

SERVICE DESCRIPTION FORM

Department: Corporate Services

Service: Registrars Service

Income from fees and charges : £107,000

Annual income is derived from charges for various registration services. Charges are reviewed annually every April along with other Council charges. The discretionary charges in Moray are in line with those in most other authorities, with the exception of the Marriage Approval charge which applies to the approval of marriage venues. In Moray the same charge is levied for both a 3 year permanent approval and a temporary approval. In certain other authorities a higher charge is made to reflect what is seen to be the very high standard of wedding venue provided by them.

Description:

The Moray Registration Service is responsible for:

- the registration of births, marriages and deaths for the registration district of Moray. In 2011 there were 2309 registrations.
- the conducting of all civil marriages, including civil partnerships, both within the offices of the Registrar and externally in licensed premises. In 2011 there were 192 ceremonies conducted.
- hosting and conducting Citizenship ceremonies for applicants who have been granted British nationality by the Home Office. In 2011, 20 ceremonies were conducted
- all burial ground administration in respect of cemeteries, including lair purchasing and erection of headstones, as well as undertaking ancestry research. In 2010/11 there were 664 burials and 297 lairs sold.

Since November 2011, the Service also offers the 'Tell Us Once' service to customers in relation to births and deaths registration. This offers the customer the option of allowing information to be passed to different government departments when notifying them of a change in their circumstances. There is no charge for this service.

The Service currently operates from 4 locations in Elgin, Buckie, Forres and Keith. The service is being centralised in Elgin, but appointments at all locations will still be available.

As regards the split between statutory services and discretionary services, all are statutory with the exception of the following:

1. The work relative to burial ground administration need not be undertaken by the Registrars but was taken on by this team in 2006 for efficiency reasons and to maintain public access to this service when the Lands and Parks Department was relocated to offices at Ashgrove in Elgin. The work must be undertaken by or on behalf of the Council however.
2. Work undertaking assisted genealogical research is not statutory and private services are available to assist with this process. Access to the closed records must however be provided by statute – these relate to the last 100 years of birth records, 75 years of marriage records and 50 years of death records and can only be accessed by a qualified registrar. In 2011, 84 assisted searches were completed.

Outcomes / impacts:

The Registration Service aims to provide a comprehensive service dealing with the registration of births, marriages and deaths in accordance with regulations and standards as determined by the National Records Office for Scotland (NRS).

This dovetails with National and Corporate priorities relative to ensuring that our services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local needs.

Given the current provision of an ancestry and genealogy search facility by the Service and its links with the Archivist Service and the aspiration of the Libraries and Museum Service for a combined heritage centre, the objectives of the Service further link with National Outcome 2 and Local Outcome 4 which is the Council's undertaking to contribute to the social, cultural and economic regeneration of Moray.