



Home Office

**Identity &
Passport Service**

**THE REGISTRATION SERVICE
PLYMOUTH**

SERVICE DELIVERY REVIEW

**Local Government Delivery Partnership Unit
General Register Office
February 2010**

CONTENTS

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. Introduction	2
2. Summary of Findings	3
3. Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)	5
4. Statutory and Technical Standards	9
5. Customer and Business Focus	12
6. Customer Journey	14
 <i>Appendices</i>	
Appendix A - District Profile	16
Appendix B - Good Practice Guide (GPG) - Assessment of Statutory Standards	17
Appendix C - Good Practice Guide (GPG) - Assessment of Non-Statutory Standards	19
Appendix D - Assessment of Technical Delivery and Processes	21
Appendix E - Stock and Security Assessment	23
Appendix F – Customer Journey	24

INTRODUCTION

1

Background

- 1.1 The delivery and administration of civil registration is a partnership between local government and the General Register Office (part of the Identity and Passport Service). The Registrar General for England and Wales is the Chief Executive of IPS. In 2007 registration officers became local authority employees. This, together with the creation of a new governance framework, provided local authorities with greater responsibility and opportunities to develop the delivery of local registration services. To date some 70 local authorities have adopted the new governance arrangements, and formally committed to the national Code of Practice / Good Practice Guide (GPG).
- 1.2 The GRO Delivery Partnership Unit (DPU) works with local authorities to review and improve service standards and to progress the modernisation of civil registration. The Unit also seeks to identify innovation and good practice within the service and to encourage its wider dissemination. For local authorities that have yet to formally adopt the new governance arrangements, a Service Delivery Review (SDR) will be undertaken. SDRs evaluate local authority registration services against the standards in the national GPG, and provide an assessment of service performance (together with a summary of strengths and areas for improvements). A view is also provided of the local authority's preparedness for new governance

Terms of Reference

- 1.3 It was agreed that the review would assess the Statutory and Technical Standards within the service, together with Customer and Business Focus and evaluate the customer journey around accessing and utilising the service. It was also agreed that the five underpinning Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from the GPG and the local authority's associated monitoring systems would be examined.

Methodology

- 1.4 The following methods were used to gather information, assess standards and measure performance against the Good Practice Guide:
 - Examination of RON records and associated documentation
 - observation of the registration of events, notice taking and ceremonies, and interviews with registration staff
 - meetings with registration managers and other officers
 - consideration of reports and statistics from the General Register Office (GRO)
 - general observations, evaluation of customer comment and mystery shopping

The field work was carried out between 15 and 19 February 2010

Acknowledgement

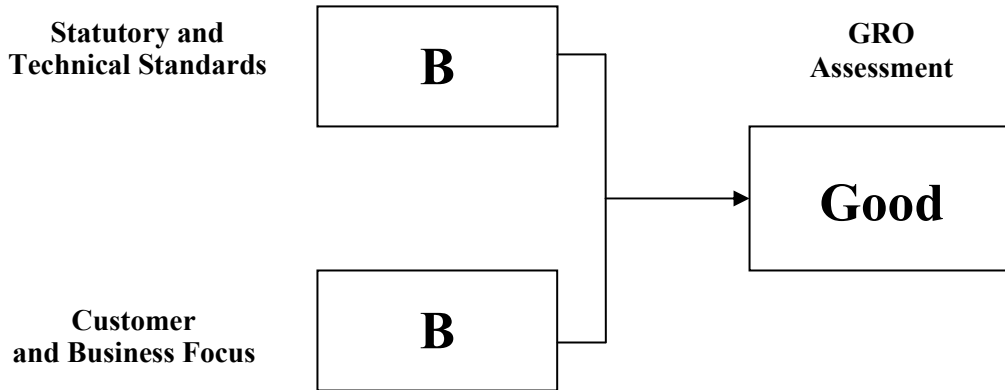
- 1.5 The Local Government Delivery Partnership Unit would like to extend its thanks to all those who contributed to this review.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

2

Overall Assessment Rating

2.1 Plymouth Registration District has been rated as follows:



Background to Assessment

2.2 A previous service review was carried out in July 2007. Since this time the assessment methodology has been developed in line with a revised version of the Good Practice Guide for registration, which was published in May 2009. This version includes a broader range of non-statutory standards linked to business planning and development. Therefore, there is no direct correlation of markings between the two inspections.

Overall Assessment

2.3 The ratings show that Plymouth is performing to a good standard with regard to service provision. In terms of statutory standards the district has achieved a good overall rating against the Good Practice Guide which is underpinned by a sound technical knowledge of all registration activities and a good understanding of the associated legal requirements. While business planning is evident it is not currently informed by formal consultation with stakeholders and customers.

Statutory and Technical Standards

2.4 A professional and well organised workforce enables the district to produce a good standard of registration work. Register work is of good quality although better control of associated paperwork and the timely processing of inquests is required. The timely registration of births national standard is currently being exceeded but deaths are below the target level. Citizenship activity and the ceremonial business is effectively managed and delivered. There is good management and control of stock and registers. Certificate applications are processed quickly and efficiently. The timely certification and submission of quarterly certified copy returns (of register entries) to the General Register Office is an ongoing area of concern and some immediate action to bring returns to date is required.

Customer and Business Focus

2.5 Few complaints suggest that customer satisfaction is high. The district has sought customer feedback to further inform the position, but the results have not been compiled or published. Operational management of the service is sound and there is good communication between managers and staff. The staff appraisal scheme is effectively used to identify and address training and development needs. Performance monitoring is not widely undertaken and further development to enable measurement and evaluation would be useful.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

2 *continued*

Preparedness for New Governance

2.6 As part of the approval process for new governance, which will allow greater freedom for local authorities to manage their registration service, there is a requirement to commit to a code of practice and to meeting the national standards contained within the Good Practice Guide. Plymouth have indicated their intention to move to new governance arrangements, but are yet to finalise a timescale. Most elements are already in place to enable this, but the local authority will need to ensure that its service delivery plan is informed through customer and stakeholder consultation and that monitoring mechanisms are in place for all the key performance indicators. A move to new governance arrangements within a year would not be unrealistic.

Key Strengths and Innovation

2.7 In delivering the service, Plymouth is successful in a number of areas including:

- i) Timely birth and still birth registrations (*see 3.5*)
- ii) Prompt turnaround of all certificate applications (*see 3.15*)
- iii) A professional well organised workforce, which understands customer needs and delivers work to a good technical standard (*see 3.18, 3.19, 4.7 & 4.16*)
- iv) Effective marriage procedures with a robust checking system (*see 4.6*)

2.8 In addition, the following have been identified as areas where improvements since the previous review are evident:

- Provision of a reception point on the ground floor
- A visible complaints and suggestions procedure is in place
- Offices locked when vacant and informants accompanied at all times
- Cashbook control and record procedures standardised across the office
- Nominated officer duties documented

Key Recommendations

2.9 The inspection has identified some key areas where action and development is required and these are listed below. A number of these were also raised as issues at the previous inspection.

- i) There is an immediate need to improve the timely registration of deaths by engaging with the coroner and other stakeholders (*see 3.6 - 3.8*).
- ii) Introduce mechanism to assess availability of appointment times, and of waiting times on arrival at the register office (*see 3.10 - 3.11*)
- iii) Arrangements to ensure the prompt registration of coroners inquests need to be put in place. Additionally all incoming correspondence should be date stamped and associated actions documented so that a clear audit trail is in place (*see 4.4*)
- iv) Arrears of quarterly copy returns including outstanding uncertified entries on RON, need to be brought to order as a matter of urgency. Furthermore, procedures need to be established to ensure regular certification and submission takes place (*see 4.10 - 4.12*)
- v) Emergency out of hours arrangements should be put in place (*see 6.6*)
- vi) The local authority should further develop the Service Delivery Plan which should be informed through customer and stakeholder consultation (*see 5.7*).

The local authority should also review areas of development at the end of each Chapter.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

3

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

- 3.1 Whilst service delivery is measured against the Good Practice Guide as a whole, it is recognised that there are five underpinning Key Performance Indicators.
- 3.2 As part of the annual reporting process under New Governance arrangements, local authorities are specifically required to report on performance against these Indicators.
- 3.3 The table below shows the current position for Plymouth against the national standards.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS			
Key Indicators	Monitoring mechanisms in place	Standard attained	Performance rating
1. Events registered within statutory timeframe i) 98% of Births registered within 42 days ii) 98% of Still-births registered within 42 days iii) 95% of Deaths registered with 5 days	Yes Data extracted from RON (GRO)	99% 100% 81%	Met Met Not met
2. Average waiting times for registration and notice taking. i) 95% of customers to be able to obtain an appointment for business as follows: Births/declaration – 3 working days; Deaths/still births/declaration – 2 working days; Marriage/CP notice 5 working days.	Yes Manual system in place	100%	Met
ii) 90% of customers for birth, still-birth and death registration/declaration and marriage/civil partnership notice seen within 10 minutes of appointment time	No	Not recorded	Met (based on observations during inspection)
3. Certificate applications 95% of applications dealt with within 5 days of receipt	Yes	100%	Met
4. 90% of customers satisfied (evidenced from response to customer satisfaction surveys and actual number of returned forms)	Yes	Figures not collated	Not met
5. Total number of formal complaints received (less than 0.5% as a % of all registrations)	Yes Records of complaints kept by RO	Less than 0.1%	Met

- 3.4 The district has monitoring mechanisms in place for three of the key performance indicators. The following paragraphs further detail the findings in relation to the KPIs.

KPI 1 - Events registered within statutory timeframe

- 3.5 Speed of registration performance data for Plymouth has been available electronically since the district returned to the computerised RON system in June 2009. For the period June to January, Plymouth has achieved a very good level of performance with regard to the timely registration of births and still births and at 99% is currently exceeding the national standard of 98%.
- 3.6 During the same period 81% of deaths were registered within the 5 day statutory timescale, which is some way short of the national standard of 95%.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

3 *continued*

- 3.7 In the case of Plymouth the delay appears to be mainly caused by deaths referred to the coroner which accounted for 53% of the events registered. The high number of referrals is linked to the local hospital being a teaching establishment with new doctors taking up post every 6 months. Just under a third of the referred deaths were registered outside the statutory timescale. In this respect routine engagement with the coroner is recommended to facilitate a more timely flow of paperwork.
- 3.8 Other reasons identified as contributory to the low timeliness figure included:
- relatives needing to travel from outside of the district
 - cases where relatives could not be contacted
 - informant delays in making an appointment
- To help progress these issues it would be useful to liaise with bereavement service stakeholders, which could help to raise awareness of the timeliness requirements linked to registration.
- 3.9 Incoming coroner's paperwork is handled by the ground floor reception staff who record receipt in a log, file paperwork, and add the appointment details when made. This log is accessible to all staff. It was reported that the nominated officer regularly checks the log and when paperwork is available follows up with the coroner or hospital if no appointment has been made (to try to locate an informant). However, this practice is not documented in the nominated officer instructions and does not seem to be carried out by all. As such we recommend that the follow up procedure be documented and formalised.

KPI 2 - Average waiting times

- 3.10 During the period of inspection customers were able to obtain appointments to register births and deaths, or give notice of marriage or civil partnership, within the national standards. Given that Plymouth is a Designated Register Office for taking notices from non-EU nationals serving a large geographical area across the South West, this is a good achievement. However, no formal monitoring of appointment availability has been undertaken. This is key to assessing service accessibility and should be introduced.
- 3.11 Similarly, no monitoring of customer waiting times on arrival at the office is undertaken. Observations during the review did though show, that in line with the national standard, customers were attended to within 10 minutes of their appointment time. We recommend a formal logging system be introduced.
- 3.12 Customers attending without appointments are offered an appointment to return or the opportunity to wait to be seen by the nominated officer.
- 3.13 The local authority planned to introduce an automated booking system soon after the last inspection but this did not come to fruition. There are now plans to introduce one in the next financial year. Other local authorities who use automated systems are also using them to collect performance information, which enables them to measure against the key performance indicators in the Good Practice Guide.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

3 *continued*

KPI 3 – Certificate applications

- 3.14 Customers can apply for certificates through the post, by telephone, e-mail, or in person. Currently there is no on-line certificate service, although the local authority is exploring the possibility of offering the facility. Such a service has been introduced in other local authorities and feedback shows that these are appreciated by customers, as well as helping to streamline wider arrangements around certificate processing.
- 3.15 A manual system is in place to deal with receipt and clearance of certificate applications. The applications are processed in order of receipt. The office supervisor monitors production and additional resource is used to ensure the 5 day turnaround is met.
- 3.16 A priority service is in place for customers wishing to receive their certificates within 24 hours and these applications are held separately. An additional charge of £5 is levied for this service. It is not clear on what basis a fee over and above that provided by statute is being charged. We are informed that these additional charges have been introduced under the fee raising powers of the Local Government Act 2003.

KPI 4 – Satisfied customers

- 3.17 Customer surveys are in place to gauge customer satisfaction levels for births and deaths, marriage and civil partnership business. However, the overall results have not been scrutinised or published to date, so the satisfaction rate is unknown. We recommend that results are collated and publicised.
- 3.18 Registration service customers are able to make comments about the service via the local authority's corporate scheme "have your say", which is advertised both on the website and in the Register Office. Plymouth has received many cards and letters complimenting and praising the service provided. A customer comments folder, at the reception desk, is also available for feedback. This feedback, which could usefully highlight the good service provided, is not currently publicised and we recommend that these results are made available to the public.
- 3.19 During the inspection, officers were observed as being professional, polite, sympathetic, and helpful when dealing with the public either face to face or over the telephone.

KPI 5 – Formal complaints

- 3.20 There have been four formal complaints received by the registration service over the past twelve months. These were handled by the Superintendent Registrar.
- 3.21 The local authority's "have your say" process also provides an avenue for customers to make a complaint. There is a clear link on the registration home page to the complaints procedure. We see this as an important part of engaging with the public.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

3 *continued*

Strengths and Innovations	Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Timely registration of births and stillbirths• Customers seen quickly on arrival at the office• Appointment slots available to facilitate the timely giving of notice (including DRO)• Quick turnaround of certificate applications• Good understanding by staff of needs of customers• Positive customer feedback received via “have your say” process and letters of praise• Few customer complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve awareness of registration targets by routine engagement with the coroner and other stakeholders• Introduce system to monitor appointment availability• Introduce system to monitor customer waiting times when attending the office• Consider introducing an ‘on line’ certificate application system• Compile and publicise customer feedback

STATUTORY AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS

4

Statutory standards

4.1 The following table summarises performance against the statutory standards contained within the Good Practice Guide by key activity. A full analysis is provided at Appendix B.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE SUMMARY TABLE				
Category	Number of Standards	Compliant	Non compliant	Compliant %
Birth and death activity	11	7	4	64
Marriage and civil partnership activity	7	7	0	100
Records, returns and certificates	7	5	2	71
Citizenship activity	3	2	1	67
Overall	28	21	7	75

4.2 Currently, Plymouth is achieving three quarters of the statutory standards within the Good Practice Guide. Statutory areas for development include the timely registration of deaths and the timely certification and submission of quarterly copies.

Birth and death activity

4.3 Commentary on the timely registration of events and inquests is included in Chapter 3.

4.4 The collection of information, scrutiny of medical certificates and issue of burial and cremation forms is performed to a good standard. Inward declarations, corrections, and inquests are generally processed quickly but as these documents are not always marked as received on arrival it has been difficult to fully assess performance in these areas. Outward declarations were sent on the same day the declaration was taken. Some inquests for which the receipt dates were logged were registered between 6 and 8 days after arrival at the office. This is well outside of the national standard which requires registration on receipt and arrangements to ensure the timely registration need to be put in place. Additionally, it is recommended that all incoming documentation be date-stamped thereby improving audit trails and the monitoring of standards.

4.5 Births informants who have not registered their event within 42 days are required to be requisitioned. The national model allows mothers to be reminded of the need to register at four weeks and then formally requisitioned after 42 days (if required). Within Plymouth both stages of the follow up process are carried out if necessary.

Marriage and civil partnership activity

4.6 There are sound procedures in place to ensure marriage/civil partnership business is carried out in accordance with legislation. Post-notice action is completed to a good standard with documentation fully labelled and filed systematically. Checks are in place to ensure marriage authorities can be properly issued and outstanding documentation chased on a regular basis.

STATUTORY AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS

4 *continued*

- 4.7 Observations of registrars attesting notices of marriage and conducting pre-marriage interviews highlighted a good standard of questioning and knowledge of necessary checks. Two ceremonies observed during the inspection were carried out in a professional, friendly manner. Both involved minor complications which the staff dealt with well, displaying a good standard of technical knowledge and excellent customer care skills.
- 4.8 The electronic registration of civil partnerships is compliant with national standards.
- 4.9 The Proper Officer has overall responsibility for the licensing of approved premises but the administration is dealt with by the Superintendent Register. A highlighted spreadsheet on display in her office alerts staff to forthcoming renewals. An automated reminder system is also in place to ensure licences due to expire are followed up.

Records, returns and certificates

- 4.10 The district continues to be tardy in submitting Quarterly Certified Copies (QCCs) of registration entries to GRO. Over the last year birth and death returns were late in each of the four quarters. Plymouth only returned to using the RON computer system in mid 2009 yet already some 4600 entries are listed as uncertified, which is well over 90% of registrations. These need to be certified by the superintendent registrar and cleared to GRO as a matter of urgency.
- 4.11 Until the original paper record has been checked by the superintendent registrar it can not be locked onto the computer system as a true and accurate copy of the original entry. As a consequence, where certification is delayed there is no contingency should anything untoward happen to the original paper record. Where uncertified records are lost or stolen the event usually has to be registered afresh, causing significant inconvenience for informants and additional work for the office. In other districts arrangements have been put in place to ensure that copies are checked and locked as true copies on a daily or weekly basis, this work is often shared between several officers acting as deputy superintendent registrars.
- 4.12 The submission of marriage returns from the clergy and authorised persons have also been late on a regular basis. It is important that this work is undertaken in a timely fashion and this too needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.
- 4.13 Commentary on certificate applications and processing is included in Chapter 3.

Citizenship activity

- 4.14 The administration of Citizenship Ceremonies is undertaken within the registration service. There are effective working procedures in place with new citizens being offered a ceremony within the statutory timescale. Notification of the ceremony taking place is reportedly sent to the Home Office on the day the ceremony takes place but there was no evidence in place to support this and we therefore recommend that an audit trail is put in place.

STATUTORY AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS

4 *continued*

4.15 Citizenship Ceremonies take place every month. Public ceremonies are held in the Council House and private ceremonies in the register office’s ceremony room. The ceremony is performed by the Superintendent Registrar or her deputy with the Lord Mayor normally in attendance at group ceremonies. A medal is presented to the citizens as a memento of the occasion.

Technical standard

4.16 The overall standard of technical work within the register office is good, although some issues raised at the last inspection feature again in this report and should be addressed, such as providing a clear audit trail, giving customers an overview of the registration process and recording full descriptions in register entries. A summary of technical findings can be found at Appendix D. This includes a short list of development needs that should be taken forward by the registration manager. There is a need for some officers to be more organised when dealing with post-registration paperwork. Examples were found of paperwork incorrectly or haphazardly filed including - a birth entry filed in a death register, marriage notices and authorities randomly placed on repository shelves and incorrectly filed coroner’s paperwork.

Stock and security

4.17 Stock and registers are appropriately secured within the office. An electronic cashbook has been implemented since the last inspection which allows standardised accounting to take place, with cashbooks completed on a daily basis. Early last year a detailed check of the certificate stock held and recorded as used was made against the records held by the General Register Office and all was accountable. Offices are locked when vacant. A summary of findings together can be found at Appendix E.

Strengths and Innovations	Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good level of technical competence among staff • Post registration paperwork in good order with effective follow up procedures • Good control of processes relating to marriage and civil partnership paperwork • Effective control of the Approved Premises approvals. • Citizenship activity organised and effectively delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrears of QCC returns to be certified and submitted to GRO as a matter of urgency • Introduce process to ensure the ongoing timely certification and submission of QCC returns • All incoming paperwork to be date stamped on receipt and subsequent actions recorded • Procedures around the timely registration of inquests need to be reviewed • Review the process for filing post-registration paperwork

CUSTOMER AND BUSINESS FOCUS

5

Customer and business focus

5.1 The following table summarises performance against the non-statutory standards contained within the Good Practice Guide by key activity. A full analysis is provided at Appendix C. (*Appendix A provides a district profile outlining demographics and business volumes.*)

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE SUMMARY TABLE					
Category	Number of Standards	Fully Attained	Mostly Attained	Partly Attained	Not Attained
Customer service	7	2	1	4	0
Business continuity and resources	2	1	1	0	0
Leadership	6	1	3	2	0
Training and development	7	1	0	4	2
Overall	22	5	5	10	2

Customer service

5.2 Initial contact for customers is through the ground floor reception point at the register office, which has been installed since the last inspection. This provides a welcome front office service before customers are directed to the upstairs waiting area to wait for their appointment.

Business continuity and resources

5.3 Overall and strategic responsibility for civil registration in Plymouth lies with the Director for Corporate Support, in his capacity as Proper Officer for Registration matters. At an operational level, the service is headed by the Registration Manager who is also the Superintendent Registrar. Her duties include - business planning, office performance monitoring, day to day management of work and staff management. She is assisted by an Additional Superintendent Registrar who has responsibility for ceremonial business.

5.4 A comprehensive Business Continuity Plan is in place which includes plans for timely communication with customers and stakeholders in the event of an incident. A rota system is in place to inform staff of their forthcoming duties

5.5 Most of the core registration staff have been trained to perform all statutory duties. In addition to this there is a pool of seven deputies, all of whom can perform birth, still-birth, and death registrations. Two of these deputies are also able to attest notices.

5.6 The registrars carry out nominated officer duties on a rota basis. The duties covered include birth requisitions, incoming birth declarations, death registrations from coroner's paperwork, birth re-registration applications, walk-in registrations and submitting weekly returns. Nominated officer instructions are held in a folder and passed to the registrar carrying out the duties.

CUSTOMER AND BUSINESS FOCUS

5 *continued*

Leadership

- 5.7 The registration service has a service delivery plan which feeds into the corporate system linking roles and responsibilities to the corporate strategies and drivers. However, the plan is currently not informed through customer and stakeholder consultation and this will need to be addressed. The plan also needs to be developed to encompass the key registration standards as detailed within the Good Practice Guide. Consulting, monitoring and measuring performance will help Plymouth to better understand its customer needs and strengthen a move towards a new governance arrangement.
- 5.8 During recent years there has been a high turnover of staff and the Registration Manager has needed to concentrate on staff development and introducing new systems rather than moving the service forward in line with the modernisation of registration agenda and towards the associated new governance arrangements. The service delivery plan does however highlight the local authority's intention to adopt new governance arrangements in due course.
- 5.9 Formal staff meetings are held weekly at different times to ensure that all staff have the opportunity to take part.
- 5.10 The Registration Manager regularly attends the Regional Management Group meetings. This group offers the opportunity to share good practice, network and be involved in the developing national agenda.

Training and development

- 5.11 Staff are fully integrated into the local authority's staff appraisal scheme. Annual appraisals set objectives and identify development needs which are reviewed at mid year.
- 5.12 Training is carried out by experienced staff using one to one training, shadowing, supervised registrations, role play, and external courses. The district does not currently play an active part in the South West Regional Training Group, although they engage through correspondence. This group brings training skills and resources together and develops training modules for use across the region. Additionally, the regional group links into the national forum, which provides a valuable steer for regional groups and wider links to training materials. Active participation within the regional group would be beneficial.

Strengths and Innovations	Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear line management structure and appraisal system in place • Regular staff meetings held and effectively used to communicate key issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to seek and analyse customer and stakeholder opinion regarding service provision • Incorporate the key registration standards within the service delivery plan • More actively engage and participate with the regional training group

CUSTOMER JOURNEY

6

Customer experience

6.1 In addition to the analysis provided at Appendix F and generally throughout the report, the following paragraphs provide more information regarding the customer journey within Plymouth.

Facilities

6.2 The registration service operates from one central service point and is available within normal business hours. It also remains open until 6pm on a Tuesday evening. There are good local bus links to the city centre, which is just a short walk away. On site parking is also available.

6.3 There is a good range of facilities available at the register office. These include choices of ceremony rooms, a garden area which provides good photographic opportunities, baby change facilities and public toilets. Reasonable adjustments have been made to the building to make it DDA compliant, which include a lift to the first floor, a low counter, and disabled toilet facilities.

6.4 The adaptation of the accommodation to include a reception point on the ground floor offers a welcome at first point of contact. The ceremony rooms and spacious waiting area, also on the ground floor, are in a good state of decoration and provide pleasant surroundings for marriage customers. In contrast the first floor waiting area for registration customers is rather drab and the general appearance of the building is dated.

Reception

6.5 Two officers covering the reception answer the telephone, greet customers, make appointments, give advice, and deal with some certificate production. When both telephone lines are in use calls are redirected to the first floor reception/general office area where customers will be dealt with or a message call back form completed.

6.6 There is no facility through the main office telephone number to leave messages outside business hours, and emergency arrangements are only in place during public holiday periods, when callers are directed to the local authority emergency number. The Superintendent Registrar or her deputy can be contacted by the police or hospital for Registrar General's licences. The local authority plans to introduce an automated telephone information service and we recommend that when the system is upgraded it includes a message facility as well as emergency contact details for all contingencies.

6.7 Customers are requested to signal their arrival at reception on the ground floor, prior to moving to the first floor waiting area. The reception staff advise registrars that their customers have arrived.

6.8 As part of this service review, a telephone 'mystery shopping exercise' that explored a variety of registration scenarios was undertaken. Staff at the Register Office were described as generally courteous, helpful, and knowledgeable. Comprehensive, friendly advice was provided to a birth registration query, certificate application enquiry, and request for probate details. However, queries relating to a death registration and a marriage were reported as being dealt with rather brusquely.

CUSTOMER JOURNEY

6 *continued*

Information

6.9 There is a good range of local information for customers visiting the Register Office which includes information on ceremonies, certificate production, and the customer comments, suggestions, and complaints procedure. Registration pages on the local authority website provide a range of information, although the requirement to register deaths within 5 days is not listed. The inclusion of this information may help to secure more timely death registrations.

Strengths and Innovations	Areas for development
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good customer access to the registration service• Professional and courteous staff• Steps taken to ensure DDA compliancy of building• Good promotion of non-statutory services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review information available on statutory services• Improve arrangements around out of hours and emergency contact with the service

APPENDIX

A DISTRICT PROFILE

Demographic			
Governance	Unitary Authority		
Formation	1998		
Population	250,000 (2008 population estimates)		
Size	80 sq km		
Region	South West		
Main hospital	Derriford Hospital, Plymouth		
Access and facilities			
Location of Register Office	Central; good transport links		
Other Service Points	None		
Car parking	Free on site		
Gardens	Fenced garden within Register Office Grounds and nearby tended grassed area		
Opening hours	Register Office: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 9am -5pm Tuesday 9am - 6pm Friday 9am – 4.30pm		
Ceremony Rooms	2		
Approved Premises	20		
Designated RO	Yes		
Business Volumes			
Births	4842	Marriages	730
Deaths	3278	Civil Partnerships	34
Still-births	28	SR Certificates issued	7533
Marriage Notices	2346	Citizenship ceremony attendees	259
CP Notices	60	Birth Declarations	28
Staffing profile (core staff)			
Local Structure		Statutory postholder (scheme)	
Registration Manager (1)		Superintendent Registrar (1)	
		Additional Superintendent Registrar (1)	
Registrar of Births and Deaths/Deputy Superintendent Registrars (4)		Registrar of Births and Deaths (4)	
Registrars of Births and Deaths (1)		Registrar of Births and Deaths (1)	
Additional Registrar (1)		Additional Registrar (1)	

APPENDIX

B GPG ASSESSMENT OF STATUTORY STANDARDS

1. Birth and death activity		
Task & Statutory Requirement	National Standard	Findings
All births accurately registered within 42 days. (KPI 1)	98% registered within 42 days of birth	Compliant - 99% attained
All still-births accurately registered within 42 days. (KPI 1)	98% of still-births registered within 42 days	Compliant – 100% attained in 2008/09
All deaths accurately registered within 5 days (except deaths following an inquest). (KPI 1)	95% of deaths registered within 5 days of occurrence	Non-compliant - 81% attained
All deaths after inquest accurately registered on receipt of the coroner's certificate. (KPI 1)	90% to be registered on day of receipt of coroner's certificate.	Non -Compliant – earliest registered day after, some a number of days after receipt
Completed forms of declaration (birth, still birth & death) sent to receiving authority for registration on receipt	Completed outward declarations accurately completed and sent to receiving authority on the same day	Compliant - post book shows date sent same day that declaration is made
Inward declarations promptly processed.	90% of incoming declaration registered within 24 hours of receipt	Compliant
Requisitioning of responsible person to attend registrar's office and register birth.	Procedure in place for reminding of outstanding registration after 28 days and issuing formal requisition after 42 days.	Compliant – Nominated Officer carries out this function
Scrutiny of medical certificate of cause of death and reportable deaths referred to Coroner prior to registration.	Referral to coroner followed up by completion of form 52	Compliant – cases referred with form 52 being issued
All relevant statistical information requested and recorded.	Basis of request for information clearly explained to customers	Non-Compliant – questions not always clearly explained
Burial or cremation certificates accurately completed and issued at the appropriate time	Relevant documents issued.	Compliant
Applications for corrections and re-registrations processed and effected in accordance with statute	90% of applicants offered appointment within 7 working days of Registration Officer receiving GRO notification. Corrections accurately carried out.	Non-compliant - Incomplete evidence to suggest timescale is being met

2. Marriage and civil partnership activity		
Task & Statutory Requirement	National Standard	Findings
Taking notices of marriage or Civil Partnership to allow event to take place as planned.	Couples able to give notice in time to allow the marriage or civil partnership to take place as planned	Compliant
Accurate completion and processing of notices in accordance with legal requirements.	Preliminaries to Marriage and Civil Partnership completed in accordance with legal requirements.	Compliant
For ceremonies, the provision of a room within the register office to accommodate the couple and two guests for statutory fee.	Room identified on plan approved by the RG. Couples offered choice of words of declaration and contract provided for in legislation	Compliant

APPENDIX

B *continued*

Marriages registered immediately following the event.	Marriages accurately recorded immediately after event.	Compliant
Civil Partnerships recorded onto RON within 2 working days of formation.	Civil Partnerships recorded onto RON within 2 working days of the formation.	Compliant - 100% achieved <i>(Sample Apr 2008 – Mar 2009)</i>
Approved premises applications processed in accordance with Marriages and Civil Partnerships (AP) Regulations 2005	Procedures in place for approval process to be managed.	Compliant
Local authority maintains the Approved Premises register	Controls in place to manage the expiry and renewal of licences	Compliant – <i>register maintained by Registration Manager at RO.</i>

3. Records, returns and certificates

Task & Statutory Requirement	National Standard	Findings
Quarterly copies certified and submitted to RG within 28 days of the end of the relevant quarter.	All returns made in accordance with statutory requirements and timescales	Non-compliant – <i>returns outstanding for last 5 quarters</i>
Occasional copies of corrected entries not on RON submitted within 7 days of correction	All returns made in accordance with statutory requirements and timescales	Non-Compliant – <i>Incomplete evidence to suggest timescale is being met</i>
Notifications to Health Authority, tax, electoral and education authorities, and to Local Safeguarding Children Boards made in accordance with statutory timescales	All returns made in accordance with statutory requirements and timescales	Compliant
Suspected sham marriages or civil partnerships reported to Home Office	All returns made in accordance with statutory requirements and timescales	Compliant – <i>although low rate of suspected sham marriages has meant few reported over recent years</i>
Registers to be kept in repository approved by the Registrar General	Registers stored to prevent deterioration and in secure and accessible location.	Compliant
Index to be prepared and made publicly available for deposited registration records	Provide public access to indexes on request.	Compliant
Certificates from entries in deposited registers issued in response to application (KPI 3)	95% of applications dealt with within 5 working days of application being received.	Compliant – <i>100% achieved.</i>

4. Citizenship activity

Task & Statutory Requirement	National Standard	Findings
Provision of or make arrangements for premises where citizenship ceremonies may be held.	Premises available for ceremonies.	Compliant
Ceremony must take place within 3 months of approval and must be conducted by a superintendent registrar or deputy.	Ceremony held within 3 months of applicant being informed that application has been successful. (See also <u>good practice brochure</u>).	Compliant
Citizenship certificates to be dated correctly and notification sent to Home Office within 14 days.	Citizenship certificate accurately completed and notification sent to within 14 days of the ceremony.	Non-Compliant - <i>no evidence to suggest standard is met</i>

APPENDIX

C GPG ASSESSMENT OF NON-STATUTORY STANDARDS

1. Customer service	
Key Activity & National Standards	Level of attainment and comments
1.1 Customer Satisfaction (KPI 4) 90% customer satisfaction level. Surveys undertaken to cover satisfaction with service access and availability; areas of service delivery dissatisfaction identified and acted upon; results published	Partly attained – <i>customer surveys in place to gauge satisfaction levels but results not compiled or published</i>
1.2 Compliments and Complaints (KPI 5) Formal complaints received to be less than 0.5% of registration activities; clear, visual Compliments and Complaints policy in place; results published annually.	Mostly attained – <i>for 2008/2009 there were 4 complaints recorded; procedure to complain available via council’s website but visibility at the register office should be enhanced. No results published</i>
1.3 Consultation Public views used to inform Service Delivery Plan; public/staff consultation strategy in place and reviewed.	Partly attained – <i>no formal engagement with public and stakeholders has taken place</i>
1.4 On arrival - waiting times (KPI 2a) (ii) <i>Those offices with appointment system</i> 90% of customers seen within 10 minutes of appointment time	Partly attained – <i>Observations during the inspection showed that all customers were seen within 10 minutes of their appointment. No formal records kept</i>
1.5 Waiting Times for Appointments (KPI 2a) (i) 95% of customers to be able to obtain an appointment for business as follows: Births/declaration – 3 working days; Deaths/still births/declaration – 2 working days; Marriage/CP notice 5 working days. Customers without an appointment able to complete their business on the day if they choose to wait	Fully attained – <i>Appointments available within the statutory timescales</i> <i>Very few walk in customers, but they are seen by the nominated officer.</i>
1.6 Information about Services provided Available for statutory and non-statutory functions; in corporate format and obtainable at appropriate outlets; reviewed on a regular basis	Fully attained – <i>information available on the website, range of material displayed in public areas at the Register Office</i>
1.7 e-facilities Up to date and informative web site; credit/debit card payment facilities; e-appointment booking system in place	Partly attained – <i>Up to date website, but no automated booking system, or credit/debit payment facilities available</i>
2. Business continuity and resources	
Key Activity & National Standards	Level of attainment and comments
2.1 Business Continuity Business Continuity plan in place linked to corporate policy and other key stakeholders; staff awareness of plan; business critical levels agreed with IT; reviewed and tested regularly; Risk Register in place	Fully attained – <i>BCP in place relating to Register Office activities, linked to corporate policy and other key stakeholders</i>
2.2 Resources Sufficient levels of appropriately trained staff employed to meet service delivery plan commitments.	Mostly attained – <i>most key staff trained in all registration duties. Temporary staff currently cover 2 vacancies. There is no dedicated training officer</i>
3. Leadership	
Key Activity & National Standards	Level of attainment and comments
3.1 Developing a direction for the Service Clear statement of Service Aims and Objectives (“Mission”) with objectives linked to council vision. Annual Service Plan informed through customer and staff consultation; reviewed to identify success and failure; service leaders engaged in processes/activities; aware of national agenda; staff management undertaken; proper financial control	Mostly attained – <i>vision in place to move service forward. Staff appraisal system, electronic accounting system and audits in place. Customers/stakeholders need to feed into formal Service Plan.</i>

APPENDIX

C *continued*

3.2 Engagement with customers and key partners External partners identified and engaged with; account taken of feedback/comments; Elected members involved	Partly attained – <i>partners identified and meetings held with them although feedback and views need to be sought</i>
3.3 Developing an appropriate culture/leading by example Clear values and behaviours in place and used when making decisions affecting staff, customers and key partners; action taken when behaviours and decisions not in accordance with the values for the Service; staff trained on fairness and diversity issues	Fully attained
3.4 Managing Change Service leaders aware of factors affecting service delivery; change communicated to staff; staff engaged in designing changes and improvements to service delivery; changes managed effectively	Mostly attained – <i>good lines of communication in place; Opportunities identified and consultations with staff made to develop service. Individual or group projects carried out and reported back through staff meetings, presentations. Monitoring of success has been sporadic.</i>
3.5 Managing Systems Systems in place to collect, collate and provide leaders with information regarding the achievement of objectives and delivery of service plans; clear roles and responsibilities for staff; effective succession plan in place.	Mostly attained – <i>Clear roles and responsibilities in place for staff; some manual monitoring systems in place. A structured staff development system is in place which provides progression opportunities for staff.</i>
3.6 Improving Performance Service is designed/structured to deliver continuous improvement within available resources; performance standards and team targets in place and communicated to staff; Guide to Good Practice is used to evaluate and improve key processes/practices; responsive to internal and external audit reports.	Partly attained – <i>Service Delivery Plan lists improvement priorities and other planned projects. GPG is used to set standards. Some development needs identified in previous Service Delivery Inspection are still an issue</i>

4. Training and development	
Key Activity & National Standards	Level of attainment and comments
4.1 Induction Corporate and registration induction in place and evaluated	Partly attained – <i>Induction training is provided. Registration functions to be formalised. Training not currently evaluated.</i>
4.2 Identify and plan training needs – current and future Training plans in place for both existing staff and new starters which identifies skills required to undertake work and development needs; effective delivery of training; review of training needs; training delivered for new legislative changes; aware of GRO instruction.	Partly attained – <i>induction training for new starters is in place. Training plan has not been formalised</i>
4.3 Delivery methods Developmental activities include work shadowing, cascade training, mentoring and internal discussion groups.	Fully attained
4.4 Access to or appoint competent trainer Access to corporate and/or service training officer.	Partly attained – <i>Trainers identified for new staff from experienced members, but no dedicated training officer in post. Training bought in from other districts.</i>
4.5 Evaluation, and records of training Corporate training record; staff are set annual objectives against which performance is reviewed; staff aware of their role and responsibility	Partly attained – <i>performance appraisal system in place but there are no corporate training records</i>
4.6 Active regional training group Participate in a regional training group.	Not attained – <i>South West Regional Training group provides information on its activities but Plymouth are not represented at the meetings</i>
4.7 Sharing of good practice Sharing ideas and good practice within training group. Training as a standard item on team meetings	Not attained

APPENDIX

D ASSESSMENT OF TECHNICAL DELIVERY AND PROCESSES

The tables below grades technical performance against the key activities within the registration process at an office-wide level. Where appropriate, development needs have been recorded.

Markings: 4 = *Fully compliant*; 3 = *Mostly compliant*; 2 = *Partly compliant*; 1 = *Non-compliant*

MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP (PART 1) TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT OF NOTICE PROCEDURES	Mark
Customer process from point of arrival to start of registration	4
Customers fully and consistently advised as to the documentation required for giving notice	4
Couples interviewed separately	4
Preliminary questioning to ensure marriage/ CP notice could be completed	4
Explanation of process given and due procedure followed	4
Questioning full, open and properly directed throughout	4
Names, aliases and ages properly sought, checked and recorded.	4
Condition properly checked and details recorded.	4
Places, addresses and residency fully checked/ recorded.	4
Current marriage/ CP venue thoroughly checked and details accurately recorded	4
Occupations detailed - expanded as required.	4
Relationships ascertained	4
Nationality thoroughly checked	4
Appropriate Notice declarations completed	4
Notice checked and serious nature impressed before signing; first notice properly attested before commencing second notice	4
Appropriate advice given regarding notice period, display, issue and collection	4
Suspected sham marriages being reported to the Home Office	4
Notices entered and displayed according to statutory requirements	3
Comparison and information copy action accurately undertaken	4
Effective process in place to ensure the issue of SR's Certificate of Marriage/ Schedule	4
Effective and efficient use of time and systems at notice attestation and ceremonies	4

MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP (PART 2) TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT OF CEREMONY AND REGISTRATION DUTIES	Mark ↓
SR's Certificate for Marriage and CP Schedules checked for validity	4
Venue/ room meets prescribed requirements	4
Couples clearly established at outset of pre marriage / CP interview	4
Questioning full and direct throughout	4
Amendments to couples details recorded on reverse of own SR's Certificate	2
Established procedure between interviews and ceremony	4
Ceremony conducted in line with statutory requirements	4
Register entry completed in line with statutory requirements	4
Correct procedure followed for all types of corrections	4
Associated paperwork in order (e.g. Widows cards)	2
Marriage QCCs actioned in accordance with GRO instructions	1
Marriage indexing is up to date	4

APPENDIX

D *continued*

BIRTH, STILL-BIRTH AND DEATH TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT OF REGISTRATION PROCEDURES AND DUTIES	Mark
Customer process from point of arrival to start of registration	4
Checks made to effect registration (e.g. Medical Certificate Cause of Death)	4
Relationships and qualification to register clearly established at outset	2
Customers advised regarding parental responsibility, re-registration and registration utilising father's name (where applicable)	4
Questioning full and open throughout	3
Names and aliases properly sought and recorded	4
Age and marital condition properly sought and recorded	4
Places and addresses properly collected and recorded	3
Detailed recording of occupations (expanded where required)	3
Statistical questions properly introduced and explained to customers	2
All statistical data collected	4
Review of Information: Details checked by informants and correctly signed off	4
Appropriate birth and death documentation issued and explained at end of registration	4
Loose-leaf register in order (accurate, complete and in sequential order)	3
Ancillary duties fully completed (e.g. Greens, F111s, CONL)	4
Deaths referred to Coroner as appropriate (Form 52 completed)	4
Statutory returns actioned appropriately	4
Declaration and Re-registration process actioned appropriately and accurately	4
Correct procedures followed for all types of corrections	4
Requisition process followed	4
Birth, Still-birth and Death QCCs actioned in accordance with GRO instruction	1
Effective and efficient use of time and systems during registrations	4
Documentation in order and filed appropriately	3
Awareness of and access to up to date GRO directives (handbook, circulars etc)	4

Technical recommendations

Marriage

1. Ensure the timely submission of marriage QCCs
2. Changes should be made on the reverse of the marriage authorities and fronts should be unmarked
3. Widow/widowers cards should be completed if appropriate

Birth, Still-birth and Death

1. The recording of occupations could be expanded upon – eg with regard to company directors, engineers, teachers
2. Use correct place of birth conventions– there were examples in the registers of Maesteg, Wales; Wrexham, Wales; Edgware, London; Hayes; Abingdon
3. Formally introduce Statistical Questions and ensure distinction is made between compulsory and voluntary sections.
4. Ensure the timely submission of birth, still-birth and death QCCs

APPENDIX

E STOCK AND SECURITY ASSESSMENT

The tables below assesses the management and control of stock and registers and the degree of security within the register office. Where appropriate, development needs have been recorded.

Markings: 4 = *Fully compliant*; 3 = *Mostly compliant*; 2 = *Partly compliant*; 1 = *Non-compliant*

	Mark
<u>Stock Control</u>	
Security of certificate stock at time of registration	4
Security of certificate stock when not in use (overnight)	4
Flu pandemic stock suitably labelled and secured separately from main stock	4
Record of Issue counterfoils completed at point of sale	4
Cashbook in operation to record daily business	4
Fees received for services rendered banked according to LA instruction	4
Counterfoils filed appropriately and kept for accounting purposes (minimum of 2 years)	4
Requisition and Stock Return Form in order	4
GRO Stock Record matches stock held at the register office	4
<u>Register Control</u>	
Last bound registers appropriately closed	4
Register pages accounted for in current register	4
Historic registers housed and secured appropriately (including Title Page)	4
Historic registers easily accessed for certificate production	4
Indexes maintained to GRO requirements	4
Same day return of marriage registers to register office if attendance at an approved premise	4
<u>Security</u>	
Effective security of building in place (eg burglar alarm, CCTV, security guards)	4
Offices and restricted areas appropriately secured (lockable/access control)	4
General Search facility in place and securely managed	4
Customers appropriately escorted and accompanied at all times	4
Effective management of keys/swipe cards/security codes	4
Marriage and CP Notices displayed to public held in secure environment	4
Strong Room meets GRO specifications	4
GRO RON User List matches current staff profile	4
PC Password protocols in place	4

APPENDIX

F CUSTOMER JOURNEY

As part of the inspection process the “customer journey” was explored.

1. How easy is it for the customer to make contact with the registration service?		
Contact number accessed:	via website	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	other council offices	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	stakeholder establishments	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	local directories	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
First point of contact (by telephone)	Direct to register office (registration office)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct to register office (reception point)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Direct to Contact Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency contact number in operation		<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Comment:</u> The public can access Plymouth services with little difficulty during normal business hours but there are no out of hours emergency arrangements		

2. How easy is it for the customer to access the registration service?		
Convenient central location of register office		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Additional service points within registration district		<input type="checkbox"/>
Good public transport links in place		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Opening hours in line with other corporate services		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Extended opening hours in operation		<input type="checkbox"/>
Lunchtime opening in operation		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>Comment:</u> The office is located close to the town centre. There has been no public consultation in relation to additional service points or extended opening hours		

3. How easy is it for the customer to locate and access the register office?		
Good signage in place (street sign to RO <u>and</u> signs indicating location of RO)		<input type="checkbox"/>
On-site car parking/cycle area/disabled bays		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Drop-off points (for bridal cars)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direct access (office at street level with no steps or other barriers)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At point of entry to building, access arrangements for disabled customers in place		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reception point in place to greet/direct customers		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>Comment:</u> Signage is in place outside the office but none in the streets leading to it from the town centre		

4. How easy is it for customers to conduct their business quickly?		
Waiting time for an appointment meets national standards (all events)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Waiting time from arrival to registration meets national standards		<input type="checkbox"/>
Walk-in provision available		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>Comment:</u> Observations show minimum waiting times although no formal monitoring takes place.		

APPENDIX

F *continued*

5. Is there good information about the registration service available to the customer?	
Wide selection of statutory notices, booklets and leaflets within public areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wide selection of local information within public areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Use of IT to convey information (eg plasma screen) within public areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Easy access to registration services on website	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
All information on website is up to date <u>and</u> relevant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Promotional material in place (eg marriage brochure)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Compliments and complaints policy in place <u>and</u> visible to customers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Service standards/targets publicised	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Comment:</u> Although there is a wide range of local information available there is scope for more information to be on offer of a statutory nature, for example, statutory fees, how to register a birth or death, passport information.	

6. What facilities and enhancements are available for customers at the register office?	
Garden area	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Good backdrop for photo opportunities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Statutory ceremony room (meeting national standard)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Decommissioned rooms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Waiting areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Separate waiting areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quiet room available for distressed informants	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baby changing facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Public toilets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Public telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's play area	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water dispenser/Drinks dispenser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobility provisions for disabled customers (eg ramps, wide doors, lower counter)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Visual provisions for disabled customers (eg Braille, large signs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Aural provisions for disabled customers (eg hearing loop, microphone)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disabled washroom facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rooms: clean and tidy/room for business to be conducted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wide range of choice with regard enhancements at ceremonies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Payment by credit/debit card	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Special arrangements for still-birth/neo natal death arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Home registrations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Partnership working with associated groups (eg bereavement)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Comment:</u> A reasonable range of facilities are available for customers.	

APPENDIX

F *continued*

7. Is there a good range of other services available to the public?	
Private citizenship ceremonies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Baby naming ceremonies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Re-affirmation of vows	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Civil Funerals	<input type="checkbox"/>
National Checking Service (NCS)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:	

8. How did staff engage with the public?	
Confidentiality respected at all times	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Understanding needs of customer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Clear and concise explanation of procedures etc	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Good explanation of certificates and forms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Showed sympathy/empathy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Receptive to questions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Professional outlook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Comment: Staff offer a good standard of customer care. This was observed in the general office, at registrations and ceremonies, and during the mystery shopper exercise	