



## **LANARKSHIRE VALUATION JOINT BOARD**

### **CUSTOMER CARE POLICY**

May 2025

## **1.0 Introduction**

LVJB works to serve the people of North and South Lanarkshire, those who live in the area and have businesses in the area. LVJB's Customer Care Policy reinforces its commitment to delivering its core services whilst maintaining excellent customer care for the people who use our service.

## **2.0 Our Core Purpose**

To prepare, maintain and update an accurate Valuation Roll, Valuation List (Council Tax) and Electoral Register having regard to statutory requirements.

## **3.0 Our Vision**

Our vision is to deliver quality efficient services to all service users, ensuring completeness and accuracy in the work which we undertake.

In order that we fulfill our core purpose and achieve our vision we will:

- Ensure that our services are delivered in accordance with all statutory requirements.
- Plan service development and delivery in accordance with the principles of efficient government and continuous improvement.
- Undertake customer care surveys to assist us in improving our service delivery.
- Recognise our employees as both stakeholders and our most important asset.
- Take individual and collective responsibility for the services provided by LVJB.
- Encourage innovation and recognise achievement within the organization.
- Monitor and report performance levels to stakeholders.
- Integrate equalities issues into all aspects of our service provision.
- Build on our achievements to date.

#### **4.0 Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board Equal Opportunities Policy**

We are committed to achieving equal opportunities in all our activities and responsibilities. This means ensuring that services, facilities and employment opportunities are accessible and receptive to the values and the diversity of needs within the community. In meeting this commitment, we shall aim to prevent, as well as eliminate, any form of discrimination that occurs in the workplace or in service delivery.

We also aim to provide services which users (and potential users) can access freely without prejudice, discrimination and/or harassment. "Equal Opportunities" means the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between persons on the grounds of sex or marital status, or racial grounds, or on grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or of other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions (The Scotland Act 1998, Section L2 Part II, Schedule 5).

#### **5.0 General Principles**

We aim to provide an equitable, customer focused, best value, high quality, professional valuation and electoral service for all stakeholders.

LVJB's general approach to customer care stresses that the following principles should apply:-

- Customers should have access to clear information about LVJB's services and how to access them.
- LVJB employees should have a clear understanding of our customers' needs and how to meet them, recognizing the diverse needs of our community.
- Enquiries should be handled efficiently and effectively.
- Employees should be competent in their job.
- Employees should be competent in the core competences, particularly commitment to quality customer care and achieving equal opportunity.
- Employees should be empowered to provide the best service to the customers.
- Customers should have the opportunity to comment, complain, or make compliments about the standard of service provided.
- All customers should be treated with the same care and consideration.

Our customer care commitment is supported by training and materials to enable all employees to provide the highest level of customer care.

## **5.1 Customer Care in Service Delivery**

When delivering services, it is important to make sure that consistently high standards of service are maintained.

LVJB employees are expected to:-

- Acknowledge all visitors to our office as soon as possible and ask how they can be of assistance.
- During site meetings, inspections, or visits to our stakeholder's homes or business premises, provide their name and clearly explain the reason for the visit.
- Be sensitive to each customer's needs.
- Ensure that the customers' requirements are fully understood.
- Deal directly with the customer's request or find someone who can.
- Keep the customer up to date with what is happening.
- Agree a course of action with the customer regarding delivery of the service.
- Respect the need for confidentiality.

Communication between service providers and customers is the key to good customer care and effective customer relations.

## **Customer Care Policy**

This policy is in 2 parts:

- Part 1 – Expected Working Practice and Standards Required.
- Part 2 – Customer Care Questionnaires and Feedback.

### **Part 1 - Expected Working Practices and Standards Required**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

The purpose of this section is to provide employees with guidance on the standards expected in relation to customer care and the expected working practices to ensure that the customer receives the highest quality of service.

It is essential that all employees work in a manner and to the standards expected that conform to the Codes of Conduct, Policies and Procedures and regarding LVJB Core Purpose and Vision statements.

#### **2.0 Customer Satisfaction**

It is essential that as an organisation we deliver a service that meets the needs of the electorate, council taxpayers and ratepayers while performing LVJB's statutory duties within the prescribed timetables.

It is therefore essential to constantly monitor the services provided by LVJB, to reassess the needs of the organisation to meet service delivery standards and strive to improve all the services that we deliver. Best value is an integral part of the organisation.

It is essential to strive to build and maintain good relationships, and good working practices with Elected Members, council departments, partner organisations, the public, private surveyors, the electorate, ratepayers, council taxpayers and colleagues.

#### **3.0 Correspondence**

All enquiries either by letter or email must be answered. If a member of staff is in any doubt how to respond, then they should raise with their line manager immediately.

##### **3.1 Response Times**

Written correspondence (not subject to different processes because of statutory regulations or procedures, such as freedom of information requests, data protection matters, complaints, statutory proposals or appeals) must be responded to, in writing, within 5 working days of receipt.

If a full response is not likely to be provided within that timescale, it is important contact is made and the customer kept fully updated on proceedings, including an estimated response date.

### **3.2 Format of Response**

All correspondence will be replied to in the same format as it was received.

### **4.0 Telephones**

Telephones should be answered within 5 rings. The answer should be courteous. During LVJB office hours, there will always be enough staff available within each statutory service to answer telephone calls; line managers must monitor and allocate resources accordingly.

Language Line, where an interpretation service is required, is available to all staff.

### **5.0 Reception**

The reception at our office is covered during our office hours; 08.45 – 16.45 Monday to Thursday; 08.45 – 16.15 on a Friday.

## **Part 2 - Customer Care Questionnaires and Feedback**

### **1.0 Introduction**

LVJB aims to provide an equitable, customer focused, best value, high quality, professional valuation and electoral service for all stakeholders.

In keeping with its commitment to providing good quality services LVJB strives to continue to improve customer services.

In keeping with its commitment to providing good quality services, LVJB is continuing to develop a range of means by which it can:-

- Inform the public and its employees about LVJB's aims, objectives and priorities.
- Inform the public and its employees about LVJB's core purpose, vision and service plan.
- Respond to stakeholders' needs by listening to their views and wishes.
- Ensure the services that LVJB provides continue to meet customers' needs.

LVJB wants to learn from the 'customer care' forms that it receives, and to use feedback to help improve services. The customer care procedure will also be used as a tool to help monitor service performance and customer satisfaction.

## **2.0 Why have Formal Mechanisms for Customer Care?**

LVJB has chosen to implement a formal customer care procedure because it recognises that it must be accountable to its stakeholders. This form of feedback is crucial as a means of keeping in touch with its service users and providing a mechanism through which comments can be considered.

The procedure provides an opportunity for customers to put in writing any positive or negative feedback that they may wish to give on how they feel that they have been treated by the organisation. This form of consultation will help to deliver an improved service that meets the needs of LVJB stakeholders.

## **3.0 The Stages of the Customer Care Procedure**

### **3.1 Stage 1 Random Sampling**

A random sample of customers will be selected for each of the functions, Valuation Roll, Council Tax and Electoral Registration.

The questionnaires, including an equal opportunity monitoring form, will be addressed to the member of the public or person that has had direct contact with a member of staff from the organisation. Note, no information on the equal opportunities form should be recorded which may link the information provided to any individual.

The sample will be identified by the Audit and Information Management Team and should exclude any people who may have already lodged a complaint on that subject. The random sample will be chosen based on the following:

#### **Valuation Roll**

- 10% of running roll changes each month.
- 1% of settled appeals each month from agents.
- 100% of settled appeals each month from non-agents.

#### **Council Tax**

- 10% of new houses added to the Council Tax List each month.
- 10% of settled proposals.

## **Electoral Registration**

- 1% of absent voters dealt with at each by-election.
- 1% of absent voters dealt with at each election.
- 1% of alterations to the monthly rolling register.
- 1% of Canvass Forms issued at the annual canvass.

### **3.2 Stage 2 Issue and Content of Customer Care Questionnaire**

Questionnaires will be printed, enveloped and issued monthly and will include a reply paid private and confidential envelope.

Management will review the contents of the questionnaires monthly.

### **3.3 Stage 3 Receipt of Completed Questionnaires**

Returned questionnaires will be collected for analysis.

### **3.4 Stage 4 Formal Reporting**

Formal reporting will be included in the annual Public Performance Report that is presented to the Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board. Putting the procedure into practice.

## **4.0 Monitoring Comments**

The monitoring of the positive and negative comments will hopefully give greater confidence to staff who perform their job well and will also help to identify where there are matters requiring attention or training. Comments and complaints are a necessary part of ongoing consultation in the achievement of best value and improved efficiency.

## **5.0 Training and Guidance**

Initial training and guidance on the comments and complaints procedure was given to coincide with the implementation of LVJB's procedure. Update training is given at regular team briefings following the receipt of feedback which highlights areas where improvements can be made. LVJB ensures all new members of staff are briefed on customer care and given a copy of this policy for reference.

Managers should demonstrate visible commitment to the principles underlying this policy as well as giving practical support to the team in dealing with customer care on a day-to-day basis.



## **6.0 Co-ordination, Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements**

- 6.1 Each line manager is required to assist in the implementation of the continual promotion of the customer care procedure and ensure adequate systems are established to support it. This includes:-
- Reminding staff of the procedure and its basic principle.
  - Identifying training gaps in accordance with the policy and arranging appropriate training for staff where required.
- 6.2 The AIM Team Leader will have responsibility for ensuring the overall effectiveness of LVJB's recording and monitoring system, including:-
- Statistical analysis of feedback and complaints.
  - Reports to the management team and provision of feedback to line managers for inclusion in their team briefings, and should it be required, discussions with individuals within the team regarding their behaviour and practices.
  - Identification to the management team of occasions when there is a need to review policies, procedures or practice, or where other remedial action is required.
- 6.3 Customer care questionnaires should be collated and reported to the management team monthly and must be made available in time for inclusion in the annual performance and development review meetings where required.
- 6.4 The analysis of customer care questionnaires will be based on the information contained in the completed questionnaires received. The pro-forma analysis sheet will be held on the network and should be completed by the Audit and Information Team Leader when a questionnaire is returned.
- 6.5 The AIM Team Leader will provide information on an annual basis on the analysis of the customer care questionnaires received including any significant trends and policy issues that have arisen. The statistics will also report on the number of questionnaires issued and returned in each category.

## **7.0 Outcomes from Customer Care**

The comments and suggestions received, because of this policy, will be used in the development of service planning, and to improve customer care.

## **8.0 Customer Care Questionnaire**

- Covering letter.
- Sample questionnaire.
- Equal opportunity monitoring form.

The questionnaire and monitoring form are printed duplex with no personal data (the name and address are excluded). A reply-paid envelope marked private and confidential is provided.

Our Ref:  
Your Ref:  
Tel: (01698) 47      Fax: (01698) 47 6010  
Date:  
If calling ask for:

Dear Sir/Madam

**Customer Care Survey**

I would be grateful if you could take the time to complete the questionnaire and return it to me in the pre-paid envelope provided.

You have been selected at random from the many service users that have had dealings with our organisation recently. From our records I believe that you spoke with a member of our staff, and it is regarding that service provided, that I ask you to complete the enclosed questionnaire.

In keeping with my commitment to providing good quality services we will analyse the responses that we receive and use the results to improve the delivery of our service.

If you have additional comments to make or you would like to speak with a member of staff regarding any matter, please add appropriate comments at the end of the questionnaire or contact us on the telephone number above.

Yours faithfully

Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer

# **LVJB CUSTOMER SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. Which service did your contact/enquiry relate to?
  - Council Tax
  - Electoral Registration
  - Valuation for Non-Domestic Rates
  - Other
  
2. When contacting the Assessor and Electoral Registration office recently, were you satisfied with the level of service you received?
  - Very satisfied
  - Fairly satisfied
  - Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
  - Fairly dissatisfied
  - Very dissatisfied
  
3. Overall ability, how would you rate the knowledge and ability of the staff you deal with and how would you rate their ability to convey to you the reasoning behind the decisions taken?
  - Very good
  - Good
  - Fair
  - Poor
  - Very poor
  
4. Speed of response, how would you rate the speed of the response you received from LVJB?
  - Very good
  - Good
  - Fair
  - Poor
  - Very poor
  
5. Are LVJB services easy to access, inclusive and free from discrimination?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Don't know
  -
  
6. If you have any additional comments regarding the service you received, please write them below:

If you would like a response to your feedback, please provide contact details. This information will be used to contact you regarding your comments and for no other purpose, in line with Data Protection legislation.

# **LVJB CUSTOMER EQUALITIES MONITORING**

LVJB are committed to eliminating discrimination and providing equality in all aspects of its services. 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. How would you describe your ethnic group?
  - Scottish
  - British
  - Irish
  - Gypsy/Traveler
  - Eastern European
  - Any mixed or multiple ethnic group
  - Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish, Pakistani British
  - Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish, Bangladeshi British
  - Indian, Indian Scottish, Indian British
  - Chinese, Chinese Scottish, Chinese British
  - African, African Scottish, African British
  - Other African
  - Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British
  - Black, Black Scottish or Black British
  - Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British
  - Other Arab
  - Other
2. How would you describe your gender?
  - Male
  - Female
  - Prefer not to answer
3. What is your age?
  - 16-24
  - 25-34
  - 35-44
  - 45-54
  - 55-64
  - 65-74
  - 75+
4. Do you consider that you have a disability? 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.
  - Yes
  - No