

Non-Executive Report of the: Standards Advisory Committee Tuesday, 18 April 2023	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	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 15 February 2023.

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 report.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

Register of Interests

- 3.1 It is important that Members maintain an up to date Register of Interests, in line with the Code of Conduct. To support this Democratic Services send quarterly reminders that any changes should be notified to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.
- 3.2 Twice a year (roughly 6 months apart), a request is sent to all Members and Co-opted Members to confirm that their current register of interests remains accurate.
- 3.3 Following the request made in January and the subsequent update to the Committee in February regarding outstanding responses, the Mayor, councillors and Co-opted Members have now all responded.
- 3.4 The report to the Committee in February also mentioned the internal audit currently taking place, reviewing the processes for managing and monitoring Members' declarations of interests. This is ongoing and the outcome will be reported to the committee once it has been completed.

Gifts and Hospitality

- 3.5 An article was included in the Members' Bulletin in March, reminding Members to declare any offers of gifts and hospitality they may have received.
- 3.6 During the period 1 February 2023 – 31 March 2023, 1 declaration was received. The details are set out in Table 1 below.

Name	Date offered	Type	Accepted/declined	Date declared	On time	Provided by	Estimated value	Description
Cllr Musthak Ahmed	11/12/22	Hospitality	Declined	31.03.23	No	Mr Mohammed Mahtabur Rahman, address unknown.	£50	Wedding invitation

Table 1

3.7 The declaration was not received within the 28 day deadline. However, the councillor confirmed that it had been submitted previously within the deadline, but was resubmitted last month when it became apparent that we did not have it.

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.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 The Council is required by Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 ('the Act') to have a Code of Conduct for Members as part of its duty to maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members. Section 29 of the Act requires the monitoring officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of Members and co-opted Members.

7.2 The Code of Conduct is set out in Part C of the Council's Constitution. It includes a requirement for Members to disclose their interests in the register of interests.

- 7.3 The matters set out in this report comply with the above legislation and with 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