

Members' Library Service Request Form

Date of Document	17/03/14
Originator	Customer Services, Diane Robertson, Service Improvement Manager
Originator's Ref (if any)	
Document Title	Civil Marriage and Civil Partnership Charges – 2014/2015 Citizenship Ceremony Charges – 2014/2015

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East Lothian Council

Additional information:

Authorised By	Tom Shearer
Designation	Head of Communities and Partnership
Date	17/03/14

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REPORT TO: Members' Library Service

MEETING DATE:

BY: Head of Communities and Partnerships

SUBJECT: Civil Marriage and Civil Partnership Charges – 2014/2015
Citizenship Ceremony Charges – 2014/2015

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval for an increase in charges from 1 April 2014 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.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To approve the increase in charges for civil marriage and civil partnership ceremonies for 2014/2015 (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 To approve the increase in charges for individual Citizenship Ceremonies.
- 2.3 To note that fees associated with non statutory Registration income will remain, without increase, throughout 2014/2015

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 second 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 designated marriage rooms.
- 3.5 The statutory fees made by the NRS to cover the costs of the legal paperwork are generally increased each year.
- 3.6 This paper seeks approval for the increase in charges for civil marriage and civil partnership ceremonies for 2014/2015. (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 2013/2014 and the proposed increase for 2014/2015 from 1 April 2014.
- 3.9 There are no plans to increase the fees applicable to Licensing venues to conduct Ceremonies on their premises for 2014/2015. 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 2014/2015 from £80 per individual ceremony to £85. Neighbouring local authority fees vary with the highest of the charges being in Falkirk who charge £160 for the same service.
- 3.12 Earlier this year the Scottish Government backed the proposal for same sex marriage. The increase in charges outlined in this report will apply when applications are received for same sex marriages which may be available from Autumn 2014.
- 3.13 From 1 April 2013 we introduced fees for other non statutory services associated with the Registration service. These were; £5 charge for priority extract service, £20 for signing paperwork associated with Foreign pensions, £50 non refundable deposit for securing Wedding/Civil Partnership dates and £20 for providing 'To Whom It May Concern' letters.

- 3.14 It is proposed that the fees introduced in 2013/2014 associated with the non statutory services remain, without increase, throughout 2014/2015.

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 as outlined in Appendix 1.
- 6.2 An increase in charge for individual Citizenship ceremonies from £80 to £85.
- 6.3 Non statutory fees associated with the administration of the Registration service will remain as is.
- 6.4 Personnel - none
- 6.5 Other – None

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Proposed increase for charges for Ceremonies conducted within East Lothian – 2014/2015 (Appendix 1)

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DATE	10 March 2014

Appendix 1 – Proposed charges for ceremonies conducted within East Lothian – 2014/15

	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 2014/15	No additional charge	£125	£235	£180	£235	£285
Statutory fees*	£125	£125	£125	£125	£125	£125
Total cost to couple	£125	£250	£360	£305	£360	£410
Current 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

*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

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