

# **DORCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL**

## **POLICY ON GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

### **1. Introduction**

This protocol provides guidance for the Councillors and employees on accepting gifts and hospitality in relation to their roles.

### **2. General Caution**

2.1. Councillors and employees must treat with extreme caution any offer of gift, favour or hospitality that is made to them personally, which may possibly be perceived to be in connection with their role on behalf on the Council.

2.2. The personal reputation of the individual concerned and that of the Parish Council can be seriously jeopardized by the inappropriate acceptance of gifts or hospitality.

### **3. Criminal Law**

3.1. It is a criminal offence corruptly to solicit or receive any gift, reward or advantage as an inducement to doing or forbearing to do anything in respect of any transaction involving the Parish Council.

### **4. Limits of Guidance**

4.1. This protocol does not apply to the acceptance of facilities or hospitality provided to your Parish Council, or gifts given to your Parish Council that you accept on their behalf and are retained by the Parish Council.

### **5. Meaning of Gifts and Hospitality**

5.1. These include the free gift of any goods or service; the opportunity to acquire any goods at a discount or terms not available to the general public; the offer of food, drink or entertainment, or the opportunity to attend any cultural or sporting event.

### **6. Principles to apply in relation to Gifts and Hospitality**

6.1. Councillors and employees must not accept a gift or hospitality as an inducement or reward for anything you do as a Councillor or employee.

6.2. By exception Councillors may accept modest gifts up to a value of £25.

6.3. By exception Councillors and employees may receive modest hospitality and refreshment of value up to £25 in connection with a meeting or socialising in the course of your work as a Councillor or employee.

6.4. Councillors and employees must not accept a gift or hospitality of over £25.

6.5. Councillors and employees must not accept a gift or hospitality if acceptance might be open to interpretation, e.g. from applicants for planning permission; from parties involved in competitive tendering; from applicants for grants; or from parties in legal proceedings with the Council.

6.6. Councillors and employees must not accept a gift or hospitality if they believe it will put them under any obligation to the provider as a consequence.

6.7. Councillors and employees must not solicit any gift or hospitality and avoid giving any perception of so doing.

## **7. Registration of Gifts and Hospitality.**

7.1. Councillors and employees must, within 28 days of receiving any gift or hospitality over the value of £25, provide written notice to the Monitoring Officer of SODC, via the Parish Clerk, of the existence and nature of that gift or hospitality.

7.2. Whilst the formal notification requirement is limited to goods over £25 in value, Councillors and employees are expected to give notification of any significant gift or hospitality they receive.

7.3. Councillors and employees must complete the gifts and hospitality registration form for all notifications.

## **8. Reporting of Inappropriate Gifts and Hospitality offered**

8.1. It is a criminal offence for a person to offer any gift, reward or advantage as an inducement or reward to you as a Parish Council member.

8.2. Councillors and employees must immediately report to the Monitoring Officer of SODC, via the Parish Clerk, any circumstance where an inappropriate gift or hospitality has been offered to you.

## **9. Review of policy**

9.1 This policy was approved by Dorchester Parish Council on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and will be reviewed every 4 years.