

**AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 5 June 2023****PROCEDURAL MATTERS – QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES**

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N.B. The deadline for Member's questions is 30 May 2023 and public questions is 29 May 2023.

**b Public Questions****1. Question submitted by Brian Edmonds**

Does Surrey County Council have an employee Gifts and Hospitality Register subject to internal and external audit?

Under the Bribery Act 2010, it is a criminal offence for employees in an official capacity to accept any gift or consideration as an inducement or reward for: doing or not doing anything; or showing favour or disfavour to any person.

**RESPONSE:**

At Surrey County Council any gift beyond a small token of goodwill should be politely declined. Gifts should only be accepted in exceptional circumstances, where there is a clear justification for doing so and where this has been formally approved in advance. Offers of gifts, other than small tokens of goodwill, must be recorded in the online gifts & hospitality register, whether accepted or not. Manager approval is needed before any gift or hospitality is accepted.

The register is reviewed monthly by the HR&OD team and, where appropriate, will be discussed with line managers. The register is reviewed quarterly by HR, the Monitoring Officer, and representatives from Internal Audit.

An annual report summarising register activity is reviewed by members of the HR&OD leadership team and presented for review and discussion to the Risk Governance Group and Audit and Governance Committee. Following this, a summary of the Register of Gifts and Hospitality is published online on the Surrey website. It is thus open to the public and internal and external auditors.

Internal Audit periodically review the Gifts and Hospitality process. This was last undertaken in 2019/20.

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