

Customer Complaints Monitoring Report

Annual Report 2013/14

This report covers the twelve month period from 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014. 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 2013/14

There were a total of 21 Complaints received during 2013/14 all bar 1 of these related to Electoral Registration. The key theme which arose from the Electoral Registration complaints was dissatisfaction with the wording on envelopes sent out with the annual canvas forms however this has to be put in the context, where over 190,000 forms were issued to householders. It is a tiny proportion of the issued forms, in addition to this with the introduction of Individual Registration the next major write out will be required to use envelopes with a prescribed set of wording, therefore learning from these complaints will be impossible to implement.

There was one complaint about the conduct of a member of staff.

Resolution of Complaints

All complaints were resolved at the frontline resolution stage. Most complaints (14) were resolved on either the day of receipt or the day after and all complaints were resolved within 20 working days.

Referral to the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman

There were no referrals to the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the management team note the contents of this report.

R Nicol

8th May 2014

Appendix 1

SPSO Performance Indicators

Indicator 1: Complaints Received per 1000 of population.

0.074

Indicator 2: Closed complaints.

The number of complaints closed at stage one: 100%

There were no stage two or stage three complaints.

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: 14%

The number of complaints not upheld at stage one as a percentage of all complaints closed at stage one: 71%

The number of complaints partially upheld at stage one as a percentage of all complaints closed at stage one: 14%

There were no stage two or stage three complaints.

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: 3.6 days

There were no stage two or stage three complaints.

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: 76%

There were no stage two complaints

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: 24%

There were no stage 2 complaints

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. Our recording mechanism is being further refined to improve our learning outcomes and attempt to reduce the number of complaints where an extension in time is required. The key theme arising out of the complaints received during 2013/14 was regarding the wording on an envelope which is issued during the Electoral Canvass, from 19th September 2014 the wording on the envelope for this type of correspondence is prescribed and cannot be changed.