

Committee:	Date:
Community & Children's Services	08/02/2019
Subject: Registration Service update 2018	Public
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Report of: Director of Community & Children's Services	

Recommendation

- Members are asked to note the report.

Summary

The City of London Registration Service has been delivered by the London Borough of Islington for over 40 years. Responsibility for the service was previously held by the Town Clerk's Department, but transferred to Community & Children's Services in 2014. A new arrangement was approved by Committee in January 2018 where the service is provided under a Section 113 agreement which allows staff from one local authority to perform duties in another. This paper gives an update on the Registration Service for 2018.

Main Report

Background

1. Every local authority is required by law to provide a registration service, but this can be delivered by another local authority.
2. The London Borough of Islington has provided a registration service to the City of London since 1977.
3. The service currently consists of:
 - Registration of births, deaths and still births;
 - Attestation of marriage and civil partnership notices;
 - Marriage and civil partnership ceremonies;
 - Renewal of vows ceremonies;
 - Commitment, naming and citizenship ceremonies;
 - Nationality and settlement checking;
 - Rehearsals and copy certificates;

- Church applications and returns;
- Completion of statutory returns.

A full description of services provided is attached as Appendix 1, together with a list of performance indicators.

4. The service is delivered principally from the Islington Registrar Office, with a Registrar also offering services at the Guildhall every Wednesday.
5. A Proper Officer (PO) must be appointed by the local authority to manage the registration service and have overall responsibility for the delivery of the service. Since November 2018 the City's PO has been Andrew Carter, Chief Officer / Director Community & Children's Services.

Current Position

6. In 2017/18 there were 181 marriages at licensed premises in the City of London. The Register Office issued 184 certificates and 73 marriage notices, and registered 1 birth and 494 deaths. The majority of deaths were people who lived in other local authorities but who died within City boundaries, usually at Bart's.
7. The service is high performing. In 2017/18, performance against timeliness measures was as follows. The percentage of births and still births registered within 42 days was 100% and the percentage of deaths registered within 5 days was 81%. Appointments to residents and those accessing St Barts have been available within 5 days as we operate walk in services for deaths. Some families struggle to attend within this timeline due to the bereavement and often do not live very close to London. The service has a dedicated website for booking ceremonies and on-line service access for births and deaths appointments.
8. Digitalisation of City's birth, death and marriage records has been completed for the period 1837 to 1950. Nearly 700 registers have been scanned with 13,000 records indexed in a database. Second phase in the autumn will see records digitalised from 1950 to 1991 (all records from 1991 to present day are already digitalised).
9. The agreed cost of the service provided by Islington is £29,000. However, efficiency measures have reduced the actual amount billed to £8,000 in 2017. A Marketing Officer has recently been appointed to help drive the number of marriage venues in the City – this will reduce costs further, as more weddings are carried out.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Registration & Citizenship Service – services delivered for City of London. LB Islington, January 2019

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