

**Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee  
16 June 2017**

**Report by Chairperson and  
Monitoring Officer/Secretary**

**ANNUAL REPORT RE :  
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST REGISTERS AND  
GIFTS, HOSPITALITY AND SPONSORSHIP REGISTERS**

**REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The review of counter fraud arrangements by internal audit contained a recommendation that Declarations of Interest Registers and Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Registers should be reviewed (at least annually) at the GAS Committee. This report reviews the Declarations of Interest Registers and Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Registers for the period 1 April 2016 to 1 June 2017.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Committee is asked to consider this report.

## BACKGROUND

2. Section 29 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer of the Fire Authority to establish and maintain a Register of Interests of Elected Members and Co-opted Members of the Authority. Subject to the requirement to require the registration of certain categories of interest defined as 'disclosable pecuniary interests' it is for the Authority to determine what is to be entered in the register. The Monitoring Officer must secure that a copy of the register is available for inspection at a place within the Authority's area at all reasonable hours and that the register is published on the Authority's website.
3. The Officer's Code of Conduct states that Officers must comply with the Authority's requirements for the registration and declaration of any financial and non-financial interest and the Authority's policies on the declaration of hospitality or gifts offered to or received by employees.
4. The review of counter fraud arrangements by Internal Audit for 2016/17 examined the recording of Members' registers of interests and the recording of offers of gifts and hospitality recorded by Officers and Members. The review contained a recommendation that Declarations of Interest Registers and Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Registers should be reviewed (at least annually) at the GAS Committee.
5. This report reviews the Declarations of Interest Registers and Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Registers for the period 1 April 2016 to 1 June 2017.

## REVIEW OF DECLARATION OF INTEREST REGISTERS AND GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY REGISTERS 2016 /2017

### MEMBER REGISTERS OF INTERESTS

6. The review of counter fraud arrangements by Internal Audit for 2016/17 examined the recording of Members' Registers of Interests. The review stated that the latest entries on the Registers of Interests were examined at the time of the review and found to be in order.
7. A review of the content of the Registers of Interests of Members was also undertaken as part of the preparation of this report. A review of the information contained on the website confirms that Register of Interests forms for each Member of the Authority are shown on the website and the information that would be expected to be recorded is shown on the website.

### MEMBER DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALTY

8. The review of counter fraud arrangements found that there had been no recent recorded examples of declarations of gifts and hospitality by Members. Since the review two declarations have been made by two Members of hospitality consisting of a meal at a conference from the Fire Industries' Association.

### OFFICER DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALTY

9. The review of counter fraud arrangements found that there were very few offers of gifts and hospitality recorded in recent years. A Register of Gifts and Hospitality offered to Officers is shown on the Authority website in the form set out at Appendix 1 to this report. It can be seen from this that 17 offers of gifts and hospitality have been recorded in the 2016/17 period. The value of the gifts is generally low with the value to each

Officer not being generally above £35 although the combined value when more than one Officer has been offered the gift / hospitality is clearly greater. It can be seen that when gifts and hospitality of a greater value are offered they are refused or the gift is to be raffled for a charity.

10. The form does not record the reasons that the gift / hospitality was accepted or refused and this perhaps would enable some context to be given especially where gifts are accepted.

#### CONCLUSION

11. There are systems in place for the recording of interests by Members and the recording of offers of gifts and hospitality by Officers and Members. These are recorded and are available for public inspection on the website of the Authority.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

12. None arising directly.

#### FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

13. No direct implications

#### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14. It is a legal requirement for Members' interests to be recorded and for the Registers of Interest to be published on the website of the Authority.

#### EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

15. None arising.

#### CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

16. None arising.

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

17. None arising.

#### COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

18. None.

#### DETAILS OF CONSULTATION AND/OR COLLABORATION

19. None.

#### BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

20. Members' Registers of Interest and Officers' Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

21. The Committee is asked to consider this report.

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