

Non-Executive Report of the:  <b>Standards Advisory Committee</b>  Thursday, 21 September 2023	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	<b>Classification:</b> Open (Unrestricted)
<b>Register of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality Quarterly Update</b>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services Patricia Attawia, Democratic Services Team Leader (Civic and Members)
<b>Wards affected</b>	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 22 June 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, comment on 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 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 The recent reminder in July was followed up by an email to all Members asking them to confirm that their register of interests is up to date. At the time of writing responses have been received from all Members, to either notify officers of changes or to confirm that there are none and the current register is correct.
- 3.4 In addition, the recent process implemented as a result of the audit of the management of Members' interests has been carried out, with fortnightly reports being provided by Committee Services detailing Members' declarations made at meetings, which have been checked against each Member's register of interests to ensure it is accurate.

### **Gifts and Hospitality**

- 3.5 The email sent to all Members in July also included a reminder to ensure any offers of gifts and hospitality have been declared.
- 3.6 During the period 1 June to 31 August 2023, 3 declarations were 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 Kabir Ahmed	10.7.23	Hospitality	Accepted	28.7.23	Yes	House of Lords	£100	Food and Hospitality
Cllr Mufeedah Bustin	28.7.23	Gift	Accepted	2.8.23	Yes	All Points East, SE1 8NW	£280	2 Tickets to All Points East Festival
Cllr James King	26.7.23	Hospitality	Accepted	22.8.23	Yes	All Points East, SE1 8NW	£300	2 Tickets to All Points East Festival

Table 1

3.7 All declarations were received within the 28 day deadline.

3.8 The timetable for reminders over the next 12 months is set out in table 2 below.

<b>Timetable</b>	
Quarterly reminder – Members’ Bulletin	October 2023
Quarterly reminder – Members’ Bulletin and email requesting confirmation that registers are up to date and all gifts and hospitality have been declared	January 2024
Quarterly reminder – Members’ Bulletin	April 2024
Quarterly reminder – Members’ Bulletin and email requesting confirmation that registers are up to date and all gifts and hospitality have been declared	July 2024

Table 2

#### **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 direct financial implications arising from this report

## **7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

7.1 Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 requires a local authority to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members of the authority. The same section requires a local authority to adopt a Code of Conduct for Members and co-opted Members of the authority.

7.2 The Council's Code of Conduct, which is set out in Part C of the Constitution, sets out the circumstances in which a Member or co-opted Member must register offers of gifts or hospitality.

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

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## **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:**

Or state N/A