

Hospitality

There are no hard and fast rules about accepting hospitality. Members of the Civic party must judge whether doing so can be justified without causing damage to the reputation of the Office which they hold. The following guidelines will though help with that judgement:

- There are a number of functions each year which Lord Mayor and/or members of the Civic party will traditionally attend and at which hospitality, including formal dinners, will be offered. This includes functions such as Guild dinners. The Civic Office will be able to advise on which events fall into this category. Accepting such hospitality is acceptable.
- At other civic engagements the acceptance of reasonable refreshment, such as a lunch, is likely to be acceptable.
- The acceptance of more substantial hospitality when not linked to one of the traditional functions is more likely to be acceptable where it is clearly linked to the promotion of the City. Where the attendance of a member of the Civic party has been requested in such circumstances, then the decision as to whether to accept such hospitality should be made based on impartial guidance from an appropriate officer of the Council.
- Offers of foreign travel should only be accepted where the Chief Executive has confirmed that it is appropriate to do so in the interests of promoting the City.
- Great caution should be exercised in accepting hospitality from any organisation which is known to be engaged in a current procurement exercise or has a current planning, licensing or similar application before the Council.

Where the Lord Mayor (or any member of the Civic party who is a councillor) accepts hospitality in line with these guidelines the receipt of that hospitality does not have to be declared in the register of Members' interests.

Accepting Gifts

Gifts of more than a nominal value (exceeding £50) should be accepted on behalf of the Council and not retained personally. Such gifts should be passed to the Civic Office who shall manage such gifts on behalf of the Council.

More minor tokens of goodwill, such as flowers, can be accepted as personal gifts.

In either of these cases it is not necessary to register the receipt of the gift in the register of Members' interests.

Occasionally gifts may be offered which are clearly intended to be personal gifts but are more than a minor token of goodwill. Where the value of the gift appears to exceed £50 the advice of the Monitoring Officer should be sought before the gift is retained by the recipient.