Equality Impact Assessment



Name of Increase in Ceremony Registration Fees from April

project/proposal 2017

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Department Culture, Communities and Business Services

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Description of Service / Policy

Hampshire Registration Service offers a variety of ceremonies including civil marriage and civil partnerships. Death bed marriages and registration of marriage in religious buildings fees are set by the General Register Office and are statutory and are therefore unable to be set or changed locally. The fees for other ceremonies have been reviewed and adjusted to take into account the cost recovery and to be more in line with other local authorities. Geographical impact* All Hampshire

Description of proposed change

Raising fees for ceremonies delivered in Hampshire Approved Venues and Register Office ceremony rooms from 1st April 2017, with further increases taking place annually up to 2019/20. Increases vary across the range of ceremony options by up to 12%. Fees will be reviewed in October each year with any further adjustments to take effect from January the following year. Previously published fees will be honoured for customers who have already prepaid for ceremonies during 2017/18.

Engagement and consultation

Has engagement or Yes consultation been carried out?

No specific Hampshire wide consultation has been carried out on this proposal, however, the County Council carried out a major public consultation exercise over the Summer 2017 on a range of options for finding further budget savings including increasing council tax, using reserves and making changes to the way in which services are delivered, which may mean reducing or withdrawing certain services. The outcome of this consultation will be presented to Cabinet in September 2017.

When decisions are made to pursue the options, further specific Hampshire wide consultation will be carried out with stakeholders on the detailed options where required.

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Impacts of the proposed change

This impact assessment

Service users

covers

Statutory

considerations

Neutral

Impact

Disability

Age

Neutral

Sexual Orientation

Neutral

Race

Neutral

Religion and Belief

Neutral

Gender Reassignment

Neutral

Gender

Neutral

Marriage and civil

partnership

Neutral

Pregnancy and

Maternity

Neutral

Other policy considerations

Poverty Low

Impact Any increase in fees charged to the public will

undoubtedly impact on those customers working within a tight budget. It is important to be aware that these will be maintained. Fees are 'one off' charges

for customers and not a regular burden or

requirement for them throughout their normal life. However there are a range of options available at different rates depending on the day of the ceremony and type and size of venue. The fees are suitable for

a range of customer budgets which will be maintained. There is also a facility for a basic statutory marriage ceremony in Basingstoke,

Winchester, Fareham or Aldershot Register Offices

costing £50.

Rurality Neutral

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Additional Information

Fee increases were identified via a full cost profiling exercise, identifying areas where the service was not achieving full cost recovery as well as benchmarking against fees charged by other local authorities within the South East region to ensure commercial viability. The benchmarking exercise is carried out annually with Registration Authorities within the SE Region including large authorities such as Kent and Surrey.