

**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 the renewal of a licence to be approved as a venue for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships in accordance with the provisions of:-
 - The Marriage Act 1949 (as amended by the Marriage Act 1994),
 - The Civil Partnership Act (2004)
 - The Marriage and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005, and
 - The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act (2013)

Summary

2. The Council Chamber has been an approved venue for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships for a number of years and has been the designated Register Office decommissioned marriage since the Register Office relocated into the Town Hall in October 2016. Its current licence is due to expire on 2 June, 2019.
3. The Council Chamber has proved a popular place for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnership and couples have a choice of either a small ceremony of up to 20 people in the Council Chamber Foyer or, for larger weddings, a ceremony in the Council Chamber of up to 70 guests. The Council Chamber Public Gallery is not licenced
4. As a previously approved venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships the Council Chamber is 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 below.

Information

5. The Marriage Act 1949 (as amended by the Marriage Act 1994), the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005, and the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2103 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 as an **Appendix**. The renewal fee is not applied as the venue is a Darlington Borough Council venue.
7. In accordance with building control requirements, the applicant has confirmed:-

That a Fire Risk assessment has been carried out within the last 3 years which covers the proposed areas for use and occupancy.

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 other than highlighted above.

8. The maximum number of persons permitted in each room is proposed as follows :-

The Council Chamber	70 guests
The Council Chamber Foyer	20 guests

Legal Implications

9. This report has been considered by the Assistant Director, Law and Governance, for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which 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. Officers recommend that the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Darlington is a suitable venue for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships under the above legislation and that the licence be renewed for a period of a three years up to 2 June, 2022.

Recommendation

12. It is recommended that the application for renewal 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.

**Luke Swinhoe, Assistant Director, Law and Governance and
Proper Officer for Darlington Registration District**

Background Paper

Application from Darlington Borough Council for renewal of the Council Chamber as a venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships.

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