

GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY GOLDEN RULES FOR EMPLOYEES 2009

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Solicitor

Golden Rule

Employees must act with the highest standards of honesty to comply with the law and avoid the suspicion that they might be influenced by improper motives.

Employees must not as a general rule accept any gift, financial reward, hospitality or entertainment from any person or from any company or body which has or intends to have dealings with the Council

This policy does not apply to personal gifts between employees.

However, in circumstances where an employee receives a gift of high value, or has any doubts as to the motives for making a gift, this should be reported immediately to the employee's line manager.

What can be accepted and does not have to be reported

Tea, coffee, soft drinks and biscuits may be accepted in the normal course of business with people from outside the Council and do not have to be reported.

Gifts of low value (less than £5) from people outside the Council such as calendars, pocket diaries, disposable pens, notepads, coasters, boxes of chocolates where it would be impractical to refuse them or uneconomic to return them. Wherever possible, these gifts should be shared with team members or given to the Mayor's charity. Where employees have any doubts as to the value of a particular gift, they should declare it.

What can be accepted but must be reported

Hospitality - light refreshments in excess of tea, coffee, soft drinks and biscuits where it would be embarrassing or impractical to refuse. Anything in excess of light refreshments is only allowed if authorised **in advance**. The minimum level for authorisation is Head of Service and, for Heads of Service and above, it must be their line manager.

If a gift or hospitality is offered (whether it is accepted or declined) it must be notified on this [registration form](#) for entering in a register which will be reported in June each year to the Corporate Management Team and the Standards Committee.

What should not normally be accepted by an individual?

This includes money, gift tokens, alcohol of any kind, or any gift of higher value than the token amount. They should be returned to the sender but if this is not practical they should be sent to the Mayor's Office for the Mayor's charity. These should still be recorded in the register.

Anything in excess of light refreshments not previously authorised in advance.

Offering of inducements

Anybody who is offered a gift or hospitality **as an inducement** should report it immediately - employees to their manager for reporting to the Director, Directors to the Chief Executive and the Chief Executive to the Monitoring Officer. Any cases will be rigorously pursued.

Advice

Advice on all aspects of these rules is available from the Borough Solicitor or the Head of Democratic Services.