


<p>Individual Mayoral Decision</p> <p>[Insert Decision Date]</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Ann Sutcliffe – Corporate Director Place</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Ceremony fees for St. George’s Town Hall</p>	

Lead Member	The Mayor
Originating Officer(s)	Kathy Constantinou/Superintendent Registrar
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	No
Reason for Key Decision	This report has been reviewed as not meeting the Key Decision criteria.
Forward Plan Notice Published	[Insert date notice was published – see forthcoming decisions webpage]
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	[State Priority and/or Outcome from the Strategic Plan 2020-23]

Executive Summary

The Registration service is moving to St. Georges Town Hall. Due to the delayed building work and relocation of the service to the new building, the Registrars move will happen in 3 phases starting from 25th May 2021. The service has been advised it has to vacate Bromley Public Hall by the end of September 2021. No more ceremony bookings can therefore be taken for BPH beyond September 2021. The service urgently needs to introduce new ceremony fees for SGTH to reflect the new building and ceremony rooms to enable the team to begin taking bookings for September 2021.

There are more ceremony rooms at St. Georges and a new fee scale has been introduced to reflect the refurbishment and room sizes now available. Additional fees will be introduced by next financial year once a caterer has been appointed to lease the space at SGTH so that the service can create wedding packages to include refreshments/catering.

Proposed new fees are as follows:

<u>TOWER SUITE</u>	Simple (half room) Max 40	Enhanced (whole room) Max 120
Monday to Thursday	£220	£400
Friday	£275	£450
Saturday	£350	£550

Sunday/Bk Hols	N/A	£850
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HAMLET SUITE

	Max 10	Max 20
Monday to Thursday	£150	£200
Friday	£200	£250
Saturday	N/A	£325
Sunday/Bk Hols		£850

Recommendations:

The Mayor is recommended to:

1. Agree the new fees
2. To note the Equalities Impact Assessment

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 To enable the Registration Service commence taking ceremony bookings at St. Georges Town Hall

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 If not accepted, the service will lose revenue and bookings which will create a deficit within the budget.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The registration service is moving to St. Georges Town Hall and as part of this move, new fees are to be introduced to include wedding packages with catering/refreshments. However, the move has been delayed several times and the inhouse caterers are yet to be instated. The service was recently informed that they had to vacate Bromley Public Hall by the end of September 2021 and cannot take any new bookings for ceremonies beyond that date. The service urgently requires temporary new fees to be agreed to enable the team take bookings for St. Georges as soon as possible to avoid losing booking opportunities and money. A full set of wedding/ceremony fees will be created and introduced once the Registrars and the caterers can discuss this new business opportunity. In the meantime, customers are waiting to make bookings for St. Georges but until the fees are agreed, the Registrars cannot release the new fees.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There will not be any equality implications arising from the proposal.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Registration service has a statutory obligation to offer ceremony dates for weddings and Civil Partnerships within a reasonable time frame. Beyond September 2021, the service is currently unable to offer any ceremonies without having a structured fee table available.
- 5.2 A Notice of Marriage appointment has to be taken before a wedding or civil partnership can take place. The Notice creates the authority for the registration to take place and must be placed at least 28 days before the registration of the marriage/civil partnership. The Notice of Marriage cannot go ahead without a venue being recorded on the document. Until we can agree the fees for St. Georges, we cannot release the venue as an approved premise therefore the council will be losing revenue and bookings until we can release the venue as an approved premise.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 Fees have been calculated to support the achievement of income budget and have been reviewed in line with the local environment.
- 6.2 The budgeted income from ceremony fees for 2020/21 is £609,400. The proposed fees recommended in this report will contribute to achieving that budgeted income in order to recover costs.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 The Council has the legal power to charge fees for the provision of discretionary services in order to recover the costs of the provision of the relevant service. Therefore, the Council is entitled to set a fee for the use of the rooms and when relevant, the cost of any provided catering.
- 7.2 For clarity, the report does not include alteration of ceremony fees which are set by separate regulations
- 7.3 The Council's Corporate Scheme of Financial Delegations requires that the setting or alteration of charged fees occurs as a result of a minuted decision of the Mayor's Executive. Therefore, an individual Mayoral Decision is appropriate in the circumstances.
- 7.4 This decision is not a key decision as the decision is not likely to have a significant effect on 2 or more wards.

- 7.5 The introduction of the charge does not in itself breach the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010.
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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- List any linked reports
- State NONE if none.

Appendices

- List any appendices [if Exempt, Forward Plan entry MUST warn of that]
- State NONE if none.

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.
- These must be sent to Democratic Services with the report
- State NONE if none.

Officer contact details for documents:

Or state N/A