

Decision Maker: Resources Portfolio Holder

Date: For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Executive and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday 5 February 2014

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: **BROMLEY REGISTRATION SERVICE - LOCAL GOVERNANCE SCHEME**

Contact Officer: Carol Tyson, Registration Manager/Superintendent Registrar
Tel: 020 8461 7957 E-mail: carol.tyson@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Mark Bowen, Director of Corporate Services

Ward: All

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report provides details of the proposal to move Bromley Registration Service, responsible for the registration of births, deaths and marriages, to a local governance scheme.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Executive and Resources PDS Committee is requested to consider the proposed decision by the Resources Portfolio Holder and

The Resources Portfolio Holder is recommended to agree that the Bromley Registration Service move to a local governance scheme by April 2014 and that the Bromley Registration Service commit to the national Code of Practice and Good Practice Guide.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: N/A.
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council.
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No cost
 2. Ongoing costs: N/A.
 3. Budget head/performance centre: £221,790
 4. Total current budget for this head: £221,790
 5. Source of funding: Base budget
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 13 permanent staff, 28 casual staff
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory requirement.
 2. Call-in: Call-in is applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): 17,000 (2012/13)
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 Under the current governance arrangements the Registration Service Act 1953 confers upon the Local Authority obligations and powers in regard to the registration of births, deaths and marriages. The current local Scheme as amended came into operation on 1st January 1987 and is known as “The Bromley Registration Scheme 1986”. As part of the Civil Registration Modernisation agenda local authorities are being given greater freedom to deliver the local registration service in partnership with the Registrar General. The purpose of this agenda is to ensure the delivery of statutory services and encourage good practice which will enable the local authority to plan, develop and deliver a registration service which meets the needs of the local community.
- 3.2 A new governance scheme means that changes to the local registration service may be adopted without the need to apply to the General Register Office for a formal amendment to the existing scheme. For example, the opening or closure of a further service delivery point, the increase or decrease of principal post holders and the move of a register office or head office may all be effected to meet with local customer needs and expectations, without the need for a formal scheme change.
- 3.3 The benefits of a local governance scheme can include:
- Greater freedom and flexibility to tailor the delivery of the local registration service;
 - Development of a more customer focused approach;
 - Proper Officer to have more responsibility and accountability for the delivery of the local registration service;
 - Lays a foundation for the future delivery of local registration services;
 - Local registration service is more integrated with the rest of council services

By signing up to a new governance scheme, local authorities commit to the national Code of Practice and Good Practice Guide, and to having in place a reliable system for monitoring performance and annual reporting to the Registrar General.

- 3.4 Under the new revised governance arrangements, Bromley will commit to the service delivery standards contained in the Code of Practice for Local Registration Authorities in England and Wales developed by the General Register Office (GRO) and LACORS (the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services). The Code of Practice is complemented by a Good Practice Guide jointly developed by the GRO and LACORS. This guide provides information on specific national standards the local authority must meet together with aspirational standards. We will submit an annual report on performance to the Registrar General which will include the key performance indicators.
- 3.5 Bromley Registration Service has been moving towards local governance over a period of years, and in particular since a successful inspection by the General Register Office in 2009 which deemed the service offered to be “excellent”. The service consistently meets performance indicators and service delivery standards. The move to local governance will bring Bromley into line with other high-performing Register Offices. In order to facilitate the move to local governance a service delivery plan has been drawn up which details the scope of the service, staffing levels, and details of how the service is performing in relation to key performance indicators and service delivery standards. A 30 day consultation period was undertaken with all staff within the service, and there were no objections to the proposal to move to local governance. There are no changes planned to the level of staffing or to the way in which the service is currently delivered.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None

Non-Applicable Sections:	4. Policy implications 5. Financial implications 6. Legal implications 7. Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service Delivery Plan• Staff structure• London Borough of Bromley Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Scheme under Section 14 of the Registration services Act 1953