

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO COUNCIL

16 JULY 2014

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION – OFFICER GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval of proposed amendments to the constitution which reflect changes to the procedures for the notification, authorisation and registration of officer gifts and hospitality.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priority.

- 2.1 This report supports the achievement of all Corporate Priorities and enhances the accountability of employees of the authority.

3. Background.

- 3.1 Following an internal audit of Officer gifts and hospitality, improvements to the current system of notification and registration were proposed which would enable a consistent approach to be undertaken and subsequently enhancing the assurance provided by the process.

4. Current situation / proposal.

- 4.1 Paragraph 12 of Part 5 of the Constitution relates to Code of Conduct for Council Employees as shown at Appendix 1, states that:

12.8 Each chief officer shall maintain a register recording details of hospitality received by employees, and the date on which and by whom authorisation was given for the hospitality to be received. The registers shall be available for public inspection.

- 4.2 To provide consistency across the Authority the process for the notification and registration of gifts and hospitality will now be undertaken by the Monitoring Officer.

- 4.3 Employees offered gifts or hospitality are to notify the Monitoring Officer using the appropriate form within 28 days of any offer being made and request authorisation from him to accept the gift.

- 4.4 To facilitate this change it is proposed that the constitution be amended as follows:

12.8 The Monitoring Officer will maintain a register recording details of gifts and hospitality offered to employees. Employees are to notify him within 28 days of the offer being made using the appropriate form. Authorisation will be considered for the acceptance of the gift or hospitality. All relevant details will be added to the register which shall be available for public inspection.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.

5.1 The provisions and recommendations of the report accord with the Council's Constitution.

6. Equality Impact Assessment.

6.1 There are no equality implications attached to this report.

7. Financial Implications.

7.1 There are no financial implications

8. Recommendations.

8.1 Council is requested to:

8.1.1 Approve the amendment of Paragraph 12 of Part 5 of the Constitution relating to Code of Conduct for Council Employees as shown in paragraph 4.4 of the report

P A Jolley

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7 July 2014

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Background documents: None.

PARAGRAPH 12 OF PART 5 OF THE CONSTITUTION RELATING TO CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCIL EMPLOYEES

12. Gifts and Hospitality

- 12.1 Employees should not accept significant personal gifts from contractors and outside suppliers, although the Council will allow employees to keep insignificant items of modest value such as mugs, calendars, pens, diaries, etc. up to a value of £20.
- 12.2 Apart from participating in concessionary schemes arranged by the Council, trade unions or other groups specifically for the benefit of their own members, or taking advantage of discounts generally available to any member of the public, employees should not acquire materials, labour or plant at cost, trade or discount prices from or through a contractor employed by the Council.
- 12.3 Employees responsible for the purchase of goods and supplies on behalf of the Council should note that any promotional offers given by suppliers are the property of the Council.
- 12.4 Employees should only accept offers of hospitality if there is a genuine need to receive or impart information or represent the local authority in the community. Offers to attend purely social or sporting functions should be accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the Council should be seen to be represented. They should be properly authorised and recorded.
- 12.5 When gifts or hospitality have to be declined those making the offer should be courteously but firmly informed of the procedures and standards operating within the Council.
- 12.6 When receiving authorised hospitality employees should be particularly sensitive as to its timing in relation to decisions which the Council may be taking affecting those providing the hospitality.
- 12.7 Acceptance by employees of hospitality through attendance at relevant conferences, seminars and courses is acceptable where it is clear the hospitality is corporate rather than personal, where consent is given by or on behalf of the Council and where purchasing decisions are not compromised. Where visits to inspect equipment, or for the purpose of investigating any matter relating to the award of any contract, are required, employees should ensure that the Council meets the cost of such visits to avoid jeopardising the integrity of subsequent purchasing decisions.
- 12.8 ~~Each chief officer shall maintain a register recording details of hospitality received by employees, and the date on which and by whom authorisation was given for the hospitality to be received. The registers shall be available for public inspection.~~

The Monitoring Officer will maintain a register recording details of gifts and hospitality offered to employees. Employees are to notify him within 28 days of the offer being made using the appropriate form. Authorisation will be considered for the acceptance of the gift or hospitality. All relevant details will be added to the register which shall be available for public inspection.