

South Lakeland District Council

Standards Committee

Monday, 10 October 2022

Review of Employee Register of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality and Member Gifts and Hospitality

Portfolio: Cllr Hennessy – Customer and Locality Services Portfolio Holder
Report from: Deputy Monitoring Officer
Report Author: Julia Krier – Legal, Governance and Democracy Specialist (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Wards: Not applicable
Forward Plan: Not applicable

Links to Council Plan Priorities:

Good governance and transparency links to the Council's achievement of its Council Plan priorities and objectives.

1.0 Expected Outcome and Measures of Success

1.1 This report is presented to review the register of interests and gifts and hospitality for employees and Members since the last update to the Committee in October 2021.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the report and appendices.

3.0 Background and Proposals

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

3.2 For employees there are standard corporate forms to complete for declarations of interest, gifts and hospitality. Gifts and offers of hospitality that are declined should also be included in any declarations.

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 October 2021.

3.4 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 more or where any gift or hospitality in connection with their duties is declined.

3.5 During the period 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 one employee declared a gift/hospitality which was declined, as detailed in Appendix 1. So far in this year from 01 April 2022 to date no employees have declared a gift/hospitality.

3.6 The Code of Conduct also requires employees to register personal interests in decision-making or working practices. The registration of interests protects the employee by giving early warning of any possible areas of conflict of interest and provides assurance to the public that the employee is acting transparently. Registration of personal interests is only required in areas where there are clear grounds for concern that such an interest could give rise to accusations of partiality in decision making and working practice of the authority. Employees must register, within 28 days of taking up their appointment or of those interests arising, in writing to the Monitoring Officer or the Chief Executive as appropriate, any interest (Financial / Non-Financial) as set out in the Constitution.

3.7 During the period 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, one officer recorded a declaration of interest, as set out in Appendix 1. From 01 April 2022 to date, one further officer has recorded a declaration of interest as set out in Appendix 2.

3.8 Member Gifts and Hospitality

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. The Code also requires that Members register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 that has been offered but which the Member has refused to accept. During the periods 01 April 2021 to March 2022 and 01 April 2022 to date, no Members declared gifts / hospitality meeting those thresholds.

4.0 Appendices Attached to this Report

| Appendix No. | Name of Appendix |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Employee Register of Interests, Gifts/Hospitality Log April 2021 to March 2022 |
| 2 | Employee Register of Interests, Gifts/Hospitality Log April 2022 to present |

5.0 Consultation

5.1 All Lead Specialists have been reminded of the need for officers to declare gifts / hospitality and interests.

6.0 Alternative Options

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

7.0 Implications

Financial, Resources and Procurement

7.1 N/A

Human Resources

7.2 N/A

Legal

7.3 Under the Code of Conduct for Council Employees in the Constitution, officers are required to declare appropriate interests and any gifts and hospitality received. The

Code of Conduct for members provides that members must register gifts / hospitality within the thresholds set out in para 3.10 above.

Health and Sustainability Impact Assessment

- 7.4 Have you completed a Health and Sustainability Impact Assessment? No
- 7.5 If you have not completed an Impact Assessment, please explain your reasons: Not applicable
- 7.6 Summary of Health and Sustainability Impacts – N/A

| | | Positive | Neutral | Negative | Unknown |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|---------|----------|---------|
| Environment and Health | Greenhouse gases emissions | | X | | |
| | Air Quality | | X | | |
| | Biodiversity | | X | | |
| | Impacts of Climate Change | | X | | |
| | Reduced or zero requirement for energy, building space, materials or travel | | X | | |
| | Active Travel | | X | | |
| Economy and Culture | Inclusive and sustainable development | | X | | |
| | Jobs and levels of pay | | X | | |
| | Healthier high streets | | X | | |
| | Culture, creativity and heritage | | X | | |
| Housing and Communities | Standard of housing | | X | | |
| | Access to housing | | X | | |
| | Crime | | X | | |
| | Social connectedness | | X | | |

Equality and Diversity

- 7.7 Have you completed an Equality Impact Analysis? No
- 7.8 If you have not completed an Impact Analysis, please explain your reasons: Not applicable.
- 7.9 Summary of Equality and Diversity impacts – not applicable

| Please indicate: P = Positive impact; 0 = Neutral; N = Negative; Enter "X" | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|
| Age | P | | 0 | X | N |
| Disability | P | | 0 | X | N |
| Gender reassignment (transgender) | P | | 0 | X | N |
| Marriage & civil partnership | P | | 0 | X | N |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|--|----------|----------|----------|--|
| Pregnancy & maternity | P | | 0 | X | N | |
| Race/ethnicity | P | | 0 | X | N | |
| Religion or belief | P | | 0 | X | N | |
| Sex/gender | P | | 0 | X | N | |
| Sexual orientation | P | | 0 | X | N | |
| Armed forces families | P | | 0 | X | N | |
| Rurality | P | | 0 | X | N | |
| Socio-economic disadvantage | P | | 0 | X | N | |

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

Contact Officers

Julia Krier – Legal, Governance and Democracy Specialist (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Julia.Krier@southlakeland.gov.uk

Background Documents Available

None

Tracking Information

| Signed off by | Date sent | Date Signed off |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Section 151 Officer | 28/09/22 | 28/09/22 |
| Deputy Monitoring Officer | Report Author | Report Author |
| CMT | N/A | N/A |

| Circulated to | Date sent |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Lead Specialist | N/A |
| Human Resources Lead Specialist | N/A |
| Communications Team | N/A |
| Leader | N/A |
| Committee Chairman | 28/09/22 |
| Portfolio Holder | 28/09/22 |
| Ward Councillor(s) | N/A |
| Committee | N/A |
| Executive (Cabinet) | N/A |
| Council | N/A |