SUBJECT: Newborn Registration Services (FCS07073) (City Wide)

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report FCS07073 regarding the changes to the Newborn Registration Service be received for information.

Joseph L. Rinaldo
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Municipalities in Ontario act as an agent for the Provincial Government to register Births and Deaths and to issue Marriage Licences. The current paper based Birth Registration process can take, on average, four to six months to complete. Parents are then required to apply for a Birth Certificate, which used to take up to an additional 3 months to obtain from the Office of the Registrar General.

The recent implementation of online Birth Certificate request process, launched by Service Canada, now promises delivery of the Birth Certificate within 15 days. The next phase to this successful launch of Newborn Registration Services is to launch online Birth Registration throughout Ontario. The City of Hamilton has been advised by Service Ontario that this online service will be launched in Hamilton hospitals sometime between November and December this year.
BACKGROUND:

Currently, when a child is born, the birthing hospital or midwife submits a Notice of Live Birth to the local municipality. Parents are then required to submit a Statement of Live Birth to the same local municipality. The municipality matches the paperwork and verifies that the information is accurate and forwards the forms to the Office of the Registrar General to register the birth of the child. Subsequently, the parent can apply for a Birth Certificate.

In an effort to streamline the Newborn Registration Service (NRS), the Office of the Registrar General and Service Ontario, as a joint initiative, are rolling out a new online Birth Registration process. This new service will enable parents and hospitals to submit birth information electronically, directly to the Office of the Registrar General for processing.

Phase 1 of the Newborn Registration Service was launched through 8 birthing hospitals in March 2006. This service bundled a number of activities for parents – completing the Statement of Live Birth (which was still to be printed and submitted to the local municipality), submitting an online application for a Birth Certificate and submitting an online application for a social insurance number. Response to the pilot was very positive and rollout of this initiative to parents across the province occurred in September 2006.

The second phase of this initiative eliminates the printing of the Statement of Live Birth and the submission of same to the local municipality. In May 2007, Service Ontario launched a pilot of phase 2 of this project. Parents giving birth in Oakville, Brantford and Thunder Bay hospitals now submit their Statement of Live Birth online. At the same time, the hospital where the birth occurred submits the supporting registration information online. Both online forms go directly to the Office of the Registrar General for registration.

Once the pilot is successfully completed, this phase will be rolled out across the province, hospital by hospital. This implementation will continue at regular intervals through to the end of 2009. The rollout of this process in Hamilton is scheduled to begin in November or December this year.

Municipalities will continue to play an important role in the Birth Registration process for one year from the time the online service is implemented in a municipality. After that year, municipalities will no longer have a role in the Birth Registration process but will continue to issue marriage licences and register deaths and stillbirths for the Office of the Registrar General.

ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:

N/A

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:

N/A
FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Over the past 5 years, City of Hamilton has processed an average of 6,300 Birth Registrations annually. The City’s revenues for processing Birth Registration are approximately $130,000 annually. There will be a loss of revenues for the City as a result of the implementation of the online registration process but since municipalities will continue to have a role in this process in the first year of its implementation, it is unclear what that loss in revenues will amount to over the first year.

After the first year, the City will no longer be involved in processing Birth Registrations and the loss of revenues from processing Birth Registrations will be realized.

POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:

N/A

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:

N/A

CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

By evaluating the “Triple Bottom Line”, (community, environment, economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

Evaluate the implications of your recommendations by indicating and completing the sections below. Consider both short-term and long-term implications.

Community Well-Being is enhanced. □ Yes  ☑ No

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced. □ Yes  ☑ No

Economic Well-Being is enhanced. □ Yes  ☑ No

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines? □ Yes  ☑ No

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants? □ Yes  ☑ No