

## Appendix 2

### Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion

#### Savings Proposals

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## Business Planning: Business Case - Income proposal

### Project Title: Registration Services

Committee: Communities, Social Mobility, and Inclusion

2022-23 Income amount: -£200k

Brief Description of proposal: The proposal is to achieve a £200k increase on the current profiled income budget, through revenue generated by ceremony bookings and associated fees, the addition of more ceremony booking slots, and a review of locally set fees to ensure they are set at full cost recovery.

Date of version: 14 September 2021 BP Reference: A/R.6.290

Business leads / sponsors:

Louise Clover – Registration Service Manager/ Peter Gell Assistant Director  
Regulatory Services

## 1. Please describe what the proposed outcomes are:

Realisation of £200k of additional income through recovery of pre-pandemic ceremony revenue streams, increasing ceremonial capacity, and review and revision of fees to ensure full cost recovery.

With support agreed from the Policy, Design and Delivery Team, opportunities for diversification will be explored to inform future budget planning. An options appraisal with a feasibility assessment is expected by the end of this financial year.

The £200k for 2022/23 is not reliant on diversification being realised during the year, though where feasible they will be.

## 2. What evidence has been used to support this work, how does this link to any existing strategies/policies?

In a normal operating year, the Registration Service successfully achieves its already challenging income targets whilst at the same time delivering a high-quality statutory function. There has been a sustained demand for registration services for many years, and there is no reason to suggest that the demand will change unless there is a national intervention in the form of regulatory landscape changes. Previous demand is consequently a reliable indicator of future demand in this case. The profiled income forecast for the service is £1.8 million, with £1.3 million of that derived from ceremonies, associated notices, and certificate changes.

One of the impacts of the pandemic is that there are fewer ceremony slots available due to rebooked ceremonies for those couples whose ceremony could not take place due to national lockdowns, or who moved their ceremony due to the level of COVID-19 restrictions in place at the time. Although it is not possible to accurately quantify what the additional demand may look like next year, increasing ceremony slots will help ensure the council can pick up some, if not all, of the demand. Additional Ceremony Officers are currently being recruited (on zero hours contracts) to provide additional capacity.

In addition, consultation is taking place with all our Approved Ceremony Venues to explore whether they are looking to increase the number of ceremonies they hold, and if so on what days and times. This will help ensure that the council has the resources to meet demand, and therefore are able to derive revenue from it. Approved Venues are an important stakeholder when looking at ceremony service provision outside of council premises, the council is aware that there are limited booking slots with many venues booked for months ahead.

The services for which the additional revenue will be generated for this case are statutory functions, therefore this aligns to national requirements, and local service responsibilities.

The service was restructured prior to the pandemic, with increased management and business development capacity brought into the service which has not yet been fully

able to explore other commercial opportunities. This resource will work with the Policy, Design and Delivery Team to identify and assess opportunities to help inform future budget proposals.

### 3. Has an options and feasibility study been undertaken? Please explain what options have been considered.

The Service is confident that providing there are no further disruptions related to COVID-19 restrictions/lockdown, and relocation of the Cambridge office to the new Roger Ascham building takes place without significant disruption to services, the income target can be met for the reasons detailed above. The move to Roger Ascham is included within the 'Cambs 2020 Project' Equality Impact Assessment.

As the proposal relates to the council's statutory responsibilities, no other body can undertake this work within Cambridgeshire. If the council decided not to maximise revenue generating opportunities by adding more ceremony slots, some customers would wait for available booking slots, while others would move to local authorities who are able to provide the service within their desired timeframe.

Discussions have taken place with the Policy, Design and Team and support is being provided to review fees and assess the marketing potential of existing services to increase service volume. These areas have been prioritised as they are likely to offer the quickest financial return.

After the above work, the Policy, Design and Team will be assisting with research to identify opportunities for diversification to provide future revenue opportunities. Options identified will be evaluated to assess their viability. The intention is to have a plan in place before the end of the financial year for the roll out of those viable new service offerings. It is expected that this work will identify opportunities that will be implemented over several financial years, the rate and timing of which will be dependent on the evolving Registration Service landscape.

The reason diversification is not included as a solution to the £200k proposal, but an ongoing piece of work is because it is not sufficiently advanced. The Registration Service is still affected by the pandemic and has a major office relocation to plan for hence this proposal relates to the only viable option at present which is a demand-based revenue increase, and the potential to increase fees. More detail on the potential of the latter will be known once the review is complete.

At present, other than the time of a member of the Policy, Design and Delivery Team to work with the service, no additional support is required.

### 4. What are the next steps/ actions the Council should take to pursue it? Please include timescales.

Engagement with the Policy, Design, and Delivery Team has taken place. Their input has helped to shape the current proposal in conjunction with the Registration Service, along with the future workstream to explore diversification opportunities.

Regular meetings will be diarised to discuss progress and share findings to maintain momentum.

The service will continue to work closely with its accountant to monitor and assess budget trends, and performance.

The service maintains regular contact with Approved Venues and will not only consult with them on their future service booking requirements but will also provide feedback post a review of their service need, and timescales for when additional capacity will be available. This will be managed through existing network communication channels by the service.

To ensure service users are aware of additional slots available, the council's website will be updated, and service content updated for the councils contact centre. Discussions with the Communications and Policy, Design and Delivery Teams will help identify and implement the most appropriate and effective ways to marketing this additional capacity, and services available in general, thereby maximising income potential.

Service income will be monitored through the monthly budget monitoring process, in conjunction with service bookings, to track service demand volumes and associated income. Comparing previous years outturns in conjunction with current data will enable performance in relation to meeting the income target, which can then be tracked and reported upon. Any significant variances will be identified quickly through this process, enabling consideration of interventions in a timely manner should they be necessary.

In preparation of this, data (both financial and volume based) will be collated to enable performance management from April 2022.

Assuming the fee review identifies fees that can be increased, profiling of the new fees against expected volumes will be undertaken to predict the expected outturn and income uplift. The new fees would be implemented through the council's fee setting process with the intention that they are in place as of the 1st of April 2022.

By February 2022, the service will have identified the expected breakdown of how the £200k will be met through service demand associated to chargeable services and any fee increases.

## High Level Timetable

Task	Start Date	End Date	Overall Responsibility
Engagement with Policy, Design and Delivery Team (PDDT (Scoping meeting)	27/10/2021	27/10/2021	PDDT / Louise Clover

Demand Management and income monitoring	Nov 21 (monthly)	Ongoing	Louise Clover
Review of fees and charges	Nov 21	Dec 2021	Louise Clover / PDDT
Expected breakdown of 200k identified	Nov 21	Jan 2022	Louise Clover
New Fees and Charges Implemented	Nov 21	April 2022	Louise Clover
Marketing opportunity review undertaken, and outline marketing plan produced	Nov 21	April 2022	PDDT / Louise Clover
Exploration of diversification opportunities, and outline delivery plan produced	Jan 21	March 22	PDDT / Louise Clover

5. Could this have any effects on people with Protected Characteristics including poverty and rural isolation? If so, please provide as much detail as possible.

The proposal will not have an effect on people with protected characteristics as it is a continuation of existing services. However, there are arrangements already in place to assist should poverty be raised as an issue in respect of fees set, and an Equality Impact Assessment is being developed.

6. What financial and non-financial benefits are there and how will you measure the performance of these? Are there any dis-benefits? These MUST include how this will benefit the wider internal and external system.

#### Financial Benefits

Increased income of £200k per annum from 2022/23 onwards.

#### Non-Financial Benefits

The residual and indirect findings from the review process will also likely help ensure we focus our efforts on continuously improving our statutory services.

## 7. Are there any identified risks which may impact on the potential delivery of this? What is the risk if we do not act?

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>RAG (should the risk occur)</b>	<b>Overall Responsibility</b>
Lack of service capacity to conduct the review and action the findings	We have built additional management and business development capacity into the structure	Amber	Adrian Chapman
Inability to identify the required income generating opportunities	Diversification within the service has not been fully explored before, meaning that there are significant opportunities to secure additional income. Anecdotal evidence also suggests there will be a demand, albeit in the short to medium term, for couples to book a second ceremony more aligned to their original, pre-pandemic plans	Amber	Adrian Chapman
Increased government restrictions due to COVID-19	Continuation or reinstatement of control measures currently in place	Amber	Adrian Chapman
Lack of ceremonial room capacity	Temporary facilities will be identified if necessary	Amber	Adrian Chapman

## 8. Scope: What is within scope? What is outside of scope?

Out of scope are any proposals that will lead to a reduction in service levels to the public or that, in any way, affect our statutory obligations.

All other opportunities are in-scope.

## Business Planning: Business Case - Savings proposal

Project Title: Communities and Partnerships Efficiencies

Committee: Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion

2022-23 Savings amount: £250k

### Brief Description of proposal:

This proposal describes the approach to be taken across services within the remit of the Communities and Partnerships service directorate to achieve general efficiencies leading to financial savings of £250k per annum. The approach, adopted in the 2021/22 financial year, will be based on a line-by-line review across all budgets to identify regular underspends or over achievement of income, a review of staff turnover savings that can be achieved (ensuring we establish the right balance between savings and the need to fill vacant posts), and a rapid review of any support arrangements in place across linked services to ensure we are maximising efficiency. The primary reason we can repeat the process this year is that the service directorate has increased in size, offering further opportunities.

Date of version: 5 November 2021

BP Reference: A/R.6.291

### Business Leads / Sponsors:

Service Director: Communities and Partnerships

Communities and Partnerships Directorate Management Team



## 1. Please describe what the proposed outcomes are:

Realisation of £250k savings across the service directorate through the identification of further efficiencies and process improvements. This mirrors the approach taken in the 2021/22 financial year, realising £200k of savings, and, as a result of that work, there is a high level of confidence that further efficiencies can be made, not least of all because we were partially disrupted in-year by the impacts on services caused by the pandemic.

The methodology used to achieve this saving will replicate the approach taken in the 2021/22 financial year, as follows:

- Reviewing all budget lines to identify areas of historical underspend or over achievement of income
- Reviewing vacancy savings targets recognising the increased directorate size in recent years
- Reviewing support functions across the directorate
- Identifying cost reductions and further income generating opportunities in the library service

## 2. What evidence has been used to support this work, how does this link to any existing strategies/policies?

The approach proposed in this business case is that successfully used in the 2021/22 financial year. Alongside this, the directorate has grown in size, providing new opportunities to repeat the exercise, as well as to explore further economies of scale by better aligning support arrangements.

The outcome of this review will not impact on front line service delivery or service standards, enabling the directorate to continue to deliver to the Joint Administration's priorities as well as to our statutory obligations. We will ensure that decisions made as part of the review do not adversely impact on another service's work or savings plans, and this will be carefully monitored through our existing communications channels (e.g., Department Management Team meetings) as well as through the budget monitoring processes.

## 3. Has an options and feasibility study been undertaken? Please explain what options have been considered.

This proposal is to carry out a desktop review of budgets line by line. Savings and/or income identified in the review will not impact front line service delivery or service standards, and this will be carefully considered by the Director and his team prior to implementing any recommendations.

Separate to this desktop review, there are likely to be opportunities to explore and implement different ways of delivering services that fall within the remit of the

committee – for example, those that might be improved or have greater impact through a decentralised model. These though will be subject to separate business cases in future months as work on these cross-cutting themes develops.

#### 4. What are the next steps/ actions the Council should take to pursue it? Please include timescales.

The desktop review of budgets will commence when the 2022/23 draft budgets become available. Ahead of that, the directorate management team have identified key areas of their services where contributions to reach the target by 1 April 2022 can be made (e.g., a significant underspend in our adult skills service).

The directorate's corporate finance team will support the review, as they did in the 2021/22 financial year, and the Director will oversee it, providing appropriate challenge where necessary.

If, as a result of the review, other opportunities to achieve savings or increase income are identified beyond the scope of the review, we will engage directly with services that can support that work (e.g., the Commercial Team, or the Policy, Design and Delivery Team).

#### High Level Timetable

Task	Start Date	End Date	Overall Responsibility
Pre-meet with budget holders to discuss and agree principles	1/11/21	30/11/21	Service Director
Seek Committee approval to proposal	2/12/21	2/12/21	Service Director
Complete desktop review, service by service	3/12/21	February Full Council	Service Director
Complete Equalities Impact Assessments where relevant	3/12/21	February Full Council	Service Director
Implement budget adjustments	1/3/22	31/3/22	Service Director

#### 5. Could this have any effects on people with Protected Characteristics including poverty and rural isolation? If so please provide as much detail as possible.

The proposed savings will be achieved through service efficiencies and process improvements. As service reductions of any kind are out of scope, there will be no impact on people with protected characteristics. However, an Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed and kept up to date to ensure no unintended consequences are identified.

6. What financial and non-financial benefits are there and how will you measure the performance of these? Are there any dis-benefits? These MUST include how this will benefit the wider internal and external system.

### Financial Benefits

Savings of £250k per annum from 2022/23 onwards.

### Non-Financial Benefits

The review will help ensure we deliver support services in the most efficient and effective ways possible. The residual and indirect findings from the review process will also likely help ensure we focus our efforts on doing the best we can to achieve the priorities necessary to improve outcomes for our residents.

7. Are there any identified risks which may impact on the potential delivery of this? What is the risk if we do not act?

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>RAG (should the risk occur)</b>	<b>Overall Responsibility</b>
Lack of service capacity to conduct the review and action the findings	We will build on work already underway, and will benefit from much of the work being completed by support functions	Amber	Adrian Chapman
Inability to identify the required savings	Review work started but then halted by the pandemic provides a high level of confidence that the saving can be realised without impacting service delivery	Amber	Adrian Chapman

## 8. Scope: What is within scope? What is outside of scope?

All Communities and Partnership services are in scope, except for the Registration Service (which is subject to a separate business case for increased income), and the Think Communities service (which is subject to a separate business case for investment). Also out of scope are any subsequent proposals that will lead to a reduction in service levels to the public.