
**APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF LICENCE FOR PREMISES TO BE APPROVED
AS A VENUE FOR MARRIAGES AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS**

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, DARLINGTON

Purpose of Report

1. To consider an application received from Darlington Borough Council for a renewal of its licence to be approved as a venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships in accordance with the provisions of the Marriage Act 1949 (as amended by the Marriage Act 1994) and the Marriage and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005.

Summary

2. The application has been the subject of the usual officer consultations and has been advertised. The applicant is seeking a renewal of its licence with no changes to its current arrangements in terms of designated rooms or capacities. No objections have been received.
3. The premises are considered to be suitable for approval as a venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships, subject to the standard conditions and a limit on the number of people permitted to be present in the nominated rooms.
4. Although during the three year term of its current licence, no Marriages or Civil Partnerships have been solemnized in the Council Chamber and although available to couples for ceremonies if they wish, the Council Chamber is primarily approved as a venue for Civil marriages and Civil Partnerships for business continuity purposes ie. Should the Register Office be inaccessible in the event of an emergency.

Information

5. The Marriage Act 1949 (as amended by the Marriage Act 1994) and the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005, (Reg. 4) permit a Local Authority to approve the use of certain premises as venues for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships. This Council is the appropriate Authority for premises within the Borough of Darlington.
6. A copy of the application submitted is attached.

7. Following receipt of the application, consultations have been carried out with the following:-
- (a) Licensing Officer, Darlington Borough Council
 - (b) Building Control Manager, Darlington Borough Council
 - (c) The Fire Service.
8. In accordance with building control requirements, the applicant has confirmed:
- (a) that a Fire Risk assessment has been carried out within the last 3 years which covers the proposed areas for use and occupancy.
 - (b) That a Disability Risk Assessment has been carried out and that there are no access issues for persons attending ceremonies in the proposed areas for use and occupancy.

The Fire Safety Officer recommends that the maximum number of persons permitted in each room be as follows :-

Designated Room	Maximum Capacity
The Council Chamber	70

Legal Implications

9. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

10. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

Conclusion

11. The Officers are satisfied that it would be appropriate for the renewal of the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Darlington as a suitable venue for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships under the Marriage Act 1949 (as amended) and the Marriage and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005, and the Licence be renewed subject to the points above being taken into account. The approval will last for a period of 3 years from the date of issue.

Recommendation

12. It is recommended that approval be granted for The Council Chamber, Town Hall, Darlington as an approved venue for the solemnisation of Marriages and Civil Partnerships in respect of the venue subject to the standard licence conditions and that the maximum number of persons permitted to occupy ceremony rooms on the occasion of Civil Marriages or Civil Partnerships should be as outlined in accordance with the Fire Officer's recommendations.

**Catherine Whitehead
Proper Officer**

Background Papers

- (i) Application from Darlington Borough Council for renewal of premises as a venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships.
- (ii) Correspondence to Licensing Officer, Fire Officer and Building Control.

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