

Registration Service Pricing Policy

Approved Date	20 September 2016
Review Date	20 September 2017
Related Legislation/Applicable Section of Legislation	<p>Births and Deaths Registration (NI) Order 1976</p> <p>Births and Deaths Registration Regulations (NI) 2012</p> <p>The Marriage (NI) Order 2003</p> <p>The Marriage (NI) Regulations 2003</p> <p>The Civil Partnership Act 2004</p> <p>General Register Office (Fees) Order (NI) 2016</p>
Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks	Primarily governed by General Register Office for Northern Ireland (GRONI)
Replaces	Predecessor council policies
Policy Lead (Name/Position/Contact details)	Patricia Allen Head of Regulatory Services
Sponsor Directorate	Operations
Version	V1

Revision record

Date	Version	Revision Description

1. Title and summary

- 1.1. The Registration Service Policy sets out the framework of pricing structures for the Registration Service within the context of the overarching corporate principles set out in the Corporate Pricing Policy Framework.

2. Purpose and Aims

The purpose of this policy is to provide an appropriate pricing framework for the Registration Service that will ensure services are accessible and affordable to all our citizens. The aims of the Policy are:

- to ensure charges are fair and equitable and support the Council's objective to promote equality of opportunity;
- to operate a tariff of charges for the provision of Registration Services so as to recoup a reasonable proportion of Council's expenditure in order to avoid an undue burden on ratepayers;
- to ensure that such charges, where relevant, are competitive within the context of existing market conditions;
- to maintain or increase the number of people utilising the Registration Service and so contribute to the economic wellbeing of our local service sector (e.g. use of Approved Venues and suppliers to said venues).
- to recognise Council's social responsibility through the provision of certain low-cost services to benefit specific sectors of the community;
- To develop, implement and keep under review non statutory rates to promote the achievement of council objectives and strategies and ensure these are applied consistently throughout the Borough;
- To establish an annual pricing review process.

3. Context

- 3.1. In addition to the overarching principles set out in the Corporate Pricing Policy Framework this policy is reflective of General Registration Office for Northern Ireland legislative requirements, some of which are set out below;

- Births and Deaths Registration (NI) Order 1976
 - Births and Deaths Registration Regulations (NI) 2012
 - The Marriage (NI) Order 2003
 - The Marriage (NI) Regulations 2003
 - The Civil Partnership Act 2004
 - General Register Office (Fees) Order (NI) 2016
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4. Scope

- 4.1. This policy applies to all charges for the Registration Service. The Service Pricing Schedule (Appendix 1 and 2) will become operational on 1 April 2017.
- 4.2. The ability of the Council to charge for services it provides falls into two categories:
 - Statutory charges - Charges are set nationally and regionally and local authorities have little or no opportunity to control such charges. (For example planning fees and registrar fees).
 - Discretionary charges - Local authorities can make their own decisions on setting such charges. (For example car park charges, cemetery charges or leisure centre charges).
- 4.3. A table of charges is attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.4. A table of all current statutory charges is included at Appendix 2.

5. Harmonisation of Registration Service charges across the Borough

- 5.1. The majority of fees associated with the Registration Service are dictated by the GRONI who seek approval for fees through the NI Assembly. Discretionary fees are set for the following;
 - a) The inspection of approved premises
 - b) Registrar's attendance at approved venues
 - c) Hire of Council rooms for marriage ceremonies*
- 5.2. Historically Registration Services have worked very closely together given their unique relationship with and within local Councils. The legacy Antrim, Newtownabbey, Larne, Carrickfergus and Ballymena Borough Councils have worked together since 2003 in preparation for the introduction of the Marriage (NI) Order 2003 to agree discretionary fees. Since then Larne, Carrickfergus and Ballymena Borough Councils have worked together in preparation for Local Government Reform to ensure consistency in discretionary fees across the new Borough in advance of 1st April 2015.

** The fees for room hire are not determined by the Registration Service.*

6. Annual Pricing Review

6.1 An Annual Review of pricing will be conducted by 30 September each year as part of the budget setting process. Where appropriate annual reviews will take into account:

- (a) Changes in GRO fees and charges
- (b) Inflationary pressures;
- (c) Actual or potential impact of competition in terms of price and quality;
- (d) Trends in user demand and the forecast effect of price variations;
- (e) The results of customer feedback and surveys;
- (f) Council and Service budget targets;
- (g) Cost structure implications arising from developments such as investments in the service or changes in legislation affecting payroll costs;
- (h) The collective impact of price variations on other service areas;
- (i) The potential for more effective alternative charging structures;

7. Appendices

- Discretionary Pricing Schedule for Service
- Statutory Charges for Service

8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

As this is a new policy impacting across the range of Council services the Council will include close monitoring of implementation on a service by service basis through the relevant Council Committee i.e. Operations Committee for Leisure Services, Community Planning Committee for Community Services etc. Service Managers will consider customer feedback surveys as part of this process to assist with tracking the demographics of users, impact of policies, satisfaction levels etcetera.

9. Equality Screening

This policy has been equality screened with no adverse impact identified and therefore an Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

Appendix 1A - Registration Service Discretionary Fees

Approved Venue Inspection:

Fee renewed September 2016 - no change

£400 (payable every 3 years)

Approved Venue - Registrar Attendance Fee:

Fees reviewed September 2016 - no change

Mon - Fri (9am - 5pm)	£58
Sat	£126
Sun/Bank holiday	£180

Appendix 1B - Room Hire - Council Venues:

Fees Reviewed September 2016 but subject to validation pending other service pricing reviews

Inclusive of caretaker fees

	Room	Capacity (seated guests)	Rate per Hour or part thereof Monday to Friday	Rate per Hour or part thereof Saturday and after 5pm	Rate per Hour or part thereof Bank or Public Holiday
Ballymena	Registrar's Room	2	0	£45	£60
	Committee Suite	50	£80	£120	£135
Carrickfergus	Dobbs Room	60	£60	£90	£90
	Jubilee Hall	120	£120	£180	£180
	Chamber	40	£40	£60	£60
Larne	Chamber	45	£75	£97.50	£97.50
	Small Room	9	£40	£50	£50
	Wilson Room (McGarel Hall)	60	£130	£175	£175
	McGarel Room (McGarel Hall)	120	£210	£275	£275
	Carnfunnock Walled Garden	Unlimited	£260	£310	£360

Appendix 2 - Registration Service Statutory Fees

(General Register Office (Fees) Order (NI) 2016)

SERVICE	CURRENT FEE
Certificate Production	
Full Certificate	£15.00
Additional Copies <i>includes those issued at time of Registration</i>	£8.00
Statutory Certificates	£8.00
Priorities	£20.00
General Search assisted by a member of staff	£35.00 per hour
General Search of Indexes (includes 2 verifications)	£14.00
Index Verification	£4.00
Search Only	£7.00
No Trace	£7.00

Marriage/Civil Partnership Fees - Registration Offices	
Notice (<i>required by both bride and groom</i>)	£22.00 each
Solemnisation/Ceremony	£36.00
Attendance of Registrar (Saturday)	£126.00
Attendance of Registrar (Bank Holiday)	£180.00
14 Day Marriage Waiver (exc. death bed waivers) <i>(required by both bride and groom)</i>	£22.00 each

Marriage/Civil Partnership Fees - Approved Venues	
Solemnisation/Ceremony	£36.00
Registration Section Fees	
Recording of Change of Name	£35.00
Recording of Change of Name (2 nd or subsequent child)	£16.00
Baptismal Name Change	No longer applies

