

Report to: Audit & Governance Committee Meeting: 21 February 2024

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Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Gifts and Hospitality Annual Report
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	An annual report to update Committee on the implementation of the Council's gifts and hospitality policies.
<b>Recommendations</b>	That the report be noted and that the Committee includes an annual review of the operation of the Council's Gifts and Hospitality arrangements in the Committee's work plan
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	To ensure oversight arrangements are in place going forward.

## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 A Protocol for Members on Hospitality and Gifts is included in the Council's Constitution. There is separate provision relating to gifts and hospitality in the Code of Conduct for Members.
- 1.2 Members are required to register gifts and hospitality over a certain value (even if declined) with the Monitoring Officer, via Democratic Services. These details are then published on the relevant Members' web page together with their register of interests, attendance record and so on.
- 1.3 There is a separate Gifts and Hospitality Policy for Officers. This is referenced in induction materials for all new starters via the Officer Code of Conduct.
- 1.4 Officers are required to register gifts and hospitality over a certain value (even if declined) with Administrative Services. These details are then published on the Council's website.
- 1.5 In October 2022 all Members were issued with a reminder from the Chair of this Committee and the Monitoring Officer, about the importance of registering and declaring interests, managing conflicts of interest, and registering gifts and hospitality.

A similar reminder was issued to all Business Managers by email in October and published in the staff newsletter in November 2022.

- 1.6 Gifts and hospitality requirements were be included as part of the new Member induction programme after the May 2023 elections.

## **2.0 Proposals**

- 2.1 Reminders for all Members and Officers (as per paragraph 1.5 above) are being issued in parallel with the publication of this report.
- 2.2 It is proposed that the Committee again includes an annual review of the operation of the Council's Gifts and Hospitality arrangements in the Committee's work plan.

### **Implications**

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations' officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding and Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- The Protocol for Members on Hospitality and Gifts is published in the [Council's Constitution](#) – page F19
- The Code of Conduct for Members is published in the [Council's Constitution](#) – Gifts and Hospitality are referenced on page F8
- The Officer Register of Gifts and Hospitality is published on the Council's [website](#)
- Individual Member web pages are published on the Council's [website](#)
- Audit & Governance Committee report of 1 February 2023 is published - <https://democracy.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=298&MIId=817>