Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information
Description of Current Service Baseline	Who provides the service?	Registration & Bereavement Service is currently provided by 1 F/T Service Manager, 7 F/T Staff, 2 P/T Staff and 1 Apprentice. The Registration Team is also supported by 8 casual 'as and when' marriage registrars.
	History how service was formed and why it exists	Mandatory civil registration of births, marriages and deaths was first introduced in 1837 for England and Wales.
		The Register Office at Stockton was created on the 1 <sup>st</sup> April 1996 following the abolition of Central Cleveland, which saw the return of registrations to the district for the first time since 1971.
		Registration & Bereavement Services merged in 2003 to create a 'one-stop' shop for bereaved families.
	How is the service provided	The current position within civil registration requires that every birth, stillbirth and death in England and Wales must be registered by the registrar for the area in which it occurred. This can be done in one of two ways. A qualified informant may give the information required, in person, to the registrar for the area where the 'event' happened or they can make a declaration containing that information before any other registrar.
		Currently everyone who is intending to marry in England and Wales [apart from thos marriages according the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England] is required give notice, in person, to their local superintendent registrar. In order to give notice, the bride and groom must have a usual residence in a registration district for sever consecutive days immediately preceding the giving of the notice.
		Similarly, anyone wishing to form a civil partnership must give notice, in person, of the intention to register a civil partnership to their local superintendent registrar.
		Registrars are required to deposit filled registers of birth, marriages and deaths with the Superintendent Registrar of their district for permanent preservation. Custome requiring certificates currently have to apply to the district in which the event was registered or to the General Register Office.

Every local authority must provide the superintendent registrar with an office, to be used, amongst other things, for the purpose of civil marriage and civil partnerships. Under the provisions of the 1949 Act and the Marriage (Approved Premises) Regulations 1995 & Civil Partnership Act 2004, it is possible for a local authority to approve suitable premises for the purpose of civil marriage/civil partnerships. We currently have 8 approved premises (AP) within the Borough, which have been granted a licence (3 years renewable licence). In certain circumstances, marriages and civil partnerships can also take place at the residence of someone who is housebound or detained (prison) or of someone who is terminally ill. 2010/11 Stockton Register Office Statistics: Births Registered: Deaths Registered: Stillbirths 3223 1704 Registered: Marriage Notices Taken: Civil Partnership Notices Taken: 18 1154 **RO Marriage Ceremonies:** RO Civil Partnership Formations: 199 AP Marriage Ceremonies: AP Civil Partnership Formations: 208 New British Citizens Welcomed: Certified copy certificates Issued: 191 3106 Prison Weddings: Death-Bed Weddings: Civil Funeral Ceremonies: Renewal of Vows Ceremonies: 280 8 Naming Ceremonies: 10 Challenge What influences impact in the The service is heavily regulated based on the Registration Service Act 1953. service (political social economical, technological) The main influences that impact on the service are health and wellbeing, changes in legislation, advances in IT technology

Resources are primarily human resource as described above.

What resources are used

What does inspection tell us about this service

How does the service perform

The Registration Service is inspected by General Register Office (GRO). Service delivery inspections focus on technical inspections, taking into account the customer experience when accessing the registration service. Stockton's last SDI was completed in July 2008. A recent inspection on the 27<sup>th</sup> June 2011, focussed on certificate stock checks.

GRO, in partnership with LACORS has produced national statutory and non-statutory service delivery standards for registration services, together with guiding principles for good practice in the delivery of customer service, business continuity & resources, leadership and training & development.

Performance in 2010/11 against those standards is provided in the following table:

Key Performance Indicators					
	Year 10/11 - Average Performance				
	for Stockton Register Office Q1 – Q4				
	National	SBC			
	Standard	Performance			
Events registered within statutory timeframe     i) % of Births registered within 42days     ii) % of still-births registered within	98% 98%	98.97%			
42days iii) % of Deaths registered with 5		100%			
days	95%	97%			
2. i) Average waiting times for registration and notice taking.	95% within:				
<ul> <li>Birth registration/declaration</li> </ul>	3 Days	98.91%			
<ul> <li>Stillbirth registration/dec</li> </ul>	2 Days	100%			
<ul> <li>Death registration/declaration</li> </ul>	2 Days	99.88%			
- Marriage/CP Notice ii) % of customers seen within 10	2 Days	97%			
minutes of appointment time.	90%	97.39%			
Certificate applications     of applications dealt with within 5 days of receipt.	95%	99%			
We of satisfied customers     (Evidence from response to customer satisfaction surveys and actual number of returned forms.)	90%	96%			
5. Total number of formal complaints (actual and as a % of all registrations).	0.5%	0.09%			

What assets are used to deliver the current service

Service is provided from Nightingale House, which is an Admin. Building. There is a statutory duty to provide a room for the purpose of civil marriages and partnerships. The Registration Acts also sets out specific requirements for the safe-keeping and depositing of filled registers and security stock, therefore provision has been made within the building to house a fireproof strong-room on the ground floor.

A satellite office is provided by University Hospital of North Tees for the registration of births & deaths. Access to the Hospital's secure room/safe is made available to our service.

All other assets in relation to the service are limited to furniture, ICT equipment, general office equipment and statutory records.

Could the service be provided through a different mechanism

The service is a relatively small team delivering a specialist and sensitive front-line customer focussed service. It would be difficult for another service to run it as efficiently and effectively. However, the following possible options could be considered:

Current legislation will not allow for outsourcing of the statutory element, given that the statutory registration role rests with specific officers rather than the Council themselves. Legislation states that every local authority must have a Proper Officer and a Registration Scheme. Consideration, however, could be given the potential of shared services/closer joint working, although there could be a number of legal issues that would need to be resolved (GRO are expected to offer guidance on this soon).

Efficiencies though improved working practices, combined with a registration scheme change through application for New Governance. By signing up to a new governance scheme, local authorities commit to the national Code of Practice and Good Practice Guide, and to having in place a reliable system for monitoring performance and annual reporting to the Registrar General.

Potential to stop providing or commission non-statutory services to an external provider.

Customer	Who are the customers what are	For the registration of births, deaths, marriages & civil partnerships our customers are
Baseline	their needs now	predominately residents living within the District of Stockton-on-Tees.
		For weddings, civil partnership ceremonies and celebratory ceremonies customers are both residents and non-residents of our Borough.
		Family research and certified copy certificate requests are not restricted to any particular geographical location or demographic group.
	How are service users consulted and how do their views shape delivery	Customer satisfaction questionnaires are issued at every registration and marriage/civil partnership surveys are sent to customers monthly. This enables us to seek the views of our customers and implement any changes, which will enhance the customer experience.
		For any development plans or major policy changes we work closely with the Communications Unit to develop and deliver a consultation and communications plan.
	How satisfied are the customers	Overall customer satisfaction levels are high – since the introduction of the key performance indicators for the registration service, satisfaction levels have remained above the national standard of 90%.
	How do you communicate with your users	Most communication is either face-2-face or by telephone, though we have a range of information and guidance leaflets available at every Council reception and NTGH
	How are these services promoted / marketed	Services are promoted and marketed in a variety of ways and we work closely with the Communications Unit for larger projects. Registration & Bereavement Service have a portfolio of information and guidance leaflets & brochures. The services hold road shows, wedding fayres and promote new services via press releases, Stockton News and the Council's website.

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information						
<b>Customer</b> Challenge	Are there customers who could use the service but don't	Although a couple must give Notice of their intention for marry or form a civil partnership in the district in which they reside, the legal ceremony may take place in any register office or approved premise venue.						
	Are there customers using the service who shouldn't be	No – The service to Registration.	No – The service is available to all, including advice and guidance on all aspects relating to Registration.					
	Who are the customers of the future and what are their needs / What is likely to impact on demand for these services in the future	improvements will impact on the way in which the service is provided.						
	What do complaints/ compliments tell you about these services	In 2010/11, Registration Services received:						
			Commendations	Compliments	Comments	Complaints		
		Registration	11	35	0	0		
				1	1			

Aims & Objectives	Is the service required by statute	Yes based on the Registration Service Act 1953.
Baseline	Is there a statutory level of service	Yes – For example, all births registered within 42 days, all still-births registered within 42 days, all deaths registered within 5 days (except those following inquest), all deaths after inquest registered on receipt of the Coroner's certificate.
		Historically, the number of statutory officers required within each local authority was calculated by GRO using an assessment formulae based on the number of 'events' registered within each district and time allotted for each statutory duty. Each individual Registrar Birth, Death, Marriage & CP (RBD) was allocated a set of registers, which were completed manually. Stockton was allocated 1 Superintendent Registrar (SR), 3 RBDs (Registers A, B & C) and 1 Additional Marriage Registrar (with 9 hours statutory duties).
		On 6 March 2006 a web-based system was introduced which enabled registrars to record civil partnership registrations online (RON – Registration On-Line). In November 2006, a pilot scheme was introduced to enter details of birth, stillbirth and death registrations and was rolled out nationally on the 26 March 2007. (Stockton Borough Council was one of 14 authorities that went live on the 12 March 2007.) On the 16 November 2009 Marriage preliminaries registration were registered on RON.
		In September 2006, in the absence of primary legislation to take forward the changes outlined in the White Paper, GRO and the LACORS jointly developed proposals for a more modern governance framework entitled "A Guide to Governance Arrangements for the delivery of Local Registration Services". This document enables new governance arrangements to be put in place and agreed by GRO.
		A new governance scheme allows for a minimum of one Superintendent Registrar and one Registrar of Births & Deaths. The scheme provides local authorities with greater responsibility and accountability for service delivery. Proper Officers have greater flexibility including adjustment of staffing levels in the light of actual demands without the need for formal amendment to the existing scheme provisions. In addition, responsibility for the development of a Registration Service Strategy and Service Delivery Plan, staff discipline and review of service effectiveness also rests with the Proper Officer.

	Is the service responsive or proactive or a mixture	The service is a mixture in that it responds to customer needs but is proactive in seeking and implementing improvements to improve the customer experience.
Challenge	Is the service needed	Yes – The statutory element of the registration service is required by law. The non-statutory celebratory services could cease.
	What would happen if the service was not provided either in whole or part	If the non-statutory services were not provided customer satisfaction levels could reduce as a result of limiting choice. For the Council this could also mean a reduction in income as service would be sought from an alternative provider / elsewhere.
	How would the service react to new pressures what capacity would be required to deal with additional / new demands	The service is flexible to be able to react to new pressures. For example, the new 'Tell Us Once' service is being introduced in Summer 2011 and the service will absorb the additional duties at no extra cost. Additional/new demands could be accommodated with an increase in staffing resources, to conduct civil marriages at peak times for example. (Additional staff would be employed on a casual 'as and when' basis.)

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information		
Aims & Objectives Challenge	Who provides a similar service to this using a different delivery mechanism e.g. external partnerships, shared services etc	<ul> <li>A number of authorities are exploring innovative ways of providing the Registratic Service. Currently Kent County Council and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council at leading on the modernisation of their Registration Service:         <ul> <li>Solihull Customer Service Administrators (CSA) are dual trained to take bir registrations as well as working in the contact centre.</li> <li>Kent has moved the registration of births and deaths into libraries and dual trained their library and registration staff.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
Relevance / Context Baseline / Challenge	How does the service fit with the overall aims of the Council	The Registration Service contributes to the Council's vision – "We are ambitious, open and fair. We deliver great services for your money" – through the provision of accessible and efficient, fit for purpose services.		
	How does the service contribute to key policy areas	The Service's strategic objective is: "To provide a dignified, efficient and professional Registration and Bereavement Service, offering greater freedom of choice to meet changing needs of our customers"		
	What policies, plans and strategies impact on the service e.g. statutory, policy, function, other services	The organisation of the registration service in England and Wales is based on the Registration Service Act 1953. A summary of applicable legislation is shown below:		
		<ul> <li>Birth &amp; Death Registrations (Birth &amp; Death Registration Act 1953)</li> <li>Preliminaries and solemnisation of Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Marriage Acts of 1949 &amp; 1994/Civil Partnership Act 2004)</li> <li>Citizenship Ceremonies (National Immigration &amp; Asylum Act 2002)</li> <li>Provision of statistics to Central Government (Population [Statistics] Acts of 1938 &amp; 1960</li> <li>Issue of Certificates (Registration Service Act 1953)</li> </ul>		
		<ul> <li>Forthcoming legislation</li> <li>Coroners and Justice Act 2009 – delayed until April 2013</li> <li>Welfare Reform Act 2009 - any implications for the service or impact upon customers</li> </ul>		
	Are there any political judgements / decisions involved in determining the level of service	Non-statutory fees are subject to annual review.		

	T					
Financial / Resource	What are the costs of the service	Pagaurae allocation and proj	instad			
Considerations						
Baseline	Neveride 603t3	Employees – direct	277,651			
		Employees – indirect	6,329			
		Transport	1,878			
		Supplies & Services	17,722			
		Total Expenditure	303,580			
		Income	183,316			
		Net Cost	120,264			
	Capital costs	None				
	What is the level of 3 <sup>rd</sup> party expenditure	N/A				
	What contracts or other arrangements are in place (spend analysis)	N/A				
	What is the Councils commitment to contracts / other arrangements	SBC have no control over statutory fees, these are set and reviewed by the Registrar General.				
	Do you have any charging policies		d charges are set by the Council. These fees are n an annual basis by the Head of Service.			

Service Baseline / Initial Challenge	Guidance	Information					
Financial / Resource Considerations	How can you demonstrate that the service is cost effective overall?	Fees comparison of main services with other Tees Valley Local Authorities:					
Challenge		Approved Premise Marriage/CP	Stockton	Redcar & Cleveland	Middlesbrough	Hartlepool	Darlington
		Mon - Thurs	283.50	343.50	330.00	283.50	307.00
		Friday	323.50	343.50	330.00	328.00	307.00
		Saturday	423.50	373.50	330.00	348.50	407.00
		Sunday	473.50	403.50	383.00	409.50	507.00
		Bank Holiday	473.50	453.50	383.00	409.50	507.00
Service Drivers	What do we need to change and why?	To identify options for future strategy, policy and service provision that will provide a dignified, efficient and professional Registration and Bereavement Service for SBC residents.					•
	What are the main drivers of change?	Meeting efficiency targets through the Efficiency, Improvement and Transformatio programme and exploring alternative options.					sformation (EIT)