

<b>Board/Committee:</b>	Standards and Audit Sub Board
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	18 September 2024
<b>Title:</b>	Gifts and Hospitality return for Council staff
<b>Author:</b>	Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
<b>Status:</b>	For Noting

## **PURPOSE**

To advise the Sub-Board of the Gifts and Hospitality declared by Council Staff for the period April 2023- March 2024.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Sub-Board notes the report.

### **1 Background**

- 1.1 The Gifts and Hospitality Policy for staff was approved by the Policy and Organisation Board on 28 June 2017.
- 1.2 This report notifies the Sub-Board of the gifts and hospitality declared by Council Staff from the period April 2023- March 2024.
- 1.3 Staff gifts and hospitality are required to be reported to the Standards and Audit Sub Board annually.
- 1.4 The Gifts and Hospitality Policy requires members of staff to notify the Monitoring Officer of all gifts which they have received. Gifts should only be accepted in line with the Gifts and Hospitality Policy where the value is £25 or under (£5 for Sheltered Scheme staff). This is completed in the form of a quarterly return.
- 1.5 Gifts over £25 should be refused, unless refusal would cause offence and should be included within the quarterly return whether accepted or not.
- 1.6 Hospitality cannot be accepted if it is offered in a personal capacity. It may be accepted if it is under £40 in value and is offered for receipt on behalf of the Council. It should have prior approval of section heads.

### **2 Report**

- 2.1 A total of 35 declarations of gifts were made by members of staff in relation to gifts and hospitality received at a value of £25 or under within the period covered in the report.
- 2.2 There were no cash gifts. Two gifts worth £5 each were donated to the Mayor's charity. Other gifts were shared amongst colleagues or put on display or kept by the staff member if appropriate.
- 2.3 No gifts were refused.

- 2.4 A total of 3 declarations were made by members of staff in relation to hospitality offered. One was a reception and was accepted, and valued at under £10, one was a networking meal valued at £40 it was accepted for the purposes of networking and an equivalent donation made to the Mayor's charity. One was refused.
- 2.5 The notifications are varied relating to liaison with suppliers, stakeholders, tokens of thanks and professional networks and the Monitoring Officer continues to review declarations registered.
- 2.6 All declarations recorded in the report have been approved by the relevant Section Head.
- 2.7 The current Gifts and Hospitality Policy was approved in 2017 and there is nothing highlighted in this return that causes concern, however the policy will be kept under review.
- 2.8 Neighbouring Councils' policies vary in gifts and hospitality limits from £10-£25.

### **3 Risk Assessment**

- 3.1 The Gifts and Hospitality Policy and reporting return to the Standards and Audit Sub-Board is required to ensure that staff conduct meets public expectation is in relation to the receipt of gifts and hospitality. The Policy is available to staff on the infonet.

### **4 Conclusion**

- 4.1 This report covers the period of April 2023 and March 2024 and future reports will be made at the first possible meeting of the Sub-Board in the Municipal Year.

<b>Financial Services comments:</b>	N/A
<b>Legal Services comments:</b>	Contained within the report
<b>Climate Change:</b>	N/A
<b>Crime and Disorder:</b>	N/A
<b>Equality and Diversity:</b>	None
<b>Service Improvement Plan implications:</b>	N/A
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	Deliver Effective Services
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	Section 3
<b>Background papers:</b>	Gifts and Hospitalities Policy
<b>Appendices</b>	None
<b>Report author/ Lead Officer:</b>	Lisa Young- Senior Democratic Services Officer/Borough Solicitor & Monitoring Officer