Borough of Poole Equality Impact Assessment

Function:	Civil Registration Services
Service Unit:	Legal and Democratic Services
Names & roles of officers/ partners undertaking EQIA:	Paul Morris, Registration Services Manager (Lead EQIA Officer) Christine Stainton, Chief Registrar Liz Hall, Business Support Manager (Equality Group Representative)
Date completed:	13 March 2009

Aims of the Function

The aims of the function are to provide a first class Civil Registration Service for the Borough of Poole that meets the needs of the community.

It aims to benefit all the residents of Poole and also those in the surrounding environs who need to:

- Register a birth, death, marriage or civil partnership;
- Obtain copy certificates;
- Arrange a civil marriage or civil partnership ceremony;
- Arrange a civil funeral

For those acquiring British citizenship:

- A nationality checking service and citizenship ceremony.

The function benefits all its service users as well as the local maternity hospital where new mothers are able to register their baby's birth actually at the hospital.

The Registration Manager and Chief Registrar are responsible for the function and it is delivered by a team of 16 staff - 5 full time, 4 job share and 6 part time - working with representatives of the faith community, undertakers, local NHS trusts, Poole Tourism and partners involved in the catering/accommodation industries.

The function is put into practice by a team of Registrars, Deputy Registrars with clerical support, fronted by the Chief Registrar and the Registration Services manager who have to deliver the service to ensure that it complies with all the relevant legislation and guidance issued by the General Register Office.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services is the Statutory 'Proper Officer' that each Local Authority is obliged to appoint.

It supports the following Council corporate objectives:

- Strengthening our Communities
- Developing a Dynamic Economy

And its priorities:

- Revitalising our town centre
- Improving efficiency and effectiveness

The function fits in with all Local Government Acts, Disability Discrimination Act, Mental Health Act, Civil Partnership Act, Registration Services Act, Marriage Act, Equal Opportunities Act, Support People legislation, Health & Safety Act, GRO Performance Plan and Targets together with national indicators.

Equality Strand	EQIA Evidence	SMART Actions	Performance Measures
People from different age groups	**Key findings:** - The registration services are for all from cradle to grave. However, legislation states that people under the age of 18 do require a signed consent form from a parent/guardian in order register a marriage or civil partnership. - Opening hours are Monday-Thursday 9.00 to 4.30 and Friday 9.00 to 4.00 with appointments available on Saturdays from 08:30-13:00 hours. - Registration of birth appointments available at the local maternity hospital 3 mornings a week.	Service promoted in partnership with Poole Tourism. Website to be fully compliant with information for all services by end-May 2009 Online appointment bookings to be available in the foreseeable future (2010-11).. Look at possible evening opening once a fortnight by end September 2009. Following expansion of Poole Hospital in 2010 – appointments for onsite registration of deaths to be made available.	BoP174 - % of users who perceive the service to be good or excellent.

Equality Strand	EQIA Evidence	SMART Actions	Performance Measures
	Current mitigating actions/ positive actions - Service adheres to Good Practice Guide and Code of Practice. Service delivery plan monitored by Identity and Passport Office - Saturday am appointments provide services to people of working age - Careers evening at Parkstone Grammar School - Mock job interviews carried out with students of Parkstone Grammar School by Chief Registrar and other members of the CRS team focussing across the whole spectrum of the Civil Registration Service. This event started off being an annual event but is proving so popular the frequency is increasing to more than once a year and may possibly be rolled out to other schools. - Good working relationship with Hospital bereavement officer - South West benchmarking exercise completed yearly. - Partnership working with DWP. We are participating in this Government initiative which aims to share information between Agencies. - Services are also available to detained persons (prison).	In conjunction with the awareness training being carried out by Electoral Services in schools, to look at Citizenship Ceremony awareness in Schools by end-September 2009. Easier death certification process and more support for Bereaved to be implemented in conjunction with Coroners Bill due to come into Statute 2011/2012	
Disabled people	**Key findings:** - The Guildhall is fully DDA compliant providing level disabled access to the ground floor and lift access to the ceremony rooms on the upper floor of the building. - Not all licensed premises in the Borough are DDA compliant and CRS will encourage compliancy wherever possible but are unable to enforce. **Current mitigating actions/ positive actions** - An emergency service is available to terminally ill people in their homes/hospitals/hospices who wish to enter into a civil marriage or partnership as a matter of urgency. - People who are unable to come to the officers are offered the opportunity of appointments in their home but this is currently discretionary.	Although we are not able to refuse registration to premises solely on access grounds we will be giving this a high priority in inspections in order to 'lead by example'.	
People of	**Key findings:**		

Equality Strand	EQIA Evidence	SMART Actions	Performance Measures
different faith or belief	There is an active partnership with the faith groups operating in Poole and the wider conurbation. The service is adapted to meet their needs wherever feasible. **Current mitigating actions/ positive actions** - Arranging for the registration deaths to take place in accordance with religious customs and practices. - Civil Funeral service offers the choice of a faith led service as well as a humanist service with further advice provided by Poole Chaplaincy Service. - Emergency number available during non office hours for deaths to be registered for Jewish and Muslim practice is now in place. - Leaflet available covering all areas and link to faith communities.		
Gender / Trans people	**Current mitigating actions/ positive actions** - Formal training provided to Chief Registrar on how to deal with situations that arise with regard to dealing with gender changes. Training then provided to team as part of induction process. An individual that has gone through the trans gender process is able to proceed through the gender recognition process as legislated in the Gender Recognition Act 2005 before they can legally enter into a marriage or civil partnership. This is currently in practice depending on customers circumstances ie dealing with notices of trans gender. - As and when legislation changes, full training offered to all staff plus on going dissemination of information. Training officer available in house, to train all staff as required		
Black and minority ethnic people	**Current mitigating actions/ positive actions** - Services are available to all and a full range of translation services are available. It should be noted that all registrations and ceremonies are completed in English, and prospective citizens have to attain proficiency of English before they obtain citizenship - There is now a Nationality Checking Service available to those wishing to acquire British Citizenship – a partnership working initiative with the Home Office and OISC (Office of Immigration Services Commissioner).	Service will be considering availability of leaflets in different languages during 2009/10 based on advice on what is appropriate.	

Equality Strand	EQIA Evidence	SMART Actions	Performance Measures
Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual people	**Current mitigating actions/ positive actions** - The service provides the statutory registration of Civil Partnerships and also offers participants the opportunity to incorporate this into a ceremony in recognition of their union. - In 2008/09 approx 25 to 30 per year civil partnerships are conducted by Poole's Civil Registration Service - Combined brochure of Civil Partnerships and Wedding Ceremonies.		
Review date:	March 2012	**Sent record to PERD Rep and Improvement and Policy Officer – Equalities**	Yes