



## **GUIDANCE FOR THE OFFERING AND RECEIPT OF GIFTS OR HOSPITALITY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales is determined that the culture and tone of the organisation is one of honesty and openness.
- 1.2 From time to time the Commissioner and his team may receive offers of gifts or hospitality in the course of their duties or activities and this Guidance seeks to identify and clarify how such offers should be treated.
- 1.3 The fundamental principle must always be that any offer of a gift or hospitality should be treated with great care. The prime duty of the Commissioner and Officers in these circumstances is to ensure that there is no conflict of interest in the performance of their duties. The Commissioner or Officers who are offered a gift or hospitality should also consider how the offer might be regarded or perceived by an ordinary member of the public. In any case of doubt, advice should be sought and the Commissioner and Officers alike should bear in mind the need always to be open and frank about such offers.
- 1.4 This Guidance will be subject to review to ensure its currency.

### **2. GIFTS**

- 2.1 During the course of their duties or activities, the Commissioner and Officers should not accept significant personal gifts from contractors and outside suppliers. However, it may be considered reasonable for small, token gifts to be accepted, without notification. Examples of acceptable gifts might be plaques, mugs, calendars, pens or pocket diaries bearing the donor's name or insignia.
- 2.2 All gifts with a value of more than £25 must be properly authorised and recorded as follows:
  - (a) All Officers employed by the Commissioner and who are not under the control and direction of the Chief Constable should seek the Chief of Staff's explicit written approval to acceptance of gifts and any acceptances should be recorded by the Chief of Staff in a Register kept for that purpose; and
  - (b) The Chief of Staff and Chief Financial Officer should agree with the Commissioner before accepting gifts, and record any acceptance, together with details of the consultation, in a Register kept by the Chief of Staff for that purpose; and

(c) the Commissioner, Deputy and Assistant Commissioners should record gifts received in a Register kept by the Chief of Staff for that purpose.

- 2.3** Where any gift (no matter the value) is accepted, the donor should always be advised that acceptance will not confer any advantage for that donor in his or her dealings with the Commissioner or the Force.
- 2.4** All inappropriate gifts should be declined and returned with a polite but firm explanation.
- 2.5** Apart from participating in concessionary schemes arranged by Staff Associations, Trade Unions or other groups specifically for the benefit of its own members, the Commissioner and Officers should not avail themselves of the services of contractors employed by the Commissioner, for acquiring materials, labour or plant at cost, trade or discount prices. While in some cases this may enable personal savings compared with other courses of supply, the risks to the Commissioner or Officer of finding him/herself in an embarrassing situation at a future date cannot be over-emphasised or accepted. This particular requirement will not, however, apply to those discounts that may be generally available to any member of the public.
- 2.6** Officers responsible for the purchase of goods and supplies on behalf of the Commissioner should note that any promotional offers given by suppliers are the property of the Commissioner.

### **3. HOSPITALITY**

- 3.1** The Commissioner or Officer receiving an offer of hospitality arising from their duties or activities should consider carefully all the circumstances surrounding the offer. The scale or amount of the offer will be relevant, as also are the potential frequency and the persons to whom the offer is addressed. For example, it would be inappropriate, except in very rare cases, to accept hospitality from a company, a partnership, a group of individuals or a single individual where the offeror may be seeking a contract or some financial or other advantage from the Commissioner or the Force.
- 3.2** Hospitality is defined as anything beyond the offer of non-alcoholic drinks and light refreshment which would reasonably be regarded as normal social congress. The Commissioner and Officers should only accept offers of hospitality if there is a genuine need to impart information or represent the Commissioner in the community and should avoid hospitality in situations where the Commissioner or Officer would be the sole guest. Offers to attend purely social or sporting functions should be accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the Commissioner should be seen to be represented.
- 3.3** Offers of hospitality over the value of £25 must be properly authorised and recorded as follows:
- (a) All Officers employed by the Commissioner and who are not under the control and direction of the Chief Constable should seek the Chief of Staff's explicit written approval to acceptance of hospitality and any

acceptances should be recorded by the Chief of Staff in a Register kept for that purpose; and

- (b) The Chief of Staff and Chief Financial Officer should agree with the Commissioner before accepting hospitality and record any acceptance, together with details of the consultation, in a Register kept by the Chief of Staff for that purpose; and
- (c) The Commissioner, Deputy and Assistant Commissioners should record hospitality received in a Register kept by the Chief of Staff for that purpose and as far as practicable should be accompanied by an Officer or the Force when accepting hospitality.

**3.4** When receiving authorised hospitality the Commissioner and Officers should be particularly sensitive as to its timing in relation to decisions which the Commissioner/Force may be taking affecting those providing hospitality.

**3.5** Acceptance by the Commissioner and Officers of hospitality through attendance at relevant conferences, seminars and courses will be acceptable where it is clear the hospitality is corporate rather than personal, where the Commissioner gives consent in advance and where the Commissioner is satisfied that any purchasing decisions are not compromised.

**3.6** Where visits to inspect equipment or any other matter related to the award of any contract are required, the Commissioner and Officers should ensure that the Commissioner's office meets the travel and accommodation costs of such visits to avoid jeopardising the integrity of subsequent purchasing decisions.

**3.7** When hospitality has to be declined the offeror should be courteously but firmly informed of the procedures and standards.

## **4. REGISTER**

**4.1** The Register which the Chief of Staff is required to maintain under the provisions of this Guidance will be available for public inspection, and placed on the Commissioner's website each quarter.

## **5. ADVICE**

**5.1** In cases of doubt or difficulty, for example the value or appropriateness of the acceptance of gifts or hospitality, advice will be available from either the Chief of Staff or the Chief Financial Officer, as may be deemed appropriate to the particular circumstances.