
24th March 2016

Name of Cabinet Member:

N/A- Ethics Committee

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Executive Director of Resources

Ward(s) affected:

None

Title: Six Monthly Review of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

In its work programme for 2015/16 the Committee has decided to review entries in the Registers of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality for the first 6 months of the year. This report sets out the entries in the Registers for the period 1st July to 31st December 2015. It also includes an extract from the Council's Code of Conduct for Employees relating to gifts and hospitality.

Recommendations:

The Ethics Committee is recommended to consider the entries of gifts and hospitality received by officers for the last six months of 2015 and make any recommendations that it considers appropriate.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1: Extract from Code of Conduct for Employees: Gifts and Hospitality

Appendix 2: Table of Gifts and Hospitality received by Officers; July to December 2015

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Six Monthly Review of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The Committee's work programme includes an item for this meeting to review entries on the registers of officer gifts and hospitality for the last 6 months of the year.
- 1.2 Attached at Appendix 1 to this report is an extract from the Code of Conduct for Employees. This sets out the requirements for employees when being offered or accepting gifts or hospitality. The basic rules are:

(a) Gifts

- Personal gifts should never be accepted unless they are modest and are of token value (less than £25).
- The manager's permission must be obtained

Where small gifts, such as chocolates, are given as thanks for a service provided, these can be accepted if they are shared within the Team or raffled for charity. Gifts worth more than £25 should be refused. If this is not possible, the manager **should dispose of them to charity and record the fact in the register.**

(b) Hospitality

- Hospitality consisting of light refreshments, working lunch or other meals which are part of a visit, conference, meeting or promotional exercise is acceptable.
- Invitations to social events offered as part of normal working life, may be accepted if authorised in advance by the appropriate Assistant Director.
- Invitations to other types of hospitality which are not directly linked to the City Council's functions should not be accepted.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 At present the Chief Executive's Office and each Directorate maintains its own separate register of gifts and hospitality. Each register is slightly different in terms of how much information is recorded. All are maintained by the relevant Director's office apart from Public Health which has arrangements to log gifts and hospitality received on the register maintained by the Chief Executive's Office. The Chief Executive has a separate register for gifts and hospitality that he receives.
- 2.2 The Directorates have been asked to provide details of gifts and hospitality received during the last 6 months of the year. The position for each directorate is set out in the Table at Appendix 2.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

Each Directorate was asked to provide details of their registers.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5. Comments from Executive Director, Resources

- 5.1 Financial implications

There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

5.2 Legal implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report. However, reviewing the gifts and hospitality offered to employees on a regular basis will help to demonstrate that the Council continues to monitor and review ethical standards within the Council.

6. Other implications

None

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

Not applicable.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

Reviewing gifts and hospitality received by employees will help to reduce the risk of acceptance of inappropriate gifts or hospitality.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

Keeping matters such as this under review will help to promote high standards amongst elected members and employees in accordance with the Localism Act.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

There are no public sector equality duties which are of relevance.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None at this stage

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APPENDIX 1

Extract from Code of Conduct for Employees

13. Gifts and Hospitality and Sponsorship

13.1 Gifts

13.1.1 The City Council expects the conduct of all of its employees to be of the highest standard. Employees' actions must not be influenced by offers of gifts or hospitality and their actions must not give the impression that they are influenced in this way. Acceptance of any gift should be the exception. The City Council recognises that there are some items, of token value, which may be accepted.

13.1.2 You must not accept personal gifts of any kind, unless they are modest and are of token value (less than £25). Items such as coffee mugs, diaries, calendars or other promotional materials can be retained if your Manager agrees. However, these gifts must be recorded in the relevant hospitality register unless your Manager tells you otherwise. If your Manager does not allow you to accept any small gifts, you must return them politely, but firmly, telling the person who gave it why and recording it in the Hospitality Register.

13.1.3 Without causing offence, you should discourage service users or other organisations from offering gifts. However, where small gifts, such as chocolates, are given as thanks for a service provided, then these can be accepted if they are shared within the Team or raffled for charity. No gift of alcohol or tobacco should ever be accepted.

13.1.4 If gifts have a higher value than £25, then you should tactfully refuse them. If gifts of this value are delivered, they should be returned with an appropriate explanation. If gifts cannot be returned, then the Assistant Director, or his nominee, should dispose of them to charity and record this fact in the Hospitality Register.

13.1.5 Under no circumstances, should gifts of cash, or tokens or vouchers of a monetary value, be accepted.

13.2 Hospitality

13.2.1 In relation to the acceptance of hospitality, special care should be taken so as to ensure there can be no suggestion that an employee was influenced by such hospitality.

13.2.2 You should never accept a gift of hospitality from anyone who is, or may be in the foreseeable future, tendering for any contract with the Council, seeking employment with the Council, seeking any form of consent of grant, or is in dispute with the Council. You should always decline any gift or hospitality if you think the giver has an ulterior motive. You should always be sensitive to the possibility that the giver may think even small

gifts or simple hospitality may elicit a better service or preferential treatment in their dealings with the Council.

- 13.2.3 The definition of "hospitality" includes drinks, meals, entertainment, sporting events, overnight accommodation, travel and holidays.
- 13.2.4 The following standards apply to hospitality:-
- (a) If you are offered hospitality, you should tell your Manager immediately and record the offer in the Directorate Hospitality Register, whether it is accepted or not. If you refuse the hospitality, it must be recorded in the Register.
 - (b) You should never accept hospitality unless you genuinely need to give or receive information or to represent the City Council in your work.
 - (c) Your Manager must agree, beforehand, wherever possible.
 - (d) You should never accept any hospitality if it is meant to corrupt or influence, or could be seen to corrupt or influence or as being against the City Council's interests.
 - (e) The timing of hospitality is an important factor. For example, hospitality should never be accepted from a contractor who is about to put in a tender for City Council work.
- 13.2.5 You may accept incidental hospitality, such as light refreshments, working lunch or other meals which is part of a visit, conference, meeting or promotional exercise.
- 13.2.6 Invitations to social events offered as part of normal working life, such as opening celebrations, annual dinners, may be accepted if authorised in advance by the appropriate Assistant Director.
- 13.2.7 Invitations to other types of hospitality which are not directly linked to the City Council's functions, such as attendance at sporting events, theatrical or musical performances, "corporate days", paid holidays or concessionary travel rates, should not be accepted.
- 13.2.8 Where visits are required to inspect equipment, sites etc, you must ensure that the City Council meets all the costs of such visits to avoid jeopardising the integrity of any subsequent purchasing decision. Where anything other than incidental hospitality is offered by an existing contractor, or by an organisation likely to be involved in a contract, the hospitality should be refused. You should avoid socialising with organisations and should pay your own bills for meals, travel etc, (claiming any expenditure back under the Council's procedures for reimbursement as appropriate).
- 13.2.9 Similar rules apply to those instances where employees are offering hospitality on behalf of the City Council. The following guidelines must be observed on all occasions. For the purpose of these guidelines "hospitality" excludes the normal tea, coffee and other refreshments provided at meetings:-

- (a) any hospitality must be provided on a modest scale.
- (b) so far as is practicable, hospitality must be provided in the workplace.
- (c) soft drinks only must be provided in the workplace, alcoholic drinks must not be available.
- (d) if it is necessary to provide hospitality outside the workplace, this must be on a model scale appropriate to the occasion. The cost must not be excessive.
- (e) the number of employees involved on any occasion when hospitality is provided must be restricted, and in any event, must not extend beyond those directly involved with the matter in hand.
- (f) the provision of all hospitality must be personally approved by your Manager, and an Assistant Director, Deputy Director or Director.
- (g) bills for hospitality provided must be certified for payment by your Manager, and an Assistant Director, Deputy Director or Director.
- (h) each service will maintain in their hospitality register, a record of all occasions on which hospitality has been provided, the number of persons involved, and the costs incurred.

APPENDIX 2

Table of Entries in Officers' Registers of Gifts and Hospitality: 1st July to 31st December 2015

Date	Officer	Description	Provider	Estimated Value	Code of Conduct general consent	Consent of senior officer or manager obtained?
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE						
1.7.15	Chief Executive	LGA/SOLACE Drinks reception and dinner as part of LGA Conference	Zurich	£75.00	Yes	N/A
31.7.15	Chief Executive	Carfest North Motor Festival - VIP Ticket	Brand Events	£500.00	Yes	N/A
20.8.15	Chief Executive	Dinner at Arden House, University of Warwick	Warwick Manufacturing Group / Jaguar Land Rover	£50.00	Yes	N/A

27.8.15	Communications Officer	Two standard cinema tickets: received in the post as a thank you for helping on a campaign	Pearl and Dean Advertising	£17.80	No information	No information
28.8.15	Chief Executive	Carfest South - non VIP entry ticket	Brand Events	£250.00	Yes	N/A
7.10.15	Chief Executive	Dinner at Lolitas Restaurant, Bournemouth as part of the SOLACE Summit	SOLACE/The Pinnacle Group/The Guardian	£75.00	Yes	N/A
8.10.15	Chief Executive	SOLACE Annual Charity Dinner at Bournemouth Pavilion as part of SOLACE Summit	SOLACE Business Partners	£75.00	Yes	N/A
10.10.15	Chief Executive	Rugby World Cup, Australia -v- Wales at Twickenham	Jaguar Land Rover	£150.00	Yes	N/A
20.10.15	Chief Executive	Leaders Network Dinner at Roux in London	Centre for Cities	£75.00	Yes	N/A
10.11.15	E-communications Co-ordinator	Meal at Wagamamas: received as a thank you for presenting about Coventry's e-comms work at a LG Comms conference	GovDelivery	£9.85	No information	No information
PEOPLE DIRECTORATE						
	No entries during period reviewed.					
PLACE DIRECTORATE						

21.8.15	Project Delivery Manager	Invitation from ACL for Rugby x2	Wasps	£30.00	No information	No information
2.9.15	Personal Assistant	Dinner for 2	Official opening of Las Iguanas	£35 per head	No information	No information
28.10.16	Assistant Director Property Management and Senior Valuation Surveyor	Lunch at Wagamamas	State Bank of India	£15	No information	No information
8.11.15	Assistant Director Development Services	Game and hospitality x2	Wasps	£100	No information	No information
25.11.15	Assistant Director Streetscene and Greenspace and Programme Manager Finance	Sandwich Lunch	Coombe Abbey	£20	No information	No information
28.11.15	Head of Service, Sports, Culture, Destination and Business Relationships	Concert at Old Grammar School (part of jazz festival)	Culture Coventry	£50.75	No information	No information
10.12.15	Head of Service, Sports, Culture, Destination and Business Relationships, Events Manager and Assistant Director Streetscene and	BBC Music Awards at Genting Arena	BBC	Approx. £50.00	No information	No information

	Greenspace					
18.12.15	Project Managers x 2	Christmas Hamper	Meridian Construction	£25.00	No information	No information
22.12.15	Occupier Support Manager	Christmas Hamper	Strikes	£100.00	No information	No information
PUBLIC HEALTH						
	No entries during period reviewed.					
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE						
17/18.9.15	Executive Director	S151 Event, Oxford	CIPFA	Approx. £100	No information	No information
23.9.15	Executive Director	Breakfast meeting	CW Champions	Less than £25	No information	No information
1/2.10.15	Executive Director	Annual Conference 2015 fee	Society of Municipal Treasurers	£150	No information	No information
13.10.15	Executive Director	Breakfast meeting	KPMG Pensions	Less than £25	No information	No information



Public report
Ethics Committee
