
19 March 2020

Name of Cabinet Member:

N/A- Ethics Committee

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Finance and Corporate Services

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, the Committee has decided to review entries in the Registers of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality every six months. This report sets out the entries in the Registers for the period 1 July to 31 December 2019.

Recommendations:

The Ethics Committee is recommended to consider the entries of gifts and hospitality received by officers for the last six months of 2019 and make any recommendations that it considers appropriate.

Appendix included: Table of Gifts and Hospitality received by Officers: July to December 2019

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 every six months.
- 1.2 The Code of Conduct for Employees 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
- Items such as coffee mugs, diaries, calendars, pens or other promotional materials can be retained if they are in use in the office and can be considered to form part of the general mailings of a company.
- 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, or where the Council should be seen to be represented, 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.

The rules relating to gifts and hospitality were amended by the Committee in July 2016 and those changes were accepted by full Council in September 2016.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 The Directorates have been asked to provide details of gifts and hospitality received during the last 6 months of 2019. The position for each directorate is set out in the Table in the Appendix to this report.

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 Director of Finance and Corporate Services

- 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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