WHITEHILL
TOWN COUNCIL
Serving Whitehill & Bordon

GIFTS & HOSPITALITY POLICY

Date of Adoption: 03.12.2020 Date of Review: November 2024 Next Review: November 2027

Councillors should be cautious of accepting any offer or gift, favour or hospitality that could be perceived as a result of their position as a town councillor.

It is not always inappropriate or unlawful to accept a gift or hospitality, but each individual case should be considered as to whether it is appropriate to accept any gifts, or hospitality and councillors should have regard to how the acceptance could be perceived by others.

LEGAL CONTEXT

It is a criminal offence, under the Bribery Act 2010, to corruptly solicit or receive any gift, reward or advantage as an inducement to doing, or forbearing to do anything, in respect of any transaction involving the council.

The onus is on the councillor to disprove corruption in relation to a gift from a person holding or seeking to obtain a contract from the council.

It is a criminal offence for a person corruptly to give or offer any gift, reward or advantage as inducement or reward to a councillor for doing or forbearing to do anything as a member of that council.

If this occurs, the councillor must immediately report to the Monitoring Officer any circumstances when an inappropriate gift or hospitality was offered and may be required to assist the Police in providing evidence.

PERMISSIBLE GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

Councillors may accept gifts/hospitality provided in the normal course of duties as a member. This may include:

- Civic hospitality provided by another local authority
- Normal and modest refreshment in connection with any meeting in the course of the work as a councillor (e.g., tea, coffee and other normal beverages and biscuits)
- Tickets for sporting, cultural and entertainment events, which are sponsored or promoted by the council or bodies to which the councillor has been appointed by the council, and the tickets are offered in relation to that sponsorship or promotion.
- Small low value items below £50.00 (e.g., pens, calendars, diaries, flowers and other tokens/mementos).
- Drinks or other modest refreshment in the normal course of socialising arising consequentially for council business (e.g., inclusion in a round of drinks after a meeting). Modest meals provided as a matter of courtesy in the office or meeting place of a person with whom the council has a business connection.
- Souvenirs and gifts from other public bodies intended as personal gifts (e.g., arising from town twinning and civic events).

GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY TO AVOID

Councillors may not accept a gift or hospitality as an inducement or reward for anything they do as a member of the council. If they have any suspicion that the motive behind the gift or hospitality is an inducement or reward it should be declined and avoid giving any perception of soliciting such reward.

This includes gifts or hospitality:

- of significant value or whose value is excessive in the circumstances
- from any of the following sources:
    - parties involved with the council in a competitive tendering or other procurement process;
    - applicants for planning permission and other applications for licenses, consents or approvals;
    - applicants for grants, including voluntary bodies;
    - parties in legal proceedings with the council

- if the councillor believes there will be an obligation to the provider as a consequence.

REGISTRATION

A councillor must, within 28 days of receiving ANY gift or hospitality over the value of £50, provide written notification to the Town Clerk & General Manager to the existence and nature of that gift or hospitality, and must complete a gifts and hospitality registration form for all notifications.

Registration form

For the attention of the Town Clerk & General Manager

Whitehill Town Council

Notification of Receipt of Gifts and Hospitality

What was the gift or hospitality (Give full details)	
What is the best estimate of its market value or cost?	
Who provided it?	
When and where was it received?	
Signed:	
Name in Capitals:	
Dated:	
Office Use Only: Date of receipt:	
Action required:	
Received by:	