

Non-Executive Report of the: Standards Advisory Committee Thursday, 16 January 2025	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Shupriya Iqbal, Director of Legal	Classification: Open (Unrestricted)
Register of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality Quarterly Update	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services Patricia Attawia, Democratic Services Team Leader (Civic and Members)
Wards affected	All Wards

Executive Summary

This report updates the Committee on the Members' Register of Interests and declarations of gifts and hospitality submitted by Members since the previous report to the Committee on 18 September 2024.

The Standards Advisory Committee is receiving this report as it monitors compliance with the requirement in the Council Code of Conduct for Members to register and disclose their interests, and to declare any offer of a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25.

Recommendations:

The Standards Advisory Committee is recommended to:

1. Review and note the report.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Council is required by statute to adopt a Code of Conduct for Members. For the purpose of the Code, a Member includes the Mayor, elected Councillors and Co-opted Members of the Authority
- 1.2 A Member is required under the Council's Code of Conduct (paragraph 50) to register and disclose their interests. This must be done within 28 days of becoming a member or being re-elected to office.
- 1.3 Members must ensure their register of interests is kept up to date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.

- 1.4 A member is also required under the Council's Code of Conduct (paragraph 59) to register the offer of any gift or hospitality, whether accepted or not, with an estimated value of at least £25. They must include the person from whom it is received.
- 1.5 Repeated smaller gifts and hospitality which, when combined, would likely exceed £25 within any three-month period should also be declared.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 This is a noting update report.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

Register of Interests

- 3.1 [In order to maintain an accurate register of Members' interests, Democratic Services send quarterly reminders to all Members via the Members' Bulletin to ensure that their declarations are up to date.
- 3.2 Two of these reminders (January and July), request that Members respond to officers to confirm that their current register of interests is correct.
- 3.3 Reminders were sent via the Members' Bulletin in October and at the start of the New Year. The recent reminder was followed by an email to all Members asking them to confirm that their register of interests is up to date. Responses are being received and the committee will be updated at the next meeting.
- 3.4 Fortnightly reports are provided by Committee Services detailing Members' declarations made at meetings, which are checked against each Member's register of interests to ensure it is accurate.

Gifts and Hospitality

- 3.5 This period (1 September to 31 December) two declarations have been received and these are presented below. Both items were declared within the required timescale:

Name	Date received	Type	Accepted/declined	Date declared	On time	Provided by	Estimated value	Description
Cllr Kabir Ahmed	21.11.24	Gift	Declined	9.12.24	Yes	Mount Anvil	£90	Basketball
Cllr Peter Golds	30.09.24	Hospitality	Accepted	24.10.24	Yes	City of London Corporation	£30	Dinner at the Conservative Conference

Gifts and Hospitality – Historical errors

- 3.6 The service recently undertook an audit of past declarations to ensure they had been recorded correctly. From this it became apparent that, although all declarations had been published correctly on the website, a small number had not been pulling through into the system extracts used to create the reports for the committee and so had not been seen at the Standards Advisory Committee.
- 3.7 A full audit was therefore undertaken which identified five cases where declarations had been published correctly but the items were missing from the extracts and were therefore missing from the committee reports.
- 3.8 The equivalent extracts have been run again from the system and are now not showing the errors so it has not been possible to identify the bug/problem that was causing this error (the system has received a software update since that time and has also been moved to a new hosting environment so these may have resolved the problem). In future, officers will though be making extra checks on the information extracted to ensure it is accurate.
- 3.9 To ensure that the Committee have seen all declarations made, a full list of declarations since the May 2022 local elections is set out below (those identified as missing from previous reports are indicated):

Name	Date received	Type	Accepted/declined	Date declared	On time	Provided by	Estimated value	Description
Cllr Ana Miah	02/10/22	Hospitality	Accepted	27/01/23	No	ARTA Awards Ltd, 218 Bricklane E1 6SA	£150	Asian Restaurant & Takeaway Awards 2022
Cllr Asma Begum	24/09/22	Gift	Accepted	11/10/22	Yes	Canary Wharf Group	£90	Canary Wharf Group dinner at Labour Conference
Cllr Asma Begum	24/09/22	Gift	Accepted	11/10/22	Yes	Canary Wharf Group	£90	Canary Wharf Group dinner at Labour Conference
Cllr Iqbal Hossain	25/08/22	Gift		15/09/22	Yes	AEG All Points East	£266	Pair of tickets to All Points East
Cllr Jahed Choudhury	26/02/24	Gift	Accepted	19/03/24	Yes	Mile End American Pool & Snooker, E1 4AA	£65	Snooker cue
Cllr James King	26/07/23	Hospitality	Accepted	22/08/23	Yes	All Points East, SE1 8NW	£300	2 Tickets to All Points East Festival
Cllr Kabir Ahmed	22/12/22	Gift	Declined	23/01/23	No	Chinese Embassy in the UK	£20	Gift - beverage
	26/05/23	Hospitality	Accepted			Tower Hamlets Hockey Club	£44	Complimentary ticket to the Hockey Match. In return for

								the ticket Cllr made a donation of £43.50 to the Hockey Club.
	21/11/24	Gift	Declined	09/12/24	Yes	Mount Anvil	£90	Basketball
Cllr Kabir Hussain	02/10/22	Hospitality	Accepted	03/10/22	Yes	ARTA Awards Ltd, 218 Bricklane E1 6SA	£150	Asian Restaurant & Takeaway Awards 2022
	22/12/22	Gift	Declined	23/01/23	No	House of Lords	£100	Food and hospitality
Cllr Kamrul Hussain	02/10/22	Hospitality	Accepted	03/10/22	Yes	ARTA Awards Ltd, 218 Bricklane E1 6SA	£150	Asian Restaurant & Takeaway Awards 2022
	03/12/22	Hospitality	Accepted	25/01/23	No	British Bangladeshi Fashion & Lifestyle Awards	£75	Awards event
Cllr Maisha Begum	24/09/22	Gift	Accepted	11/10/22	Yes	Canary Wharf Group	£90	Canary Wharf Group dinner at Labour Conference
Cllr Maium Talukdar	24/06/22	Hospitality	Accepted	20/07/22	Yes	Odgers Interim & Odgers Connect	£280	Municipal Journal Awards Dinner
	02/10/22	Hospitality	Accepted	03/10/22	Yes	ARTA Awards Ltd, 218 Bricklane E1 6SA	£150	Asian Restaurant & Takeaway Awards 2022
	03/12/22	Hospitality	Accepted	24/01/23	No	British Bangladeshi Fashion & Lifestyle Awards	£65	Awards event with full course meal
	26/02/24	Gift	Accepted	20/03/24	Yes	Mile End Snooker Club, E1 4AA	£65	Snooker cue
Cllr Mohammad Chowdhury	16/10/22	Gift	Accepted	20/10/22	Yes	Mr M Ahmed Mr A Chowdhury Mr S Uddin Mr A Belal Mr M Mizan Mr M Uddin Mr S Alam Mr I Sipar	£200	Hamper includes perfumes, clothes, chocolates, wall fram
Cllr Mufeedah Bustin	28/07/23	Gift	Accepted	02/08/23	Yes	All Points East, SE1 8NW	£280	2 Tickets to All Points East Festival
	25/08/24	Gift	Accepted	26/08/24	Yes	All Points East – AEG Head Office, 240 Blackfriars Road, EE1 8NW	£200	Two tickets to All Points East on 25 August 2024

Cllr Musthak Ahmed	11/12/22	Hospitality	Declined	31.03.23	No	Mr Mohammed Mahtabur Rahman, address unknown	£50	Wedding invitation
Cllr Ohid Ahmed	15/01/23	Hospitality	Accepted	23/01/23	Yes	Bangladeshi Welfare Association Milan	£120	Guest Speaker at their inaugural meeting. Dinner and hotel.
Cllr Peter Golds	30/09/24	Hospitality	Accepted	24/10/24	Yes	City of London Corporation	£30	Dinner at the Conservative Conference
Cllr Sabina Akhtar	24/09/22	Gift	Accepted	11/10/22	Yes	Canary Wharf Group	£90	Canary Wharf Group dinner at Labour Conference
Cllr Shafi Ahmed	20/07/22	Gift	Accepted	22/09/22	No	Billingsgate Market	£30	Received a salmon fish
	22/12/22	Gift	Declined	17/01/23	Yes	Chinese Embassy in the UK	£26	Gift - beverage
	25/01/24	Gift	Accepted	20/02/24	Yes	Chinese Embassy, 49-51 Portland Place, W1B 1JL	£30.00	Special tea
Cllr Shahaveer Shubo Hussain	20/08/22	Hospitality	Accepted	20/09/22	No	All Points East	£256	All Points East Tickets at Victoria Park
	24/09/22	Gift	Accepted	11/10/22	Yes	Canary Wharf Group	£90	Canary Wharf Group dinner at Labour Conference
Mayor Lutfur Rahman	18/08/22	Gift	Accepted but not kept, donated to staff	09/09/22	Yes	All Points East Festival Organisers	£1,544	All Points East Festival Tickets
	22/12/22	Gift	Accepted but not kept. Donated to staff.	22/12/22	Yes	Chinese Embassy in the UK	£52	Gift-beverage
	11/12/23	Gift	Accepted	19/01/24	Yes	Chinese Embassy, 49-51 Portland Place, W1B 1JL	£25.00	Gift box of biscuits

Reminders for Register of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality Updates

3.10 The timetable for reminders over the next 12 months is set out below.

Timetable	
Quarterly reminder – Members' Bulletin	April 2025
Quarterly reminder – Members' Bulletin and email requesting confirmation that registers are up to date and all gifts and hospitality have been declared	July 2025
Quarterly reminder – Members' Bulletin	October 2025
Quarterly reminder – Members' Bulletin and email requesting confirmation that registers are up to date and all gifts and hospitality have been declared	January 2026

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None specific to this report.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

5.2 None specific to this report.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 There are no financial implications of reviewing the Register of Interests and declarations of gifts and hospitality.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 Chapter 7 of Part 1 of the Localism Act 2011 ('the Act') requires a local authority to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members and to have a Code of Conduct for Members.

7.2 The Act also requires the Monitoring Officer of a local authority to maintain a register of Members' interests. The Council's Constitution sets out in the Members' Code of Conduct what information and timescales are required to be declared.

7.3 The matters set out in this report comply with the above legislation and the Council's Constitution.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- None

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A