**GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY POLICY**



**Introduction**

The Council needs to ensure that its decisions and operations are open and honest, accountable and in line with recognised ethical standards.

It is essential that the public can be confident that decisions are made for good and proper reasons and are not influenced inappropriately by the interests of individual employees, their relatives or friends. Therefore, employees, agency workers and consultants should not compromise their position as public service workers by accepting gifts of hospitality that might be perceived as having influenced any decision.

In delivering its objectives, the Council maintains a zero tolerance approach to fraud and corruption whether it is attempted from outside the Council (the public, clients, partners, contractors, suppliers or other organisations) or within (Members and employees). Employees should exercise caution concerning the acceptance of gifts or hospitality.

Gifts and hospitality recorded is subject to review by the employee's line manager and records are published on the Council's web site for public scrutiny.

Any gifts or hospitality valued at £20 or more must be recorded. An employee can add a record on behalf of another member of staff which will then be emailed to them for checking and confirmation.

Where employees are in any doubt about accepting gifts or hospitality, which necessitate recording them on the system they should be discussed with their line manager before accepting an offer.

Employees should familiarise themselves with the additional guidance in the Officers' Code of Conduct, which is intended to supplement these guidelines. This sets out the rules for the acceptance or giving of hospitality.

**(Contained in Part Five – B of the Council's Constitution) INSERT LINK**

**Guidelines**

There is a central location online system to declare gifts and hospitality;

Employees are expected to record any offers of gifts and hospitality

<https://officesharedservice.sharepoint.com/sites/sscs/GandH/SitePages/Home.aspx>

and line managers are expected to review and approve/decline any entries made on the register.

1. Records of gifts and hospitality given or received by employees should be made at the time, but, in any case within one week of the event (or, the date of an offer which is refused) using the Council’s online system. Only hospitality valued at £20 or more needs to be recorded.

2. **Gifts or hospitality provided** to others relates to where the cost is met **by the Council** to individuals outside of the organisation e.g. contractors, suppliers, clients, members of the public, businesses.

The person making the decision to provide the gift or hospitality should be the one to record this event, having obtained prior authority from their line manager. This will normally comprise of gifts e.g. RBKC branded merchandise provided to visitors or refreshments for meetings, seminars, organised functions.

4. Gifts or hospitality received should be categorised using the seven categories on the online system.

Where gifts and hospitality straddle more than one category sufficient detail should be inserted in one category to account for this.

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| **Type** | **Additional Guidance Notes** |
| Gift | For gifts received the estimated cost of the gift if bought by the employee. Gifts provided should reflect the actual cost per head. Where a gift is received by an employee from a satisfied customer it is not necessary to record the giver's name. |
| Food/Meal | The estimated cost of the meal if it had been paid for by the employee  |
| Drinks | The estimated cost of drinks if it had been paid for by the employee |
| Event ticket | This should cover invitations to any sporting or cultural events for which a charge would need be paid to attend as an individual.  |
| Free travel | The estimated cost of equivalent travel if it had been paid for by the employee |
| Accommodation | The estimated cost of equivalent accommodation if it had been paid for by the employee |
| Golf days | The estimated cost of the event if it had been paid for by the employee  |
| Free seminar  | Where there is a charge for those attending the value should be recorded at the price that would have been paid. For seminars provided free to all you only need record the value of any refreshments provided (if above the minimum level).General 'flyer' letters and emails offering e.g. free places at seminars, from organisations with whom the employee or the Council  has no business dealings, and which are declined, do not need to be recorded |
| Free conference  | As above |
| Other | This should only be used (rarely) for anything not fitting into the above categories  |