

# LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>ETHICS COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>19 April 2023</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>MEMBER GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY</b>	
<b>DIRECTOR:</b>	<b>Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense Director of Legal &amp; Governance</b>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Adrian May, Interim Head of Democratic Services adrian.may@croydon.gov.uk</b>	
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>Public</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>N/A</b>	

## 1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 Members must comply with the Members' Code of Conduct including the requirements around declaring gifts and hospitality. Appendix 1 to this report provides the details of gifts and hospitality declared by Members since the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023 when the Committee were last updated on declarations of this nature.

## 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 2.1 Note the requirements on Members with regards to declaring Gifts and Hospitality as detailed within the report.
- 2.2 Note any Gifts and Hospitality declarations made by Members' since 31 January 2023.

## 3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 This report supports the role and responsibility of the Committee related to reviewing the operation of the Member Code and monitoring compliance.

## 4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 As outlined in the Member 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 - with the Member's online Register of Interests (on the Council's website) subsequently updated.
- 4.3 All Members of the Council are reminded quarterly (last edition was 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023) via a Members' Newsletter of the gift and hospitality declaration requirements and submission process. The next Newsletter (and subsequent reminder) is scheduled to be sent at the end of April 2023. The reminder will include voting co-opted members (which it previously has not included).
- 4.4 Committee members are asked to note the gifts & hospitality declarations made as detailed in Appendix 1.

## **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** The implementation of the recommendations contained in this report shall be contained within existing budgets.
- 8.1.2** Please note, these are draft implications submitted by the author, and may be subject to change by Finance (any update will be given at meeting).

## **8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.2.1** The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer that 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 "Other registerable Interests", the declaration of and restriction on participation for "Non-registerable interests" and the declaration of Gifts and Hospitality as detailed in the body of the report above.
- 8.2.3** Approved by Sandra Herbert on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (11/04/2023).

## **8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.3.1** There are no direct equalities impact consequences arising from the contents of this report.
- 8.3.2** Please note, these are draft implications submitted by the author, and may be subject to change by the Equalities team (any update will be given at meeting).

## **9. APPENDICES**

None

## **10 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None