

**Bond, David**

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**From:** Fawkes, Margaret  
**Sent:** 15 July 2009 14:48  
**To:** DL CMT Members; DL Heads of Service  
**Cc:** DL All Personal Assistants; Hart, Nigel; Henderson, Michael; Wannop, Kirsty  
**Subject:** GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

Following on from the intensive media and public scrutiny and resulting condemnation of the activities of national politicians and officials, and given the present economic stringencies, you will know that the spotlight has now been focussed on local government.

Now, more than ever before, we must all therefore ensure that the letter and spirit of the Officers' Code of Conduct, particularly in relation to gifts and hospitality, is followed in full.

A copy of the provisions about gifts and hospitality is attached. Please read them carefully and circulate them to all relevant colleagues.

Specifically, bear in mind that in these times of heightened sensitivity to perceived wrongdoing in public office, the public and press will be more inclined to view gifts and hospitality as inappropriate, unreasonable and even as potential forms of inducement.

Even if an Officer is not, for instance, going to be involved in a prospective re-tender of a contract, and even though the re-tender process may not be imminent, gifts and hospitality accepted from the existing contractor may be perceived to be the result of an ulterior motive and accordingly unacceptable.

All of this applies to any gift or hospitality, however minor it may seem.

In practice, the acceptance of gifts and hospitality, of whatever size, should be the exception and not the norm.

Taking all of this into account, if an Officer considers that it would be reasonable to accept a gift or hospitality, and it is not possible for example, for the Authority or the Officer to bear some or all of the cost involved, rather than the donor, the Officer should first check with the relevant Head of Service/(Corporate) Director whether or not acceptance is approved.

Details of any gift or hospitality which is offered (even if it not accepted) or accepted, must be included on the usual notification form (copy attached), which has to be dated, signed and given to the relevant Officer in the service concerned who has responsibility for keeping the register (completed/approved forms are then copied to Democratic Services).

When filling in a form, please ensure that specific details of the circumstances are provided, in terms of the nature of the donor's interest - eg who has made the offer and in what capacity; and also as regards what exactly is being offered - eg what costs will be met by the donor, what will be paid for by the Officer, and whether the hospitality will take place in the Council's or the Officer's own time.

To conclude, please be extremely wary about accepting any gifts or hospitality at any time and before accepting check with your Head of Service or (Corporate) Director that it would be appropriate and acceptable to do so.

If there are any queries about this guidance or if you would wish to discuss specific examples, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards.

David Bond  
 15 July 2009



Employee Code of  
 Conduct - Gif...



officer dec  
 interests.doc

**Margaret Fawkes**  
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 Director of Law & Democracy and