

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

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| REPORT: | ETHICS COMMITTEE | |
| DATE OF DECISION | 17th December 2024 | |
| REPORT TITLE: | MEMBER GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY | |
| DIRECTOR: | Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense Director of Legal & Governance | |
| LEAD OFFICER: | Adrian May, Senior Democratic Services & Governance Officer adrian.may@croydon.gov.uk | |
| CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION? | NO | Public |
| WARDS AFFECTED: | N/A | |

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

1.1. Members must comply with the Members' Code of Conduct including the requirements around declaring gifts and hospitality they have received. Appendix A to this report provides the details of gifts and hospitality declared by Members since the Committee was last updated on declarations of this nature.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. For the reasons given in this report, the Ethics Committee is recommended to:

2.1.1 Note the requirements on Members with regards to declaring Gifts and Hospitality as detailed within the report; and,

2.1.2 Note any Gifts and Hospitality declarations made by Members since 18th June 2024.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. This report supports the role and responsibility of the Committee related to reviewing the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct and monitoring compliance.

4. BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

4.1 As outlined in the Members' Code of Conduct, Members agree to adhere to the following with regards to declaring gifts and hospitality:

- Members do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on their part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, license or other significant advantage.
- Members register with the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days of receipt, any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 or multiple gifts and/or instances of hospitality with a cumulative value of £50 or more when received from a single donor within a rolling twelve-month period.
- Register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that they may have been offered but have refused to accept.

4.2 In terms of submitting gift and hospitality declarations, Members notify the Monitoring Officer (or the Head of Democratic Services acting on behalf of the Monitoring Officer) via email - and the Member's online Register of Interests (on the Council's website) is subsequently updated.

4.3 All Members of the Council are reminded three to four times a year (last edition 29th November 2024) via a Members' Newsletter of the gift and hospitality declaration requirements and submission process. The reminder includes voting co-opted members, although these are not published online unless they are in direct relation to a committee agenda item.

4.4 Committee members are asked to note the gifts & hospitality declarations made as detailed in Appendix A.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 No other options considered as regular reporting of gifts and hospitality is considered standard practice.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The declarations are sent directly from the relevant member, with any clarification sought by Democratic Services on behalf of the Monitoring Officer and reported to the Ethics Committee.

7 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 Mayor's Business Plan - Priority 4: Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice

8 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1.1 Finance have been previously consulted on this report and can conclude that there are no financial implications within this report.

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority and in discharging this duty, the Council must adopt a Code of Conduct dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity.

8.2.2 This Code of Conduct must make provision for the declaration of certain interests (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) and may make provision for the declaration of other interests. This Council has adopted a Code which also requires the declaration of and restriction on participation for "Other registerable Interests", and "Non-registerable interests" and the declaration of Gifts and Hospitality as detailed in the body of the report above.

8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.3.1 The Council has a statutory duty, when exercising its functions, to comply with the provisions set out in the Sec 149 Equality Act 2010. The Council must, in the performance of its functions, therefore have due regard to:

eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.3.2 No Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken on this report, however, there are no direct equalities impact consequences arising from the contents of this report.

APPENDICES

8.4 Appendix A – Declared Gifts and Hospitality

9 10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

9.1 None