

18th December 2012

From: Head of Central Services

To: All Employees

GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

I am writing to remind staff of the procedures which should be followed regarding the acceptance of gifts and/or hospitality, as set out in the Employees' Handbook.

It is a criminal offence under the Bribery Act for a Council employee to accept or request a reward in return for acting improperly in their work. It is also an offence for Local Government employees to accept any fee, reward or gift other than their proper remuneration.

Generally, all offers of gifts and hospitality should therefore be refused unless they are of an extremely minor nature.

It is also an offence to fail to prevent bribery so where an employee suspects a contractor or fellow employee they should report their suspicions to their line manager or use the whistleblowing procedure. Managers should report all such cases to the Audit Manager.

It is of course not always possible or desirable to reject offers of hospitality on a modest scale. A drink and sandwich following a site visit, a working lunch of a modest standard to enable parties to continue to discuss business and the offer of limited hospitality when visiting an organisation on Council business would be acceptable. Invitations to attend receptions, luncheons and promotional events should only be accepted with the approval of the Head of Service.

Register of Gifts and Hospitality

ALL offers of gifts or hospitality, even if they are refused, must be recorded in the Register which is kept for this purpose by the Head of Central Services. It is also now possible to record gifts and hospitality electronically – the form is available in the Audit Section of eVoice.

For all gifts and hospitality included in the Register, an Executive Director or Head of Service must sign the Gifts and Hospitality Register and denote the action taken (i.e. 'agreed') when certifying an entry in the Register.

If you would like clarification or guidance on any points raised in this memorandum, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Internal Audit.

Paul Clisby

Head of Central Services