

Equality and Safety Impact Assessment

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal	Registration – Income rises
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	
<p>We are currently being asked to increase number of all ceremony bookings and particularly those in SCC venues to maximize their use. Ceremony fees are annually benchmarked against other authorities in the SE region to ensure fees remain competitive and affordable to our residents. Unlike other services, it is customer choice if they choose SCC for their ceremonies. In the wake of COVID 19, and how this has financially impacted on our residents, we need to be realistic about any increases as to deter business is fruitless. Pre covid 19/20 we undertook 750 ceremonies. 21/22 figures are currently at 826, which shows that the loss of ceremonies during covid has by no means transferred to 21/22. The demand is much greater on the smaller budget ceremony as customers adjust to post covid financial pressures. These ceremonies are typically in the statutory room for which the fee is set by Government.</p>	
Summary of Impact and Issues	
<p>By increasing fees unrealistically we risk losing custom altogether. We need to focus on increasing actual bookings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory fees that we cannot increase, these include fees for notices, citizenship and certificates which provide the bulk of our income. • Customer demand for smaller budget ceremonies • Other ceremony fees benchmarked against other authorities in SE region to ensure competitive • Customer choice where to get married/civil partnership • Drive to maximize use of SCC buildings for ceremonies • Ceremony numbers lost during covid, not materialised during 21/22. • 22/23 slow to book as covid confidence remains uncertain still. 	

- Fees for ceremonies have already been set for 22-23 in line with the ceremony diary being open for bookings 2 years ahead.

Potential Positive Impacts

If we can be supported to increase ceremony bookings, this will also increase the amount taken on booking fees, notices and certificates. Work is underway to refresh the marketing plan and a stand-alone website dedicated to ceremonies. As fees are already set for 22-23, results on increasing bookings can be reflected on when we set fees for 23-24.

Responsible Service Manager	Sharon Spells
Date	
Approved by Senior Manager	Rosie Zambra
Date	

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	None specific	n/a
Disability	None specific	n/a
Gender Reassignment	None specific	n/a
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Increase options	n/a
Pregnancy and Maternity	None specific	n/a
Race	None specific	n/a
Religion or Belief	None specific	n/a
Sex	None specific	n/a
Sexual Orientation	None specific	n/a
Community Safety	None specific	n/a
Poverty	Increase options for all budgets	n/a
Health &	Allows weddings and civil	n/a

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Wellbeing	ceremonies to take place	
Other Significant Impacts	None specific	n/a

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