

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on 14 June 2018

Report of the Head of Service for Libraries, Museums, Culture and Registration Services

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Review of Registration Ceremony Fees

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

A review of civil registration ceremony fees set by the county council has been carried out and a recommendation is made for some of the fees to be increased.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order C19 have been complied with.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve that the ceremony fees as set out in Appendix 'A' are agreed and implemented from 1st September 2018.

Background and Advice

The county council, as a registration authority, has a statutory power to set ceremony fees within approved venues (where civil weddings are carried out) at a rate that recovers costs. Some fees are set nationally, for example for attendance at a registered building (which are religious buildings where religious weddings are carried out) and for certified copies (certificates).

There are other fees that can be set using local authority well-being powers, for example the delivery of non-statutory celebratory ceremonies and sale of commemorative certificates. There have been no increases to our approved premise (locally determined) ceremony fees since September 2014. A review of the fees charged for delivering ceremonies has been carried out with the key aim of the fees being set at an overall cost recovery level whilst at the same time providing

ceremonies at certain times of the week and within our Registration Office ceremony rooms at an affordable rate.

Couples planning a ceremony will have a range of choices for which a range of fees will apply. The choices include whether their ceremony takes place in an external approved venue or one of our approved Registration Office ceremony rooms, on what day of the week the ceremony takes place and whether a standard or an enhanced legal ceremony is chosen.

A benchmarking exercise has been carried out and this has demonstrated that our current fees are in many instances at a lower level than the fee levels being charged by other registration authorities and that the fees being recommended are in line with the fees charged by many other registration authorities.

A table of the full range of current and proposed fees is at Appendix A.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Financial

Ceremony fees have not been increased for 4 years and the benchmarking exercise demonstrates that the proposed fees are in line with the fees charged by other local authorities. The full range of our ceremony fees with both the current and proposed levels are set out in a table at Appendix 'A'.

Based upon historical number of ceremonies carried out the proposed fee increases will result in additional income of £150,000 - £200,000. As highlighted in the libraries, museums and archives fees and charges report that was agreed by Cabinet in January, income pressures exist in these areas so any additional income for ceremony fees can help ease these pressures. This additional income will be used to contribute towards the overall income budget within Libraries, Museums, Culture and Registrars budget.

Risk management

The fees are based on recovering all the costs of delivering the service and the benchmarking shows that they are in line with the fee levels of other local authorities. Standard ceremonies at very accessible fee level are still being provided.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None		
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Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
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