

North Yorkshire Council

Environment Executive Members

28 February 2025

Registration Service Fees and Charges 2025-2028

Report of the Assistant Director – Regulation and Harbours

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval from the Corporate Director of Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member for Managing our Environment to approve fees and charges for the Registration Service for ceremonies for the financial years 2025/26 to 2027/28.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Approval is sought for fees and charges for the Registration Service for 2025/26 to 2027/28 in respect of elective ceremonies. Consideration of inflation and comparison with competing other neighbouring local authority provision has been made in recommending these fees.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Registration Service provides a range of statutory services with fees set by the General Registration Office (a division of the Home Office) for the whole range of registration activities relating to births, deaths, citizenship and notices of marriages and civil partnership. Fees for enhanced ceremonies and licensing of venues are at the discretion of the Council.
- 3.2 Elective ceremonies fees have previously been set by the Council one year in advance to allow prospective couples to book ceremonies both at Council and external venues. This paper proposes extending this to two years in light of the often long lead-in time of bookings.
- 3.3 Benchmarking of fees has been undertaken across the Yorkshire and Humber region.

4.0 DETAILED PRESENTATION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE

- 4.1 **Statutory fees**
Statutory fees for birth and death certificates are set by the General Registration Office. There has been no published change for 2025/26 and they will remain at £12.50 per certificate unless the Council is directed to change these by central government. Other fees for statutory registration services also remain as is.
- 4.2 **Standard ceremonies**
The Registration Service has a statutory duty to provide 'standard' Superintendent Registration wedding and civil partnership ceremonies. These are undertaken at registration offices on a monthly basis. This provides a low-cost option for couples wishing to marry or enter a civil partnership with the fee set by the General Registration Office. Standard ceremonies are undertaken at all 8 offices. During 2024/25 the number of ceremonies performed was 387, an uptake of 77% of scheduled ceremony slots made

available. This proposal includes the addition of a second certificate purchased at the same time. This change is in line with other local authorities and provides couples with a straightforward method of obtaining a second certificate for administrative purposes with the certainty that if lost they have a certified original in their custody.

4.3 Enhanced ceremonies lead-in

The mean lead in time for ceremony bookings is 55 weeks, with c.33% of ceremonies booked further than one year in advance. These ceremonies are predominately bookings at licensed venues and not at Council operated venues. Setting fees a further year in advance (albeit with updates to terms and conditions to allow fees to be varied if there are significant changes in operating costs in the interim) will allow greater certainty for couples when booking.

2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
Set in Spring 2024	Proposed in this report	Proposed to set this year in this report	Fees to be proposed in Spring 2026

4.4 Enhanced ceremonies options

The current pricing structure differentiates between weekend and weekday bookings. This proposal extends the differential pricing to a further split for Thursday and Friday. This three-tier pricing structure further provides choice for couples and allows a lower cost option for couples wishing to marry through an extended ceremony rather than a standard ceremony.

4.5 Licensed venues

The Council licenses venues to allow them to undertake weddings and civil partnerships. This licence is a single fee providing a three-year licence. Benchmarking analysis indicates that North Yorkshire's venue fees are not in line with ceremony fees. Approval is sought to increase this fee above inflation in order to bring it in line.

4.6 Town and Parish Licensed venues

Town and Parish Councils can apply for a licence in the same way as other potential venues. Historic arrangements currently provide a non-fee licence for Thornborough Hall in Leyburn. Approval is sought to extend non-fee licences to all Town and Parish Council venues in addition to no fees being levied on internal Council operated venues.

4.6.1 The fee charged to couples for the ceremony would be the fee charged for Enhanced Ceremonies at Registration Offices rather than the fee charged for Enhanced Ceremonies at Approved Premises.

5.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

5.1 These proposals contribute to the following Council priorities.

5.1.2 A well led and managed, financially sustainable and forward-thinking council.

- To operate on a commercial basis where it is appropriate to do so and invest in council owned assets to drive revenue generation opportunities to fund Corporate Plans.

5.1.3 Communities are supported and work together to improve their local area

- To support a vibrant, thriving and resilient voluntary and community sector in North Yorkshire.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 None

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Registration Service statutory fees for birth and death registrations, notices of marriage and superintendent registrar weddings are set by the General Registration Office. These fees will be updated in accordance with any direction by central government.

7.2 The proposed fees are in line with the Council's policy for fee setting for 2025/26 and reflect the 2025/26 budget.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no significant legal implications arising from this report.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report.

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report.

11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 These recommendations increase fees in line with inflation and provide customers with greater choice, and greater certainty when booking in advance of one year.

11.2 Town and Parish Councils are supported in providing local options for weddings and civil partnerships, alongside the opportunity to run assets where they want to take on additional responsibilities.

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 It is recommended that the Corporate Director of Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member for Managing our Environment:

- i) approves the fees and charges for ceremonies by uplifting by inflation and introducing fees one year further in advance.
- ii) approves weekday fee changes to provide further choice for couples.
- iii) approves licensed venue fee increases.
- iv) approves the removal of licensed venue fees for Town and Parish Councils.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A –Registration Service – Ceremonies Fees 2025-2028

Appendix B – Registration Service – Approved Premises Fees 2025

Callum McKeon
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County Hall
Northallerton
20 February 2025

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Presenter of Report – *Callum McKeon, Assistant Director, Regulation and Harbours*

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

Ceremonies fees effective from 1st April 2025

Service	1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026	1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027	1st April 2027 to 31st March
Recording a notice of marriage ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾	£42.00	£42.00	£42.00
Standard Civil Marriage or Civil Partnership held at a Registration Office			
One day per month at each office ⁽⁴⁾	£68.50	£81.00	£84.00
Civil Marriage or Civil Partnership Enhanced Ceremony held at a Registration Office or at an Approved Council Premises			
Monday – Wednesday ⁽³⁾	£295.00	£310.00	£330.00
Thursday/Friday ⁽³⁾	£295.00	£350.00	£370.00
Saturday/Sunday/Public Holiday ⁽³⁾	£375.00	£390.00	£410.00
Civil Marriage or Civil Partnership Ceremony held at an Approved Premises			
Monday – Wednesday ^{(3) (5)}	£510.00	£545.00	£565.00
Thursday/Friday ^{(3) (5)}	£510.00	£595.00	£615.00
Saturday/Sunday/Public Holiday ^{(3) (5)}	£610.00	£645.00	£665.00
Attendance at a Registered Building	£116.50	£129.00	£133.00
Celebratory Services – Baby naming or renewal of vows			
Monday – Wednesday ^{(3) (5)}	£295.00	£310.00	£330.00
Thursday/Friday ^{(3) (5)}	£295.00	£350.00	£370.00
Saturday/Sunday/Public Holiday ^{(3) (5)}	£375.00	£390.00	£410.00
Additional Certificates			
Standard service for a certified copy	£12.50	£12.50	£12.50
Priority service for a certified copy (Mon to Fri before 3pm)	£38.50	£38.50	£38.50

1. Statutory fees, which may change without notice, is not exhaustive and is dependent on individual circumstances.
2. Notice of marriage or civil partnership is a non-refundable statutory charge.
3. All ceremonies require a £50 deposit which is non-refundable after 14 days have elapsed from the date the booking is made.
4. Standard Civil Marriage or Civil Partnership fee is due in full at point of booking.
5. Additional ceremony fees will be payable to approved premises.
6. Civil Marriage or Civil Partnership ceremonies include two certificates from 1st April 2026.
7. Ceremonies are not conducted on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, or New Year's Day



Registration Service

Approved Premises fees effective from 1st April 2025

Service	1 st April 2025 to 31 st March 2026
Application fee up to 10 rooms	£1900.00
Additional rooms (each)	£190.00
Appeal fee for a refused licence	£650.00
Approved Council Premises including Town and Parish Council operated venues	£0