

## GIFTS & HOSPITALITY ANNUAL REPORT 2008/9

Reporting Officer: Lloyd White, Head of Democratic Services

### **Summary of Report**

This report is submitted to the Council's Corporate Management Team annually and provides a summary of gifts and hospitality accepted by staff during the 2008/9 financial year.

The Council's Golden Rules on gifts and hospitality require Corporate Directors to keep a register of declarations made by staff and for an annual report to be made to Management Team. The gifts and hospitality policy forms part of the Code of Conduct for Employees and breaches could be a matter for disciplinary action.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.**

### **GIFTS & HOSPITALITY 2008/9 – GENERAL SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

Declarations have been received from:

- Deputy Chief Executive's Office
- Finance & Resources
- Education & Children's Services
- Environment & Consumer Protection
- Adult Social Care, Health & Housing
- Planning & Community Services

The Summary of declarations by Directorate is set out at **Appendix A** to the report, the role of designated officers is attached at **Appendix B** and the current Gift and Hospitality Golden Rules for Officers is attached as **Appendix C**.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **SUMMARY OF OFFICERS GIFTS & HOSPITALITY DECLARATION 2008/9**

#### **Deputy CEO – Total of 27 declarations**

- 21 declarations of hospitality and 6 of gifts.
- 4 offers of hospitality declined, and 1 offer of gift declined.
- 3 offers of alcohol: 1 declined, 1 accepted and locked away, and 1 was won in a quiz. They were both authorised by the Head of Service.
- Majority of offers of hospitality were for lunch.

#### **Finance & Resources – Total of 49 declarations**

- 30 declarations of hospitality, and 19 of gifts.
- 4 offers of hospitality declined, and 1 offer of gift declined.
- 23 declarations have been authorised by Head of Service.
- 3 gifts of alcohol accepted, 1 gift of 8 bottles of wine were donated to a raffle, 2 gifts of a bottle of wine were noted as 'accepted'.

### **Education & Children's Services – Total of 26 declarations**

- ❑ 3 declarations of hospitality and 23 of gifts.
- ❑ 9 offers were authorised by the head of service.
- ❑ A gift of a DVD player was declared. Does not note if it was accepted, or whether it was authorised by Head of Service.
- ❑ 2 gifts of items of clothing were declared. Both not authorised by Head of Service.
- ❑ A gift of baby set declared for someone going on maternity leave. Was authorised by the head of service.
- ❑ An invitation for staff member to travel to India was declared, this was authorised by the Head of Service.
- ❑ A £10 M & S gift voucher was declared and accepted, this was authorised by the Head of Service.
- ❑ One gift of alcohol was accepted and sent to the Mayor's charity.
- ❑ One declaration of alcohol was not authorised by the Head of Service. Does not state whether it was accepted or sent to charity.

### **Environment & Consumer Protection – Total of 31 declarations**

- ❑ 15 declarations of hospitality, 16 declarations of gifts.
- ❑ 6 offers were declined.
- ❑ 10 declarations authorised by the head of service.
- ❑ One declaration of alcohol was originally refused but then accepted as giver insisted. This was donated to the Mayor's charity.
- ❑ One declaration of a bottle of champagne that was won at an awards event.

### **Adult Social Care, Health & Housing – Total of 52 declarations**

- ❑ No declarations of hospitality, all were gifts.
- ❑ 51 gifts were accepted, 1 was declined.
- ❑ Was not noted on the form whether any gifts were authorised by the Head of Service.
- ❑ Majority of gifts were chocolate, and were either seasonal gifts or thank you's.
- ❑ 5 gifts of alcohol donated to the Mayor's charity.
- ❑ 1 gift of perfume donated to the Mayor's charity.
- ❑ £100 cheque donation to Phoenix DC EVF fund raising account.
- ❑ A £10 gift to buy chocolates for staff was declined and returned. Service user donated the money to Age Concern instead.

### **Planning & Community Services – Total of 27 declarations**

- ❑ 19 declarations of gifts and 8 declarations of hospitality.
- ❑ 3 declarations of alcohol accepted and passed to the Mayor's charity (1 was authorised by Head of Service, 2 were 'not required').
- ❑ A gift of £20 gift vouchers accepted and passed to the Mayor's charity. Head of Service authorisation was 'not required'.
- ❑ All other gifts fallen in with category of 'token gift'.
- ❑ In total 10 declarations authorised by the Head of Service, others 'not required'.
- ❑ 1 offer in total was declined.

## **Gifts & Hospitality: Role of Designated Officers**

This document explains the role of the designated officers for each Directorate in relation to Officer declarations of Gifts and Hospitality.

Designated officers are encouraged to take a proactive approach and this document clarifies the level of authority and responsibilities that are required.

### **The role of designated officers:**

- All Officers in the council need to be aware of the Golden Rules regarding Gifts and Hospitality (**Appendix C**).
- Designated officers will receive an electronic version of declarations once an officer has completed the [online form](#) on Horizon. The information collected needs to be collated onto the template attached (**Appendix D**).
- Designated officers should check all declarations received from officers and challenge any that are incomplete or unclear.
- Designated officers are to report problematic cases to Corporate Directors, seeking advice from the Head of Democratic Services or the Borough Solicitor on the interpretation of the Golden Rules as necessary.
- Designated officers are to complete a quarterly report to Corporate Directors on the declarations of Gifts and Hospitality for their Directorate, and this review should be recorded on registers.
- Ensure new starters are aware of Golden Rules relating to Gifts and Hospitality and name of their [designated officer](#) (which can also be found on Horizon).
- To ensure that all offers, whether they are declined or accepted, are recorded on the register.
- Designated officers should check that all sections and establishments in their department are complying with the requirements.
- Send an annual record of declarations of Gifts and Hospitalities to the Democratic Services Officer at the end of the financial year.

**GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY  
GOLDEN RULES FOR EMPLOYEES  
2007**

**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**

**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.

**What can be accepted but must be reported**

Token gifts and modest hospitality may be accepted but their receipt must be reported promptly to the relevant officer in each Group for recording in a register:-

**a) Gifts** - for example calendars, pocket diaries, disposable pens, notepads, coasters, boxes of chocolates, bunches of flowers.

**b) 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** by the relevant head of department (for employees) or the Chief Executive (for Directors).

**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 Management Board and the Standards Committee.**

**What cannot be accepted**

Anything in excess of a token gift or hospitality should always be refused. This includes money, gift tokens and alcohol of any kind. 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.

**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.