

South Lakeland District Council
Standards Committee
Tuesday, 20 April 2021
Internal Audit Report – Assurance Review of
Members’ Interests and Declarations

Portfolio: Cllr Philip Dixon
Report from: Monitoring Officer
Report Author: Linda Fisher, – Legal, Governance and Democracy Lead Specialist
(Monitoring Officer)
Wards: N/A
Forward Plan: N/A

1.0 Expected Outcome

1.1 This report is presented to update members on the internal audit review and the register of interests and gifts and hospitality for employees and Members for the period April 2020 to April 2021.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the recommendations and actions within the internal audit report at Appendix 1

2.2 Notes the update on member and officers’ declarations in relation to gifts and hospitality.

3.0 Background and Proposals

3.1 Under the respective codes of conduct for South Lakeland District Council Members and Employees there are requirements to declare any interests and gifts and hospitality as detailed therein. Copies of the Code of Conduct both for Members and Employees can be found within the Council’s Constitution.

3.2 For employees there is a standard corporate form and offers of hospitality that are declined should also be included in any declarations. For members this information is recorded in Declaration of Interest forms to be updated accordingly.

3.3 The Standards Committee has an overview of the Employee Register of interests, gifts and hospitality and is requested to review this on an annual basis. The previous review took place in September 2019.

3.4 A review of gifts and hospitality has been carried out by Internal Audit this year and their recommendations can be found within the report at Appendix 1. This includes ensuring this report is presented to the Standards Committee. Further it recommends

that The Code of Conduct be expanded to include the necessary detail, including the recording of declined gifts and hospitality, and consideration of the cumulative effect of small gifts. Guidance provided as part of the induction process be reviewed.

- 3.5 In relation to the Internal Audit report recommendation 3 regarding gifts and hospitality, we are updating Standards Committee that there has been one officer declaration of gifts/hospitality in respect of receipt of a painting over the financial threshold of £25 and one member declaration in respect of receipt of firewood over the financial threshold of £50.
- 3.6 The Code of Conduct requires employees to notify the Monitoring Officer of all gifts and hospitality which they have received where the value is £25 or where any gift or hospitality in connection with their duties is declined.

The Member Code of Conduct requires members to declare details of any persons from whom a Member has received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50. Members must register any gifts or hospitality worth £50 or over that are received personally in connection with Members' official duties.

4.0 Consultation

- 4.1 All Lead Specialists have been asked to confirm that the register of interests is up to date. In the last 12 months all significant gifts or hospitality that have been received have been recorded and are as described above at 3.5..

5.0 Alternative Options

- 5.1 There are no alternative options. This review forms part of the Standards Committee work programme.

6.0 Links to Council Priorities

- 6.1 Links to the Council's values of being open and transparent

7.0 Implications

Financial, Resources and Procurement

- 7.1 N/A

Human Resources

- 7.2 N/A

Legal

- 7.3 Under the respective Codes of Conduct in the Constitution both members and employees are required to declare appropriate interests and any gifts and hospitality received.

Health, Social, Economic and Environmental

- 7.4 Have you completed a Health, Social, Economic and Environmental Impact Assessment? No
- 7.5 If you have not completed an Impact Assessment, please explain your reasons: not applicable

Equality and Diversity

- 7.6 Have you completed an Equality Impact Analysis? No

7.7 If you have not completed an Impact Assessment, please explain your reasons: not applicable

Risk

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Register is not maintained or incomplete	Employees / Members at risk of breaching the code of conduct	Regular monitoring of the code and sufficient awareness for employees and Members.

Contact Officers

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Appendices Attached to this Report

(delete if no appendices attached)

Appendix No.	Name of Appendix
1	Internal Audit Report

Tracking Information

Signed off by	Date sent	Date Signed off
Legal Services	Report Author	01.04.21
Section 151 Officer	08.04.2021	12.04.21
Monitoring Officer	Report Author	01.04.21
CMT	N/A	N/A

Circulated to	Date sent
Lead Specialist	Report Author
Human Resources Lead Specialist	N/A
Communications Team	N/A
Leader	N/A
Committee Chairman	N/A
Portfolio Holder	08/04/202
Ward Councillor(s)	N/A
Committee	N/A
Executive (Cabinet)	N/A
Council	N/A