

Report to:	Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board
Date of Meeting:	4 September 2017
Report by:	Assistant Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer

Subject:	Monitoring of Complaints - 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

Provide statistics and information on all complaints received by the Joint Board for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Board is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

(1) that the content of the report be noted.

3. Background

3.1. Following the introduction of Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board's (LVJB) revised Complaints Handling Procedure in March 2013, a record of complaints is now reported to the quarterly Board meetings. Additionally, members also receive a report covering information on complaints received by the Board on an annual basis.

4. Current Position

4.1. The definition of a complaint adopted is 'any expression of dissatisfaction about LVJB's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by LVJB or on LVJB's behalf.' This does not, however, extend to complaints about the rateable value or banding of a property or to the refusal to register an elector or grant a postal vote since, in all of these areas, there are rights of appeal to independent judicial bodies. The data being collected on complaints received by the Joint Board is being categorised by:-

- ◆ 'Upheld' (the complaint was upheld and action may be required as a result), 'partially upheld' (the complaint was only partly upheld and some action may be required as a result) and 'not upheld' (no further action required)
- ◆ The reason for the complaint, whether upheld or not
- ◆ Action taken as a result of upheld complaints
- ◆ Changes made or proposed to service delivery as a result of complaints received
- ◆ Equal opportunities monitoring of complaints

- 4.2. Other information gathered includes response times in line with adopted standards for dealing with complaints, together with information on the area of the Board's services where the complaint was received.

5. 2016/2017 Position

- 5.1. A report, dated 14 November 2012, by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer on the introduction of a revised Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) for Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board (LVJB), was approved by the Joint Board at its meeting on 3 December 2012.

Public authorities in Scotland were required to introduce a revised CHP, in line with guidance issued by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), by 1 April 2013.

In line with the guidance issued, LVJB introduced a revised CHP, which was submitted to and approved by the SPSO, with effect from 1 April 2013.

- 5.2. The principal changes to the complaints procedure related to the introduction of:-
- a 2 stage procedure
 - designated complaints handling employees
 - quarterly reporting and publishing of all complaints received
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The revised scheme consisted of the following documents:-

- a customer guide
- an employee guide
- a procedure document

- 5.3. The revised CHP had been submitted to and approved by the SPSO.

6 Summary

- 6.1. During 2016/2017, a total of 13 complaints were received in the period covered by this report. Four related to council tax, one related to non-domestic rating and 8 to electoral registration. Two were classified as upheld, 10 as not upheld and one was partially upheld.

- 6.2. This is in comparison to 2015/2016 where a total of 13 complaints were received. Of those, three related to council tax, one related to non-domestic Rating and 9 to electoral registration. One was classified as upheld, 9 as not upheld and 3 were partially upheld.

- 6.3. The breakdown of upheld and not upheld complaints by service area is as follows:

Service	Total No	Upheld	Not Upheld	Partially Upheld
Council Tax	4	0	3	1
Non-Domestic	1	0	1	0
Electoral Registration	8	2	6	0
Total	13	2	10	1

- 6.4. There were no complaints relating to equal opportunities received during the period being reported on.

7. Complaints to the Ombudsman

- 7.1. One complaint proceeded to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), the same as in 2015/2016. The Ombudsman, whilst noting a shortcoming on communication, advised the complainant that LVJB was still entitled to apply a charge according to the rules (the complainant was seeking for the council tax band increase to be applied from a later date than the date used by LVJB staff)

8. Employee Implications

- 8.1. For complaints where a member of staff has not followed office procedures, further training and emphasis on good customer care and good working practice is provided. Line managers are also reminded of their responsibility for proper staff and work supervision.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1. None.

10. Other Implications

- 10.1. There are no implications for risk or sustainability in terms of the information contained in this report.

11. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 11.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

12. Privacy Impact Assessment

- 12.1. Appropriate security measures have been put in place to protect any personal information disclosed by complainants as part of their complaint.

David Combe

Assistant Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer

17 August 2017

Previous References

Report on Revised Complaints Handling Procedure approved 3 December 2012.

List of Background Papers

LVJB Complaints Procedure

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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