

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Application for Approved Premises Status – The Sage Gateshead

**REPORT OF:** Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance  
Paul Dowling, Strategic Director, Communities and Environment

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## **SUMMARY**

This report advises the Committee of an application on behalf of the Sage Gateshead, for the premises to be approved as a venue for the solemnisation of civil marriages and registration of civil partnerships.

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### **Statutory Context**

1. Premises may be approved as a venue for the solemnisation of marriages under the provisions of the Marriage Act 1949 and the registration of civil partnerships under the Civil Partnership Act 2004. Premises are approved for a three-year period, subject to their being seemly and dignified and to satisfactory public order, fire and health and safety checks.

### **Application**

2. North Music Trust has made application on behalf of the Sage Gateshead, St Marys Square, Gateshead Quays, NE8 2JR

### **Inspection and Consultation**

3. The premises have been inspected by the representative of the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance and reviewed by the Service Director, Development, Transport and Public Protection. The premises satisfy the requirement to be a seemly and dignified venue for the proceedings in accordance with the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005. Consultative arrangements are set out in the appendix. There are no objections to the application.
4. Approval is recommended to marriages and civil partnerships taking place in Hall One (maximum occupancy 1925), Hall Two (maximum occupancy 600), The Barbour Room (maximum occupancy 300) and Northern Rock Foundation Hall (maximum occupancy 300).

### **Recommendation**

5. The Committee is asked to approve the application.
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**Policy Context**

1. The proposal supports the vision for Gateshead as outlined in the Sustainable Communities Strategy and the Council's Corporate Plan, in particular supporting the building of cohesive and diverse communities.

**Background**

2. Premises may be approved as a venue for the solemnisation of marriages under the provisions of the Marriage Act 1949 and the registration of civil partnerships under the Civil Partnership Act 2004, in accordance with the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005.

**Consultation**

3. In accordance with the regulations, the application has been advertised in the local press. The councillors for the Bridges ward have been consulted and the cabinet member with responsibility for safer stronger communities and culture has been advised. There are no objections to the application.

**Alternative Options**

4. Premises meeting the criteria under the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005 and guidance issued by the Registrar General must be considered for approved premises status. There is no alternative to considering the application.

**Implications of Recommended Option**

5. **Financial Implications** – The costs of processing the application and public advertisement are met from fee income. The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources, confirms that there are no financial implications arising from this report.
6. **Risk Management Implications** – The Service Director, Development, Transport and Public Protection has consulted with Tyne and Wear Fire Service, Northumbria Police and on building control for purposes of health and safety and public order. There are no objections to the application.
7. **Human Resources Implications** - There are no human resources implications arising from the proposal.
8. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - The approval of premises for the solemnisation of civil marriages and registration of civil partnerships provides opportunities for people to enter into secular, civil, proceedings in a location of their choice, rather than at the offices of the district registrar.
9. **Crime and Disorder Implications** - The Service Director, Development, Transport and Public Protection has consulted with Northumbria Police on matters relating to public order. There are no objections to the application.

10. **Health Implications**  
The approval of premises for the solemnisation of civil marriages and registration of civil partnerships increases the opportunities for couples to enter into legally recognised relationships, with their attendant benefits, which, support personal and social stability and contribute to wellbeing.
11. **Sustainability Implications** – There are no sustainability implications arising directly from the proposal. Those attending at an approved premise would be likely to travel to the premises for a celebration of the event even if the marriage ceremony or civil partnership registration was to take place at a separate location.
12. **Human Rights Implications** - The approval of premises for solemnisation of civil marriages and registration of civil partnerships provides opportunities for people to enter into secular, civil, proceedings in a building of their choice, rather than at the offices of the district registrar.
13. **Area and Ward Implications** – The Sage Gateshead is in the Bridges ward in the Central neighbourhood. The ward members have been consulted on the application. There are no objections.
14. **Background Information**
  - 1 .The Registrar General's Guidance to Authorities for the Approval of Premises as Venues for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships - Fourth Edition (Revised December 2011).
  2. Application form for The Sage Gateshead.