



## AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>OFFICERS REGISTER OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY</b>
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**AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC**

**Audit Committee Meeting Date: 21 March 2011**

**Policy Document: No**

**Directorate: Chief Executive's**

**Accountable Cabinet Member: Councillor Perkins**

### 1. Purpose

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1.1 To review the operation of the Register of Officers Gifts and Hospitality.

### 2. Recommendations

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2.1 That the report be noted.

### 3. Issues and Choices

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#### 3.1 Report Background

3.1.1 In June 2010 Management Board approved an Employee's Code of Conduct (see Appendix) which set out core ethical values which apply to all employees, set up a Register of Officer Interests that applies to Heads of Service or above, and set up a Register of Officers Gifts and Hospitality that applies to all employees. This report concentrates upon the Register of Officers Gifts and Hospitality.

3.1.2 The Borough Solicitor wrote to the Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Service in June 2010 informing them of Management Board's decision and enclosing a copy of the Code of Conduct and copies of the registration forms for declaring interests and gifts and hospitality. Initial returns for both registers were required by 12 July 2010 and then to be updated as appropriate. Heads

of Service were required to bring the Code of Conduct and the requirements for gifts and hospitality to the attention of employees.

3.1.3 Although the Monitoring Officer is responsible for the Council's ethical framework the Registers for Heads of Service and above are physically held by the Democratic Services Manager as already holding the equivalent Members Registers. Heads of Service were required to create and maintain registers of Gifts and Hospitality for the staff under their control.

3.1.4 All gifts and hospitality in excess of £25 need to be registered. The registration requires the giver to be identified, the value of the gift or hospitality (or simply state "in excess of £25" if the value is not known) as well as the recipient's understanding of why or how the gift or hospitality has come about.

3.1.5 In relation to Heads of Service and above, and since 11 June 2010, the date of the Borough Solicitor's memorandum, there have been six registrations of gifts and hospitality; one gift and five incidences of hospitality. These come from Housing (4), and Chief Executive's (2), there being no registrations from Environment and Culture, Finance and Support or Planning and Regeneration. All six registrations come from Directors.

3.1.6 The one gift was a donation to a charity nominated by the recipient. The five incidences of hospitality related to meals at conferences or business leaders lunches.

## **3.2 Issues**

3.2.1 This report does not include an assessment of the registers that the Borough Solicitor required Directorates to keep for staff of below Head of Service level.

3.2.2 It is important that all employees are periodically reminded of the need to register the receipt of any gifts and hospitality.

## **3.3 Choices (Options)**

3.3.1

## **4. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **4.1 Policy**

4.1.1 The Policy is contained in the Employee Code of Conduct.

### **4.2 Resources and Risk**

4.2.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **4.3 Legal**

4.3.1 The code of conduct is in accordance with various acts and provisions concerning the conduct of Council employees.

#### **4.4 Equality**

4.4.1 The Code of Conduct applies to all employees.

#### **4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)**

4.5.1 Borough Solicitor

#### **4.6 Other Implications**

4.6.1 N/a

### **5. Background Papers**

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5.1 Officer Gifts and Hospitality registration sheets.

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