



HUMBERSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Service Improvement

Gifts and Hospitality Policy

Owner	Executive Director of Corporate Services
Responsible Person	Head of Corporate Assurance
Date written	February 2017
Date of last review	December 2023
Date of next review	December 2025
EIA Completed	December 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

This policy is intended to provide clear guidance to all staff and Members who may, in the course of their roles within Humberside Fire Authority, receive offers of gifts and hospitality.

Core Code of Ethics

HFRS has adopted the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services. The Service is committed to the ethical principles of the Code and strives to apply them in all we do, therefore, those principles are reflected in this Policy.

National Guidance

Any National Guidance which has been adopted by HFRS, will be reflected in this Policy.

2. EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

Humberside Fire and Rescue Service has a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010, and a commitment, to ensure it does not discriminate either directly or indirectly in any of its functions and services nor in its treatment of staff, in relation to race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, gender reassignment or marriage and civil partnership. It also has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants, employees and service users.

3. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

To give clear direction to staff and Members as to the course of action to be taken if offered gifts and/or hospitality, and establishing that, in the event of any doubt, the offer should be declined, or further guidance sought.

- Explain how to record offers of gifts and/or hospitality, the rejection or acceptance;
- Explain what gifts and/or hospitality can be accepted;
- Explain what gifts and/or hospitality cannot be accepted;
- Give guidance in the form of “do’s and don’ts”.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- [Equality Impact Analysis](#)
- Legal References
 - The Bribery Act 2010
 - Government Transparency Code 2015
 - Member Code of Conduct
 - Employee Code of Conduct

- National Guidance
There is no specific National Guidance related to this policy.

5. THE REGISTER EXPLAINED

- Humberside Fire Authority is a public body and is committed to demonstrating the highest standards of governance;
- In the interest of openness and transparency, the Register is open to public inspection.
- The Employee Register is maintained by the Head of Corporate Assurance.
- The HFA Member Register is maintained by the Secretary/Monitoring Officer to Humberside Fire Authority.

6. WHERE AND WHEN TO REGISTER GIFTS OF HOSPITALITY

You must register any offer of a gift or hospitality within 20 days (normal working days) of receiving the offer, including acceptance or rejection.

You should use the form at [Appendix A](#) and submit this to the Head of Corporate Assurance (Employees) or Secretary to Humberside Fire Authority (HFA Members) if, after reading this guidance you need to register a gift or hospitality.

The Register of Gifts and Hospitality is held as a public document on the HFRS Website under 'Data Transparency'. An example is provided at [Appendix B](#).

7. WHAT MUST NOT BE ACCEPTED (Both the offer and rejection should be registered)

- Cash payment of any value;
- Holidays;
- Individual free/subsidised use of facilities, unless this is provided through the Service;
- Any gift with a value (or combined value) above £50.

8. MINOR GIFTS WHICH CAN BE ACCEPTED AND NOT DECLARED

The following types of minor gifts can be accepted without declaration:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Calendars and diaries | • Chocolates |
| • Key rings | • Flowers |
| • Mouse mats | • Retirement gifts |
| • Stationery and pens | • Bottles of wine |
| • Commemorative books | • Hospitality provided by another public body |
| • Tickets for events sponsored or promoted by HFRS _i | |

This is not an exhaustive list and is indicative only.

9. WHAT CAN BE ACCEPTED AND MUST BE REGISTERED

Gifts where the value is between £25 and £50 (including the minor gifts described above).

10. HOSPITALITY

There are occasions where corporate hospitality is offered, perhaps as part of an event/conference. Common sense is needed and as such you must exercise careful judgement.

Ask yourself if:

- Accepting hospitality is likely to lead an objective person to consider that such an acceptance would be improper or inappropriate, bearing in mind the purpose of this Policy and whether;
- Accepting hospitality would appear to create the sense of an obligation;
If hospitality is reasonable and proportionate, then it can be accepted **and must be included** on the register. Indeed, events are often considered an integral element in building and maintaining relationships in the sector.
- Frequent hospitality from the same source, particularly from a prospective or current contractor is not acceptable.

11. GIFTS DONATED FOR CHARITABLE PURPOSES

Sometimes the Service receives gifts for its nominated charities or charitable purposes. Those gifts will be donated to the charity concerned or raffled with the proceeds going to the nominated charity. **These gifts must be registered**, unless they can be regarded as being minor gifts as indicated above.

12. HFA MEMBERS' OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

- Members should refer to the Code of Conduct (Section 4 of the Guidance to the Code which is part of the Member Reference File).
- Members must declare all gifts and hospitality over £25.
- Members should also note that where a Member has declared in the Register the receipt of any gift or hospitality, then that Member will automatically have a personal interest should the person who provided the gift/hospitality come under discussion/consideration at a particular meeting.

13. REPEAT MINOR GIFTS FROM THE SAME SOURCE

Where over a period of 12 months more than one minor gift is received from the same source, then you must add together the value of each gift received to ensure that you comply with the Register.

Seeking Advice

If in doubt, seek the advice of any of the following:

Lisa Nicholson	Secretary/Monitoring Officer
Martyn Ransom	Executive Director of Service Support / S.151 Officer
Shaun Edwards	Head of Finance
Jamie Morris	Head of Corporate Assurance / Internal Audit / Chair of the Governance Audit and Scrutiny Committee

Do's and Don'ts

Do's

- Unless a minor gift, declare that you have received an offer of a gift or hospitality including where you have **rejected** that offer;
- If in doubt reject the offer, particularly where the acceptance might create an impression of bias, undue influence and be contrary to the principles of good governance and our Constitution;
- Do seek advice and guidance if in doubt.

Don'ts

- Do not accept any gifts or hospitality from any person or company tendering or considering tendering for any service, supply of goods or works;
- Do not accept any gifts or hospitality where the Fire Authority may be compromised in any way, or which might appear to the reasonable informed person to compromise the Authority;
- Do not use your official position to further your private interests or those of others;
- Do not solicit any gifts or hospitality;
- Do not accept any cash.

APPENDIX A: REGISTRATION OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

To: Secretary to HFA (Member Register)
Head of Corporate Assurance (Employee Register)

Name of Member or Employee:

Name of Donor:

Details of gift or hospitality
and estimated value:

Date received:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Was the gift or hospitality accepted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you received similar gifts in previous 12 months?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the donor have a contract with HFRS (so far as you are aware)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed:

Dated:

APPENDIX B: REGISTER OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

Applicable to all employees of Humberside Fire and Rescue Service and Members of Humberside Fire Authority.
The Register is a public document on the HFRS Website.

Name of Employee/ HFA Member	Date of Offer	Details of Offer	Offer By	Offer Accepted	Offer Declined

**If you require further guidance or information relating to this document, please contact
Corporate Assurance Section**