

Members' Library Service Request Form

Date of Document	19/03/13
Originator	Head Of Policy & Partnerships
Originator's Ref (if any)	
Document Title	Civil Marriage and Civil Partnership Charges – 2013/2014 Citizenship Ceremony Charges – 2013/2014 Associated Non Statutory Income Charges – 2013/2014

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East Lothian Council

Additional information:

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Date	19/03/13

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REPORT TO: Members' Library Service

MEETING DATE:

BY: Head of Policy & Partnerships

SUBJECT: Civil Marriage and Civil Partnership Charges – 2013/2014
Citizenship Ceremony Charges – 2013/2014
Associated Non Statutory Income Charges – 2013/2014

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval for an increase in charges from 1 April 2013 to couples undertaking civil marriage or civil partnership ceremonies within the East Lothian Council area.
- 1.2 Approval is also sought for an increase in charges for individual Citizenship Ceremonies.
- 1.3 Approval is also sought for the introduction of other non statutory fees associated with the provision of the Registration service.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To approve the increase in charges for civil marriage and civil partnership ceremonies for 2013/2014 (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 To approve the increase in charges for individual Citizenship Ceremonies.
- 2.3 To approve the introduction of other non statutory fees associated with the provision of the Registration Service.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 East Lothian Council currently has 4 venues identified within its public buildings where couples are able to hold their Civil Marriage or Civil Partnership ceremony.
- 3.2 These venues are: Marriage Room, John Muir House, Haddington; Musselburgh local area office (ground floor and first floor) and the Council Chambers, Dunbar

- 3.3 The statutory requirement set by the NRS (National Records of Scotland) is to provide one venue within the Registration District with no accommodation charge (Monday to Friday). This room is available on the ground floor, Brunton Hall.
- 3.4 East Lothian Council currently applies an accommodation charge for civil marriage and civil partnership ceremonies within the other designate marriage rooms.
- 3.5 The statutory fees made by the NRS to cover the costs of the legal paperwork are increased each year.
- 3.6 This paper seeks approval for the increase in charges for civil marriage and civil partnership ceremonies for 2013/2014. (Appendix 1)
- 3.7 The proposal is to increase our charges in line with inflation and taking into account charges made by neighbouring authorities.
- 3.8 Appendix 1 illustrates the current charges for 2012/2013 and the proposed increase for 2013/2014 from 1 April 2013.
- 3.9 There are no plans to increase the fees applicable to Licensing venues to conduct Ceremonies on their premises for 2013/2014. It is expected that later this year the Licensing of venues will be repealed as part of the changes to the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill currently under consultation.
- 3.10 Citizenship Ceremonies were introduced in 2004 as a requirement under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act

The Home Office provides a fee to East Lothian Council for every individual who goes through a ceremony. However, local authorities may make an additional charge where an individual, couple or family wish to have a separate ceremony which is sometimes necessary if the applicant needs a passport in order to travel. East Lothian Council has programmed in group Citizenship ceremonies every two months.
- 3.11 The proposal is to increase our fees for 2013/2014 from £60 per individual ceremony to £80. Neighbouring local authority fees vary with the highest of the charges being in Falkirk who charge £160 for the same service.
- 3.12 The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill is currently under consultation.
- 3.13 A separate paper has been prepared for the Cabinet meeting of 12th March 2013 to outline the proposed response to the proposals.
- 3.14 It is considered that increase or amendment to charges as outlined in this report that apply to current Civil Marriages will also apply to same sex marriages at the time of Legislation being given Royal Assent.

- 3.15 Many local authorities have taken the opportunity to maximise their income opportunities by applying charges for a whole range of services associated with the provision of the Registration Service.
- 3.16 Staff from within the East Lothian Registration service have been consulted on income generation opportunities and after review it is proposed that the following charges are applied with effect from 1st April 2013.
- 3.17 A priority extract service will be offered at an additional cost of £5 per certificate for urgent certificates which are required to be produced the same day if the request is received before 3.30pm.
- 3.18 A £20 charge will be applied for requests to sign paperwork for Foreign Pensions. The NHS service through its network of GP's currently charge £25 for the same service and the Notary Public £30.
- 3.19 It is proposed to increase the current non refundable deposit required to secure a venue for Civil Marriage and Civil Partnership from £45 to £50. The increase in cost is to cover the administration costs of securing the initial date and any associated admin.
- 3.20 A £20 charge is proposed for the provision of 'To whom it may concern letters'. Such letters are requested and provided by the Registration service so that an upgrade to Honeymoon accommodation etc can be requested by persons who have just been married.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The report is not applicable to the wellbeing of equalities groups and an Equality Impact Assessment is not required

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial – Increase in charges to couples for civil marriages and civil partnership ceremonies carried out by Registration staff within and outwith East Lothian Council premises.
- 6.2 An increase in charge for individual Citizenship ceremonies from £60 to £80.
- 6.3 An introduction of an additional £5 charge per extract certificate if the certificate requires to be produced the same day and requested before 3.30pm.
- 6.4 A £20 charge will be applied for the signing of paperwork associated with Foreign Pensions.

6.5 An increase in non refundable deposit from £45 to £50 to cover the costs of administration associated with making an initial booking for a Civil Marriage or Civil Partnership.

6.6 A £20 charge is proposed for the provision of 'To whom it may concern letters'.

6.7 Personnel - none

6.8 Other – None

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Proposed increase for charges for Ceremonies conducted within East Lothian – 2013/2014 (Appendix 1)

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DATE	19th March 2013

Appendix 1 – Proposed charges for ceremonies conducted within East Lothian – 2013/14

	Within ELC Offices			Outwith ELC Offices		Public Holidays
	In Brunton Hall Ground floor Marriage room Mon - Fri	In all other Council Marriage venues Mon - Fri	In all other Council Marriage venues Saturdays/Sundays	In approved venues Mon - Fri	In approved venues After 4 pm/ Saturday/Sunday	In Council offices or approved venues
Proposed charges 2013/14	No additional charge	£120	£230	£175	£230	£275
Statutory fees*	£125	£125	£125	£125	£125	£125
Total cost to couple	£125	£245	£355	£300	£355	£400
Current charges 2012/13	No additional charge	£115	£225	£170	£225	£270
Statutory fees*	£125	£125	£125	£125	£125	£125
Total cost to couple	£125	£240	£350	£295	£350	£395

*It is not known currently what increase the National Records Office for Scotland will make on the Statutory Fees

Statutory Fees comprise:

Lodging Marriage Notices	£30.00 x 2	£ 60.00
Civil Marriage Ceremony	£55.00	£ 55.00
Marriage Certificate	£10.00	£ 10.00
Total		£125.00

01.03.13