

Budget & Corporate Scrutiny Management Board 20 March 2024

**Progress update related to the impact on Registration related services
when the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital opens in
2024**



When and why

- From 2024 an increase in demand for Registration related services is certain
- Acute healthcare services will move from City Hospital in Birmingham to the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital in Smethwick.



Impact

- Increase of up to 5000 registration (birth 4000 and death 1000) events for Sandwell as a Local Registration Service.
- Estimated 300- 400 more cases referred to the Black Country Coroner.
- 40% increase in the number of cases referred to the Bereavement Services team related to Public Health Act funerals.



What have we been working on ?

Recruitment and training

- Five out of six additional six full-time equivalent posts needed have successfully been budgeted for and recruited to across the three areas of work within Registration Services. We anticipate the one remaining vacancy will be filled by June 2024.
- To support both the Senior and Area Coroner, new Assistant Coroners have been appointed to support the service primarily from a resilience perspective.
- Training and development of all staff is progressing well.



Facilities

- Changes and improvements to Highfields House, West Bromwich (Sandwell's Register Office).
 - DDA compliance facilities now in place. New access lifts installed across the building.
 - Improved reception area and new appointment rooms are now available for use.
 - Updated and improved welfare facilities for our staff.
 - Refreshed and new ceremony rooms as well the installation as music, recording and webcasting facilities.
- Our coroners court and customer facilities at Jack Judge House have been expanded and improved.
 - A new purpose-built digital second court is now in use
 - A new reception area, advocate and jury rooms have been created.



Case management systems, business process service reviews and customer access

- Reviews in our approach to death, birth registration and certificate production has been completed.
- Death certification reforms preparation with the introduction of the Statutory Medical Examiner Service in April 2024, which will see all deaths reviewed by either a Medical Examiner or the Coroner.
- Sustained approach to “Tell us Once and Enrichment Service” which helps bereaved families notify key stakeholders of their loved ones passing.
- A new more efficient case management system for our Coroners Team iCasework has been introduced.
- A new case management system for our bereavement services team in support of more efficient ways of working and an improved customer experience for our service users is being progressed which is expected to be in place by July 2024.
- Access to our service for our customers across all three areas, is available online, by telephone and in person.



Recommendations

- Board considers and comments upon progress approach taken and progress to date.
- Identifies any recommendations it wishes to make.

