



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

RECORD OF DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION

SUBJECT: Review of Non-statutory Registration Fees

PURPOSE OF ATTACHED REPORT:

To consider the re-structure of non-statutory registration fees following the change to Registrar's terms and conditions in June 2011 and in light of new legislation proposed by the Protection of Freedoms Bill proposing the removal of the current time restrictions in England and Wales on the Time when marriage and civil partnerships may take place.

DELEGATED DECISION (Date):

- To approve the revised fee structure as presented at Appendix 2 of report.
- To introduce a non refundable advance booking fee of £20.

Chief Officer Signature

SKORGE JOURNAL

Print Name

5/1/2012

Date

The decision is taken in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government Act, 2000 (Executive Functions) and in the terms set out in Section 5 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

Michael Joray

CONSULTEE CABINET MEMBER SIGNATURE

05/01/2012

DATE

P. J. Lee

OFFICER CONSULTEE SIGNATURE

DATE *5/01/2012*

Directorate:	Public Health & Protection
Contact Name:	Lynda Parry
Designation:	Superintendent Registrar
Tel.No.	01443 486869

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2011/2012:
REPORT TO ACCOMPANY DECISION OF
THE GROUP DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

Part 1 (Non Confidential)

REVIEW OF NON-STATUTORY REGISTRATION FEES
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To re-structure non-statutory registration fees following the change to Registrar's terms and conditions in June 2011 and in light of new legislation proposed by the Protection of Freedoms Bill proposing the removal of the current time restrictions in England and Wales on the time when marriage and civil partnerships may take place. In accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this report has been prepared to accompany the intended Officer decision of the Group Director, Environmental Services as described below.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 To approve the revised fee structure as presented at Appendix 2 of this report.
- 2.2 To introduce a non refundable advance booking fee of £20.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Normal registration fees are set by statute and superintendent registrars have no power to charge additional fees. However, the Marriages & Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005 allowed local authorities to licence venues for the solemnisation of marriages and the formation of civil partnerships and to set appropriate fees based on cost recovery.
- 3.2 Rhondda Cynon Taf has at present nine venues licensed to conduct the solemnisation of marriages and the formation of civil partnerships all competing for prime time and date slots for their customers.
- 3.3 The Local Government Act 2003 gives power to local authorities to charge for discretionary services to recover the cost of improvements to services. Since January 2011 the Municipal Buildings has offered three rooms for ceremonies giving customers more choice as to the type and price range of ceremony they wish to have. However staff resources are finite and difficulty arises when couples cancel at short notice and staff are already allocated to work. It is often too late to offer that date and time to another couple, causing gaps in the schedule.

- 3.4 The Protection of Freedoms Bill proposes the removal of the current time restrictions in England and Wales on the time when marriage and civil partnerships may take place. At the moment a marriage must be solemnised and a civil partnership must be registered between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. It is expected that the Bill will receive Royal Assent by Easter 2012, with the repeal coming into effect soon after.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The successful pilot of the £10 booking fee be increased to £20. This charge will enable couples to make a provisional booking ahead of the need to enter civil preliminaries and discourage frivolous bookings which reduce availability of staff for serious intentions.
- 4.2 Advanced Ceremony fees to be collected at the time of Notice of Marriage (civil preliminaries) enabling couples to collect a full refund should the ceremony be cancelled giving at least one months notice of intention to cancel.
- 4.3 Standardise the fees charged for ceremonies Monday to Saturday as the current fee structure reflected the different rates of overtime which are no longer relevant.
- 4.4 Charge a higher fee for Sundays and Bank Holidays and proposed extended hours reflecting the additional burden on the local authority to provide staff outside their normal working hours.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Fees are increased annually in line with inflation but have fallen behind other districts in recent years. This is an opportunity to standardise the charges and to reflect actual cost to the local authority in providing a service outside normal working hours and the additional cost of providing emergency contingencies during severe weather.
- 5.2 The booking fee goes some way to recoup the costs of last minute cancellations when staff have been deployed to work and gaps appear in the schedule.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This proposal has arisen as a result of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's aim to provide high quality customer focused services directly linked to public demand and to ensure those services balance the cost of providing resources with the need to satisfy customer needs.

**LOCAL AUTHORITY APPROVED PREMISES FEES FOR
ATTENDANCE**

April 2011

MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP CEREMONIES

Monday – Friday (9am – 3pm)	£200
Monday – Friday (3.30pm onwards)	£220
Saturday	£230
Sunday & Bank Holiday	£270

**NAMING CEREMONIES & RE-AFFIRMATION OF VOWS
CEREMONIES**

£67.00 – to book the ceremony, meet to discuss its contents and prepare the paperwork.

Plus, to conduct ceremony:

Monday – Friday (9am – 3pm)	£140
Monday – Friday (3.30pm onwards)	£160
Saturday	£170
Sunday & Bank Holiday	£210

**LOCAL AUTHORITY APPROVED PREMISES FEES FOR
ATTENDANCE**

April 2012

**MARRIAGE, CIVIL PARTNERSHIP, RE-AFFIRMATION OF VOWS & NAMING
CEREMONIES**

Monday – Saturday (9am – 4.30pm)	£250
Sunday and Monday – Saturday (outside 9am – 4.30pm)	£300

**NAMING CEREMONIES & RE-AFFIRMATION OF VOWS
CEREMONIES**

£67.00 – to book the ceremony, meet to discuss its contents and prepare the paperwork.

Appendix 3

	Mon - Thurs		Friday		Saturday		Sunday		Bank Holiday	
	De-comm. Room	Approved Premise	De-comm. Room	Approved Premise	De-comm. Room	Approved Premise	De-comm. Room	Approved Premise	De-comm. Room	Approved Premise
Blaenau Gwent 2011/12 Fees not yet set for 2012/13	£100	£160	£120	£200	£120	£200	N/A	£300	N/A	£300
Bridgend 2011/12 Fees not yet set for 2012/13	£120	£240	£120	£240	£120	£260	N/A	£299	N/A	£299
Caerphilly 2011/12 (Proposed 2012/13)	£100 (£130)	£220 (£230)	£100 (£130)	£220 (£230)	£120 (£155)	£290 (£305)	N/A	£290 (£305)	N/A	£290 (£305)
Cardiff 2011/12 Fees not yet set for 2012/13	£100	£240	£100	£240	£120	£350	N/A	£350	N/A	N/A
Carmarthenshire 2011/12 Likely to rise by 3% for 2012/13	£80 - £120	£206	£80 - £120	£206	£80 - £120	£257.50	N/A	£309	N/A	£309
Ceredigion 2010/11/12 Fees not yet set for 2012/13	N/A	£300	N/A	£300	N/A	£300	N/A	£500	N/A	£500
Merthyr Tydfil 2011/12 Fees not yet set for 2012/13	N/A	£200	N/A	£200	N/A	£250	N/A	£280	N/A	£280
Monmouthshire 2011/12 Fees not yet set for 2012/13	£150	£220	£150	£290	£150	£305	£390	£390	£390	£390
Neath Port Talbot These are the fees for 2012/13	N/A	£210	N/A	£210	N/A	£265	N/A	£365	N/A	£365

Newport 2011/12 Fees not yet set for 2012/13	£145	£245	£195	£295	£195	£295	£195	£295	N/A	£350	N/A	£350
Pembrokeshire 2011/12 Fees not yet set for 2012/13 * Old RO in amalgamated districts so fee left at statutory fee	£40*	£227	£40*	£227	£40*	£227	£40*	£227	N/A	248.00	N/A	248.00
Powys 2011/12 Fees not yet set for 2012/13	N/A	£255	N/A	£255	N/A	£255	N/A	£305	N/A	£325	N/A	£325
Swansea 2011/12 Fees not yet set for 2012/13	£80 - £160	£225	£80 - £160	£288	£80 - £160	£288	£318	£318	N/A	£425	N/A	£444
Torfaen 2011/12 Agreed 2012/13	£100 £125	£210 £225	£100 £125	£210 £225	£125 £150	£250 £275	£250 £275	£275 £300	N/A	£275 £300	N/A	£275 £300