

Gifts , Hospitality and Received Donation Policy

Gifts and Hospitality

Introduction

Councillors and any employees should be cautious of accepting any offer or gift, favour or hospitality that could be perceived as being offered because of their position as a parish councillor or officer. It is not always inappropriate or unlawful to accept a gift or hospitality, but each individual case should be considered as to whether it is appropriate to accept any gifts, or hospitality and councillors should have regard to how the acceptance could be perceived by others. It is best practice that the council has a gifts and hospitality policy that is provided to all council members at time of being elected or co-opted onto the council and explained so they have a clear understanding.

Legal Context

It is a criminal offence, under the Bribery Act 2010, to corruptly solicit or receive any gift, reward or advantage as an inducement to doing, or forbearing to do anything, in respect of any transaction involving the council. The onus is on the councillor or official to disprove corruption in relation to a gift from a person holding or seeking to obtain a contract from the council. It is a criminal offence for a person corruptly to give or offer any gift, reward or advantage as inducement or reward to a councillor for doing or forbearing to do anything as a member of that council. If this occurs, the councillor or official must immediately report to the Monitoring Officer any circumstances when an *inappropriate gift or hospitality* was offered and may be required to assist the Police in providing evidence.

Permissible gifts and hospitality

Councillors and staff may accept gifts/hospitality provided in the normal course of duties as a member. This may include:

- Civic hospitality provided by another local authority
- Normal and modest refreshment in connection with any meeting in the course of the work as a councillor (e.g. tea, coffee and other normal beverages and biscuits)
- Tickets for sporting, cultural and entertainment events, which are sponsored or promoted by the council or bodies to which the councillor has been appointed by the council, and the tickets are offered in relation to that sponsorship or promotion.
- Small low value items below £25.00 (e.g. pens, calendars, diaries, flowers and other tokens/mementos)

Drinks or other modest refreshment in the normal course of socialising arising consequentially for council business (e.g. inclusion in a round of drinks after a meeting). Modest meals provided as a matter of courtesy in the office or meeting place of a person with whom the council has a business connection.

- Souvenirs and gifts from other public bodies intended as personal gifts (e.g. arising from town twinning and civic events).

Gifts and Hospitality to avoid

Councillors may not accept a gift or hospitality as an inducement or reward for anything they do as a member of the council. If they have any suspicion that the motive behind the gift or

hospitality is an inducement or reward it should be declined and avoid giving any perception of soliciting such reward.

This includes gifts or hospitality:

- of significant value or whose value is excessive in the circumstances
- from any of the following sources:
 - parties involved with the council in a competitive tendering or other procurement process
 - applicants for planning permission and other applications for licenses, consents or approvals
 - applicants for grants, including voluntary bodies
 - parties in legal proceedings with the council
- if the councillor believes there will be an obligation to the provider as a consequence of receiving the gift.



Registration

A councillor must, within 28 days of receiving ANY gift or hospitality over the value of £25, provide written notification to the Clerk/Proper Officer of the Council to the existence and nature of that gift or hospitality, and must complete a gifts and hospitality registration form for all notifications. See form at end of document.

All such gifts or hospitality will be recorded and available for viewing by the public as part of this council's voluntary transparency code.

Received Donation Policy

General Principles

This council may enter into sponsorship or donation agreements, including a single donation, when the benefit to the community is clear and genuinely philanthropic as evidenced by the donor. Any such donations or sponsorship must be with or from organisations whose policies comply with the council's policies.

This council will not seek or accept donations or sponsorship if it could compromise or be seen to compromise the council's ability to exercise its powers and function.

A donation or sponsorship must not impose or imply conditions that could limit or appear to limit the council's ability to carry its functions impartially or ethically and must not have an agreement attached requiring the council to do anything in return for the donation or sponsorship.

Any such donations or sponsorship will be acknowledged in writing, recorded in an online register on the council's website, available for public viewing under this council's voluntary transparency code.

FAO the Proper Officer

Notification of Receipt of Gifts and Hospitality

Full details of the gift or hospitality	
Estimate of its value/cost?	
Who made the gift?	
When and where was it rec'd?	
Signed:	
Name:	
Date:	
Date of receipt by PO	
Action Required: publish on online register.	