

# WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## Report by the Chief Executive

Corporate Services Committee: 26 April 2006

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**Subject: Performance of Registration Service**

### **1. Purpose**

**1.1** The purpose of this report is:-

- (a) to provide the Committee with information on the performance of Registration Service in West Dunbartonshire in terms of the national enhanced performance indicators produced by the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) for 2003; and
- (b) to inform the Committee of the outcome of a recent Registration customer service survey carried out earlier this year.

### **2. Background**

**2.1** The work of the Registration Service in Scotland is regulated and monitored by the GROS. Every registration office is examined on an annual basis and statistics on their performances are collated and issued by the GROS. The statistics currently available relate to information gathered during 2003; the national statistics for 2004 are due to be released in May 2006. This report highlights how the West Dunbartonshire Registration Service performed in 2003 compared with the Scottish average and with other registration services of a similar size.

**2.2** In January/February 2006, a customer survey was issued to 322 customers of the Registration Service to ascertain their views on the performance of the Registration Service. From the total of 322 issued, 215 questionnaires were returned; of which 188 related to customers who had visited the office and 27 customers who had contacted our offices by telephone; this equated to an overall return rate of 66.8%. This report provides the Committee with a summary of the analysis of the customer survey responses.

### **3. Main Issues**

#### Enhanced Performance Indicators

**3.1** The four authorities selected for comparison are Argyll and Bute, Inverclyde, East Lothian and Stirling which deal with a similar number of registrations per annum as West Dunbartonshire.

**3.2** The total number of registrations for each comparator authority for 2003 was as follows:-

Argyll and Bute	2633
East Lothian	2447
Inverclyde	2247
Stirling	2850
West Dunbartonshire	2695

**3.3** The GROS enhanced performance indicators focus mainly on measures of accuracy and efficiency. In terms of both measures of accuracy (see charts in Appendix 1) i.e. 'percentage of records error free' and 'number of errors', West Dunbartonshire was top of the comparator authorities with 97% of records error free with a total of 88 errors. Both sets of statistics indicate that the service also performed above the Scottish average.

**3.4** In terms of the efficiency, the measures used are 'Events per member of staff per year' and 'Hours per event' (see charts in Appendix 1). These statistics are based on a very crude calculation of the total number of hours available for registration and the total of number of staff authorised to perform registrations. However, they do not take into account that some registration staff are part-time or job-share, nor do they take into account any other duties performed by the Registration Service e.g. the processing of footwear and clothing grants and school meal applications, the performance of Citizenship Ceremonies, school attendance, etc. This aside, West Dunbartonshire Council's performance is still good in comparison with the other authorities (second top of comparator authorities) and is better than the Scottish average.

#### Analysis of Customer Survey

**3.5** The recent customer survey carried out by the Registration Service in West Dunbartonshire has produced a very positive response from members of the public. Full details of the analysis are provided in Appendix 2 to this report. In terms of the overall level of service provided: 89.1% of respondents indicated that they thought that the service provided was excellent, 10.4% indicated that the service was very good and 0.5% indicated that the service was good. No respondents indicated that the overall level of service was poor or below average.

**3.6** In addition to seeking information on staff performance, the questionnaire asked for comments on the accommodation, accessibility of the building and its facilities. As can be seen from the summary of comments in Appendix 3 to this report, a few respondents have expressed the view that the waiting and interview rooms in Alexandria are too small; a problem which we have been aware of for some time. Other respondents have mentioned the lack of seating in our waiting areas and some have highlighted the difficulties in parking, particularly at the Council Offices, Rosebery Place, Clydebank.

**3.7** In response to these comments, additional chairs, with armrests, have been purchased for all three registration offices and a technical survey of the accommodation in Alexandria has been carried out by officers from Technical Services. A number of proposals to improve the layout of the accommodation at Alexandria have been produced but the cost of the works is likely to exceed £25,000 and therefore this will require a bid to be made for capital monies. A note of the comments made in respect of car parking in Clydebank has been passed to the appropriate officer.

#### **4. Personnel Issues**

**4.1** There are no personnel issues.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

**5.1** As stated in Paragraph 3.7 above, capital expenditure will be required to improve the office accommodation at Alexandria. A bid for capital expenditure will be submitted for consideration in the budget estimates for next financial year.

#### **6. Conclusions**

**6.1** It is clear from the national enhanced performance indicators and the outcome of the recent survey that the West Dunbartonshire Registration Service is currently performing above the national average and is providing an excellent level of service to its customers. While it is clear that some improvements can be made to our existing accommodation, the overall level of service provided is very high and deserves recognition.

#### **7. Recommendations**

**7.1** It is recommended:-

- (a) that all Registration staff be congratulated on their excellent level of performance and service to customers; and
- (b) that the Committee notes that a capital bid will be made next year for monies to improve the accommodation at Alexandria Registration Office.

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Tim Huntingford  
Chief Executive

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**Person to Contact:** George Hawthorn, Senior Administrative Officer, Legal and Administrative Services, Chief Executive's Department, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton.  
Telephone 01389 – 737204 or e-mail:  
george.hawthorn@west-dunbarton.gov.uk.

**Background Papers:** General Register Office for Scotland – Enhanced Performance Indicators 2003 – summary

**Wards Affected:** All Council Wards.