

CAMBRIDGESHIRE REGISTRATION SERVICE – SCHEME CHANGE

To: **Highways and Community Infrastructure**

Meeting Date: **19 August 2014**

From: **Executive Director Economy, Transport and Environment**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **Not applicable** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To inform the Committee about the change required to the Registration Service Scheme from 2nd September 2014, to reflect the outcome of a formal re-structure of the Service.**

Recommendation: **The Committee is asked to formally agree to the change to the Registration Service Scheme**

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Registration Service Act 1953 requires all local authorities to have a Registration Service Scheme which sets out the organisation of the local service, and Cambridgeshire County Council signed up to the current New Governance arrangements in 2007. This transferred greater decision making powers to Local Authority control, along with a change in employment status for Registrars.
- 1.2. New Governance Schemes provide local authorities with the flexibility and autonomy to adapt and improve the delivery of the service to better meet local needs. This improves customer choice and accessibility, as customers are able to attend any office within the county to register a birth or death which took place anywhere in the county, or to give notice of marriage or civil partnership if they are resident in the county. This also provides the opportunity for greater operational flexibility and increased scope to develop a more flexible, multi-skilled workforce.
- 1.3. In return, the local authority commits to the General Register Office's (GRO) Good Practice Guide (GPG). The GPG contains guidance on the application of the Registrar General's Code of Practice for Local Authorities - this reflects the need for a customer focussed, output driven local Registration Service, which is delivered sensitively, economically and efficiently to the satisfaction of users. The GPG also contains guidance more generally on national standards covering statutory duties and operational and service delivery in the Registration Service.
- 1.4. At present Cambridgeshire is one Registration District with a Superintendent Registrar (SR), an Additional Superintendent Registrar (ASR) and 4 Registrars (RBD). There is one County Register Office (at Cambridge). The other locations across the county are known as Registration Offices and Service Delivery Points. These are located in Addenbrookes (death registrations only), Ely, Huntingdon, March and Wisbech.
- 1.5. The proposed Scheme change has been discussed and informally approved by the General Register Office.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The change required to the scheme for implementation on 2nd September 2014 is to change the number of RBDs from 4 to 2. This proposal was part of a wider formal consultation on service re-structure carried out in early 2014. The change is being made in line with modernised staffing structures seen elsewhere and aids streamlining of related processes and procedures. It facilitates greater consistency of operational practices across the county, reducing the risk of errors. In the re-structure, specific roles were made redundant, this included the roles of Lead Registration Officer (LRO) – which held 3 of the 4 current RBD posts.
- 2.2 For efficiency duplicate certificates will be issued from only two locations in the county (although applications can be made at any location), and this change will mean that registers are closed and archived quicker. This will reduce customer confusion and reduce operational burden elsewhere.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

This change was part of a restructure which enabled savings to be made within the service, against a savings target of £30k in the current financial year.

4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

The statutory fee for a duplicate certificate increases once a register is closed and archived. At present birth registers in Ely and Fenland areas take many years to deposit (as the majority of births take place elsewhere) which means they benefit from a lower statutory fee, whilst customers in other part of the county pay the higher fee. This change will bring about greater equity.

4.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

The following bullet point set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- The impact of this change is to the number of staff who hold the statutory post of RBD. Staff and unions were consulted on this as part of wider formal consultation in early 2014.
- There is no impact on the public service or on how customers use the service.

4.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4.6 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications for this priority.

Source Documents	Location
Previous scheme document	Via Louise Clover, Registration Service Manager (louise.clover@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or 01223 715365)