

## **Update on the Registration of Gifts and Hospitality by Members and Officers**

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### **Purpose of the report**

To enable the committee to consider and review the operation of the Council's policy in relation to the provision of any gifts or hospitality to members and officers, and to enable the committee to make any recommendations to ensure continued compliance with the Council's Code of Conduct.

### **Recommendations**

To note the contents of the report.

### **Background**

This report provides an update on any gifts and hospitality that have been registered by members or officers in the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018. It is proposed by the Monitoring Officer that she provides annual reports to the Committee regarding any gifts and hospitality that may have been received.

### **Report**

Members will find attached to this report, at Appendix A, details of the gifts and hospitality that has been provided or presented to both Members and officers.

As Members will be aware, under SSDC's Code of Conduct, they are required to notify the Monitoring Officer of all gifts and hospitality with a value in excess of £25 which they accept from any person or body (other than SSDC), and which has been given to them in their capacity as a Member or officer.

The details of such a gift or hospitality received will then be placed on a public register, as it forms part of the Member's register of interests. Members have been provided with guidance on gifts and hospitality (as endorsed by this Committee) and this guidance forms part of the Council's Constitution (See Appendix B). The register does not include any gifts and hospitality which have been accepted by the Chairman in his official capacity as the Council's formal civic representative. These are already reported to Council as part of the Chairman's list of engagements.

In relation to officers, attached as Appendix C is an extract from the staff Code of Conduct which deals with the treatment of gifts and hospitality. Members will note that the provisions which relate to officers are considerably more restrictive as arguably they should be. The register lists all the gifts and hospitality received and how each was dealt with. It is important that this information is recorded, to remove any suggestion that it has had any influence over how an officer may have carried out their responsibilities. The Committee should note that the staff Code of Conduct needs to be reviewed and up-dated, but similar (if not identical) provisions on gifts and hospitality will be included in any new code.

Whilst it is accepted in relation to Members and Officers that the register only captures what both reveal as the gifts and hospitality they have received, the Monitoring Officer can confirm that no complaints have been received during this period that either a Member is in breach of their Code of Conduct for not registering a gift or hospitality, or that an officer has accepted something and either not registered it or failed to follow the process set out in the staff Code. Similarly, no complaint has been received by the Monitoring Officer about any town or parish Members in relation to such matters.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications at this stage.

### **Other Implications**

There are no other implications.

**Background Papers:**      The Council's Constitution

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