

GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY POLICY

This Gifts and Hospitality Policy was adopted by the Council at the Full Council Meeting held in May 2023.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to establish controls to ensure compliance with all applicable anti-bribery and corruption regulations including the Bribery Act 2010 and to ensure the Council's business is conducted in a socially responsible and legal manner.

Scope

Bribery undermines democracy and the rule of law. Routine local council activities and decision making may expose councils to the risk of bribery offences being committed. Such risks could, for example, relate to entering contracts for the supply of goods or services or commenting on planning applications. It could be said the greater the range and /or financial value of activities carried out by a Council the greater the risk of bribery occurring.

Hospitality and Gifts

Councils may be offered corporate hospitality / gifts by those who want to supply goods and services to them, or by those seeking to win favour and/or favourably influence decisions on relevant matters placed before the Council. Bona fide hospitality to establish cordial relations or other business expenditure for activity intended to promote products and services is recognised as an established and important part of doing business. It is not the intention of the Bribery Act 2010 to criminalise such behaviour. Hospitality and promotional or other similar business expenditure can, however, be employed as bribes. The greater the expenditure and the more lavish the hospitality provided, the greater the inference that it is intended to influence another and to constitute bribery. This will depend on the nature of business and each council will need to form a view on what is acceptable hospitality. The timing of any hospitality and its purpose will also need to be considered. Councillors are subject to the terms of the Code of Conduct adopted by their Council and should apply them when approached to accept hospitality or gifts which offered by virtue of his or her office. Wherever possible, Councillors are encouraged to decline offers of hospitality and/or gifts.

Register of Hospitality and Gifts

To ensure transparency the Council resolved to maintain a Register of Hospitality and Gifts which is available to view on the Council's website. Councillors are prompted to update the Register any hospitality or gifts at the earliest opportunity and as a minimum at every scheduled meeting of the Full Council. All Staff will forward gifts to The Clerk. Where possible, these will be used as prizes for events raising funds for the Chairman's Charity. If a number of small gifts (valued at £5 or less) are received (for example at Christmas) these will be distributed fairly between all members of staff. Councillors will record hospitality and gifts, valued in excess of £25.00, in a register provided for the purpose.

Monitor & Review

Members will monitor the policy annually and review, as required.

Adopted in May 2023

Reviewed annually

Next Review: May 2027 unless required due to changes in legislation