last year (and again significantly lower than the norm prior to the pandemic). The response rate of 14.7% is marginally above the 12.7% of last year but significantly lower than the pre-pandemic norm of just over 20%.

The statement made last year bears repeating – that it may well be the case that as service provision has adapted to the pandemic and accelerated changes in working practices, that the more remote nature of the work carried out has left customers less likely to respond to follow up enquiries.

On this occasion 30 of the forms returned are connected with Council Tax, 8 with Non-Domestic Rates, 20 relate to Electoral Registration and 15 cover more than one category. The relatively low return for non-domestic rating may reflect the fact that the bulk of work in this field last year was geared towards the 2023 revaluation which, by its nature reduces interaction with the public.

The responses at Section 7F once again demonstrate a very high level of satisfaction with our service with 95% of responses being either “Very Satisfied” or “Satisfied”. This is consistent with the returns of last year and maintains the long term high levels of customer satisfaction. Ongoing changes in work patterns and ongoing changes in delivery arising from changes to legislation have not had an observable negative effect on the quality of service delivery.

The majority of the comments recorded above are positive and reflect well on staff and the service they provide. 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.

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 7 recorded complaints. All were all dealt with to a satisfactory conclusion.

Recommendations

Staff should continue to be made aware of the existence and regular update of the report and encouraged to read it, and to discuss with their managers the lessons to be learned from 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 2022-23 was carried out on the same basis as in years prior to the pandemic. Although the outcome remains relatively constant compared with previous years, staff will be reminded of the value of the feedback obtained from the survey.

The customer questionnaire is 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. Based on the returns there is no reason to believe that our service provision is disadvantageous to any group identified as having protected characteristics.

Management should continue to stress to staff the importance of customer service, and in light of altered working practices, of their individual roles in continuing to provide the best possible quality of service delivery.

The management team have considered the form and medium by which returns are made to inform this report and it is felt that the current method of issuing forms by mail does not maximise the rate of return. Whilst there is no doubt that the high levels of satisfaction recorded in this report reflect a good quality service, it may be that the effort people must go to in order to make the return may mean that it tends toward members of the public who are relatively highly motivated by either very good or, conversely, very poor service being more likely to return. Accordingly the intention is to move to a primarily on-line return going forward in an effort to maximise return rates.

Similarly the length of the current form is also thought to be a reason for low return and it is the intention for 2023-2024 to shorten the questionnaire to focus on broader themes and modes of service delivery. If there are shortcomings in any of these modes of delivery this can be further investigated going forward.

Equalities Monitoring

As noted above, the customer questionnaire has been 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 66 of those returned. The responses indicated that those returning the forms were 98% white (ethnic group).

The gender divide was 40:25 (62%:38%) female/male with one return not specified.

The age group distribution is as follows:

Age Range	Returns	%
25-34	4	6%
35-44	4	6%
45-54	7	11%
55-64	16	24%
65-74	24	36%
75+	11	17%

Seven responses stated that they consider themselves to have a disability.

This is the seventh year of gathering equalities information in respect of our customers. To date no specific issues relating to protected characteristics have been identified.



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:
 East Division (Angus / Dundee)
 West Division (Perth & Kinross)

Section 2 – If you have phoned the Office

(If you did not telephone 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 your contact with the Office was by letter or e-mail

(If you have not made contact by letter or e-mail, please go to Section 4)

3A Was it acknowledged in:
 ➤ 1 – 5 days
 ➤ 6 – 10 days
 ➤ Longer than 10 days

3B Was this time acceptable to you?
 ➤ Yes
 ➤ No

Section 4 – If you have visited the Office

(If you have not visited the office, please go to Section 5)

4A How convenient did you find the opening hours?
 ➤ Very convenient
 ➤ Fairly convenient
 ➤ Not very convenient
 ➤ Not at all convenient

- 4B Was there ease of access to the building?
- Yes
 - No
(If No, please comment in Section 9)
- 4C Was there sufficient provision of facilities and information about our services available?
- Yes
 - No
(If No, please comment in Section 9)

Section 5 – If you have received a visit from a member of our staff
(If you have not received a visit, please go to Section 6)

- 5A 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
- 5B Was the time of our visit convenient to you?
- Yes
 - No
- 5C Did we properly identify ourselves?
- Yes
 - No
- 5D Was the purpose of the visit clearly explained?
- 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?

Chose 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