

<b>Report on</b>	Registration of Births, Deaths, Marriages & Civil Partnerships
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	04 June 2020
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Marissa Canavan, Director of Organisational Development
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Marissa Canavan, Director of Organisational Development

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>  If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To provide members with an update on provision of Registration services within Mid Ulster District Council.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
	<p>The Registration Offices in Dungannon, Magherafelt and Cookstown continue to provide a service to the public during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Changes to the service were introduced and adapted to ensure staff and members of the public are kept safe and adhere to government guidance.</p> <p>On the 27th March a number of steps were introduced which resulted in the public no longer attending the local registration office. The measures included,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the temporary suspension of birth registrations</li> <li>• change in legislation allowing death registrations to be completed without need of a family member to attend the office</li> <li>• suspension of marriages/civil partnerships as per the government guidance</li> <li>• accepting marriage and civil partnership notices by email and post, rather than in person.</li> </ul> <p>To minimise the risk of spread of COVID-19 and to protect staff the following items were installed and supplied; Perspex screens, hand sanitiser, gloves, wipes, cleaning spray, paper roll and masks. Staff are allocated to one work station and shared items eg printers, photocopiers are wiped at regular intervals and before each use.</p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p><b>Birth Registrations</b></p> <p>We recommenced Birth Registrations on the week commencing the 18<sup>th</sup> May, and therefore members of the public are now attending the office to complete the registration process. Preparations have been made to follow the guidance below.</p>

- All registrations are by appointment only.

### 3.2 **Office hours and Appointment system**

#### **Cookstown office**

- Appointments will take place in the evening from 5.00 to 8.00, Monday to Thursday.

#### **Magherafelt office**

- Appointments will take place in the evening Monday to Thursday 5.00 – 8.00pm.

#### **Dungannon office**

- Appointments will be during office hours 9.00 – 5.00 staggered mornings or afternoons most days.
- Public to come into registration via the side glass door beside the registration office, so that they don't come in to the main reception area or meet staff in the corridor outside registration.

### 3.3 **Change to Processes/Procedures**

To adapt and deliver the service effectively we have had to change our processes and procedures as follows:

#### **Prior to arrival.**

- All customers are advised by phone/email/website information to scan/photograph the birth registration form to the office prior to their appointment, this minimises the handling of forms. Birth registration forms are available for download on website.
- Staff remind customers they should not attend when they or a family member are displaying symptoms of COVID-19.
- Customers advised numbers are limited per visit. One to attend when married parents and both parents for joint registrations, children should not attend the office.
- Telephone payments are processed in advance of attending the office by way of online system which has been recently introduced into the Registration offices.
- The appointment time includes an opportunity for the staff members to sanitise/wash hands between customer visits.

#### **Customer Arrival**

- The customer will be contacted by telephone and advised to come into the office when Registrar is ready.
- Customers advised sanitiser is available coming into the office, these items are located on entering the building and at each of the offices.

3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All doors between reception and registration rooms shall remain open to minimise contact with door handles and to maximise air flow.</li> <li>• Notices are placed on the Registration Office doors to remind customers about social distancing and asking that they sanitise their hands before entering the room.</li> <li>• Cleanable Seats within the office are positioned at a maximum distance from the staff member and with Perspex screen between customer and staff.</li> <li>• Electronic signature pad is located on the customer side of the Perspex screen and wiped down by Registrar between each use.</li> <li>• Door handles are sanitised after each visit.</li> <li>• Open windows where possible to maximise air flow in office spaces.</li> </ul> <p><b>Marriages &amp; Civil Ceremonies</b></p> <p>Current Marriage guidance for religious ceremonies under the current NI Executive restrictions are as follows</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Indoor:</b> If one of the parties is terminally ill couple may get married in a place of worship with just ten people in attendance, this includes the couple, two witnesses and the religious officiant</li> <li>2. <b>Outdoors:</b> couple may get married with six people in attendance this includes the couple two witnesses and the religious officiant. The responsibility for deciding on the outside location for a religious marriage lies with the officiant who is carrying out the ceremony</li> </ol> <p>At present it is not possible to carry out a civil marriage at an indoor location.</p>
4.0	<b>Other Considerations</b>
4.1	<p><b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b></p> <p>Financial:</p> <p>Human:</p> <p>Risk Management: Risk Assessment agreed with Health &amp; Safety.</p>
4.2	<p><b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b></p> <p>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications: N/A</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications: N/A</p>
5.0	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
	N/A
6.0	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	N/A