



GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 15 FEBRUARY 2024

**SUBJECT: OFFICERS DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY
OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2023**

REPORT BY: HEAD OF PEOPLE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Governance and Audit Committee with information regarding the Register of Employees' Interests Forms completed by officers of the Council (excluding Schools) regarding Gifts and Hospitality for the period 1 October to 31 December 2023 ie the third quarter of the financial year 2023/2024 and a comparison with the previous three quarters.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Enclosed as Appendix 1 is a list of Register of Employees' Interests Forms in respect of Gifts and Hospitality completed by officers of the Council (excluding Schools) for the period 1 October to 31 December 2023.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Governance and Audit Committee are asked to note the contents of this report.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The recommendation is designed to ensure members of the Governance and Audit Committee have an oversight of the position in relation to officers' Gifts and Hospitality.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Council's Code of Conduct for Employees sets out guidance for employees on a range of issues, including the completion of a Register of Employee Interests form, which help maintain and improve the high standards of conduct within Local Government and protect employees from misunderstandings and confusion.

- 5.2 Completed Register of Employees' Interests forms are submitted to Heads of Service, Directors or the Chief Executive who countersign the forms to show they are aware of the declaration. The form also records details of any controls / action taken to protect the Council's interests in the circumstances outlined on the form. A copy of the countersigned form is given to the employee and a copy sent to Human Resources for filing on the employee's personal file.
- 5.3 The Head of Service, Director or Chief Executive retains the original form and maintains a summary spreadsheet to record the forms. On a monthly basis the summary spreadsheet or a nil return is submitted to Human Resources for collation and monitoring for consistency and compliance.
- 5.4 In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for Employees, Gifts / Hospitality of less than £25 may be accepted by the employee but any Gift / Hospitality which could be seen by a third party as placing the employee under an improper obligation such as more than one Gift / Hospitality from the same party must be refused, irrespective of its value.
- 5.5 Employees may accept small offers of Hospitality only where the activity is of a nature where there is a genuine need to impart information or to represent the Council in the community. Offers to attend purely social or sporting functions should be accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the Council should be seen to be represented.
- 5.6 The table below details the number of declarations regarding Gifts submitted by Directorate for the period 1 October to 31 December 2023 and the previous three quarters for comparison.

Directorate	Oct – Dec 2023	July – Sept 2023	April – June 2023	Jan – March 2023
Chief Executive	0	0	0	0
Economy and Environment	0	0	0	0
Education and Corporate Services	0	0	1	0
Social Services and Housing	1	0	0	0
Total	1	0	1	0

5.7 The table below details the number of declarations regarding Hospitality submitted by Directorate for the period 1 October to 31 December 2023 and the previous three quarters for comparison.

Directorate	Oct – Dec 2023	July – Sept 2023	April – June 2023	Jan – March 2023
Chief Executive	0	2	0	0
Economy and Environment	0	1	0	1
Education and Corporate Services	0	1	0	1
Social Services and Housing	0		0	0
Total	0	4	0	2

5.8 Conclusion

The Head of People Services will continue to monitor the declarations submitted and work with Heads of Service to improve their understanding, promote best practice and corporate compliance of the Code of Conduct where appropriate.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 There are no assumptions made within this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 As this report is for information only an Integrated Impact Assessment is not required.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The personnel implications are included in this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been included in the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Local Government Act 2000.

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Appendices:
Appendix 1 Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality 1 October to 31 December 2023

Appendix 1**Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality 1 October to 31 December 2023**

Directorate	Service Area	Post Title of Employee Making the Declaration	Type of Declaration	Details of Declaration	Post Title of Head of Service, Director or Chief Executive who authorised the declaration	Outcome
Social Services and Housing	Adult Services	Social Worker	Gift	Service user and their family. Supermarket gift voucher. Value £20.00.	Assistant Director	Accepted