



*Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute
Valuation Joint Board*

Customer Complaints Monitoring Report

Annual Report 2018/19

This report covers the twelve month period from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019. Appendix 1 contains the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman's Performance Indicators.

What is a Complaint?

Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board's definition of a complaint is:

'An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the Joint Board's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the Joint Board.'

A complaint may relate to:

- Failure to provide a service
- Failure to achieve standards or quality of service promised by the Joint Board
- Dissatisfaction with Joint Board policies or the way they are being applied or administered
- Disagreement with a decision where the customer cannot use another procedure (for example an appeal) to resolve the matter
- The Joint Board's failure to follow the appropriate administrative process.
- Failure, negligence or delays in responding to customers' inquiries or requests
- Unhelpful or insensitive treatment by, or attitude of, a member of staff
- Malice, bias or unfair discrimination
- Inadequate or incomplete provision of information and/or advice
- Failure to take account of relevant matters in coming to a decision

This list does not cover everything.

A complaint is **not**:

- A routine first-time request for a service
- A request for compensation only
- An issue that is in court or has already been heard by a court or a tribunal
- A disagreement with a decision where a statutory right of appeal exists, for example in relation to council tax or non-domestic rating appeals or Electoral Registration objections
- An attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision.

Complaints Received During 2018/19

There were a total of 18 Complaints received during 2018/19. A slight increase on 15 last year, seventeen complaints related to our Electoral Registration function, and one related to the Assessor's actions and handling of personal data.

Resolution of Complaints

Most complaints were resolved at the frontline resolution stage. With the majority resolved either on the day of receipt or the day after. Six complaints were escalated to the investigation stage after frontline resolution had been attempted and one complaint was escalated directly to the investigation stage.

Referral to the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman

No complaints were referred to the Ombudsman.

Conclusion

The number of complaints was broadly in line with recent years. The outcome of complaints are, discussed at our management team meetings and where improvements to processes or procedures are identified these are enacted. We view this learning from complaints as a valuable resource.

R Nicol

11th June 2019

Appendix 1

SPSO Performance Indicators

Indicator 1: Complaints Received per 1000 of population.

0.053

Indicator 2: Closed complaints.

The number of complaints closed at stage one as a percentage of all complaints: 55%

The number of complaints closed at stage two as a percentage of all complaints: 6%

The number of complaints closed at stage 2 after escalation as a percentage of all complaints: 39%

Indicator 3: Complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld.

The number of complaints upheld at stage one as % of all complaints closed at stage one: 10%

The number of complaints not upheld at stage one as a percentage of all complaints closed at stage one: 90%

The number of complaints partially upheld at stage one as a percentage of all complaints closed at stage one: 0%

The number of complaints upheld at stage two as % of all complaints closed at stage two: 0%

The number of complaints not upheld at stage two as a percentage of all complaints closed at stage two: 0%

The number of complaints partially upheld at stage two as a percentage of all complaints closed at stage two: 100%

The number of escalated complaints upheld at stage two as % of all escalated complaints closed at stage two: 14%

The number of escalated complaints not upheld at stage two as a percentage of all escalated complaints closed at stage two: 86%

The number of escalated complaints partially upheld at stage two as a percentage of all escalated complaints closed at stage two: 0%

Indicator 4: Average time in working days for a full response to complaints at each stage.

Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage one: 1 day

Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage two: 3 days

Average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation: 60 days

Indicator 5: Percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of 5 and 20 working days.

The number of complaints closed at stage one within 5 working days as % of total number of stage one complaints: 100%

The number of complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days as % of total number of stage one complaints: 100%

The number of escalated complaints within 20 working days as % of total number of stage one complaints: 0%

Indicator 6: Number of cases where an extension was authorised.

The number of complaints closed at stage one where extension was authorised, as % all complaints at stage one: 0%

The number of complaints closed at stage two where extension was authorised, as % all complaints at stage two: 100%

Indicator 7: Customer satisfaction

The statutory functions undertaken by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer are covered by a number of different appeal mechanisms, such as Non Domestic Valuation and Council Tax Appeals and some aspects of Electoral Registration. Representations under these are quite rightly not recorded as complaints. The resolution of these appeals can be confrontational or adversarial, despite this our staff have scored consistently highly for their professionalism and knowledge in our Customer Satisfaction Survey. The relatively low number of customer complaints does not lend itself to an analysis solely of these.

Indicator 8: Learning from Complaints

Reports of the number and type of complaints received are submitted to the management team at each meeting, normally held every 4 to 6 weeks with any trends being identified. Where the underlying cause of the complaint is not within the Assessor or EROs power to resolve, for example the wording on forms produced by the Electoral Commission that the ERO is required to use, then this is fed back to the relevant organisation.