

**Extract of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Court of Common Council
– 24th July 2014**

**17 (B) Amendments to the Members' Code of Conduct – Disclosable Interests
and the Mandatory Registration of Gifts and Hospitality**

In accordance with our terms of reference, the Standards Committee is required to prepare, keep under review and monitor the City of London Corporation's Members' Code of Conduct and make recommendations to the Court of Common Council in respect of the adoption or revision, as appropriate, of such Code of Conduct.

Due to the nature of the organisation and the wide-ranging business undertaken by Members of the Court of Common Council, your Committee believes that a number of additional categories, which would require Members to register a broader range of non-pecuniary interests, should be introduced. As there are a broad range of organisations in which City of London Members are involved, the Code of Conduct and the Members' Declarations should therefore better reflect the nature and business of the City of London Corporation, particularly where there might be a perception of influence being exerted. In reaching its decision, this Committee has taken into account the previous Standards regime, whereby Members were expected to register a more substantial list of membership bodies. The Committee also reflected on practice across local authorities and noted that some, including some London Boroughs, had retained similar provisions in their Codes of Conduct.

This Committee believes that transparency and the disclosure of relevant interests should be the guiding principle and therefore **recommends** the inclusion of an additional number of categories which would require Members to register a broader range of non-pecuniary interests. In respect of gifts and hospitality, your Committee believes that a mandatory registration regime is required given the circumstances at the City of London Corporation and the extent of gifts and hospitality offered to Members and Co-opted Members. With regards to the threshold for registration, your Committee acknowledges that whilst the £250 threshold (or £500 cumulative value) is high in comparison with a number of local authorities, this is deemed to be an appropriate threshold taking into account the nature of the organisation

A printed and circulated report has therefore been submitted for your consideration and **we commend** its recommendations to revise the Members' Code of Conduct and to introduce a mandatory registration regime for gifts and hospitality, as of 1st September 2014.

Read.

The Chairman introduced the item.

Motion – To approve the proposed revisions to the Members' Code of Conduct and the introduction of a mandatory registration regime for gifts and hospitality, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report, and that the new requirements come into effect as of 1st

September 2014, following circulation of revised guidance to Members about the new provisions in the Members' Code of Conduct and circulation of the annual reminder to all Members and Co-opted Members to update their Members' Declarations.

Following a debate the following amendments were considered:-

Amendment - that paragraph 8 of the Code set out in Appendix 1 of the report be strengthened by inserting the words "maintain" and "uphold" so that it now read as follows:-

8. You must *maintain, uphold*, promote and support high standards of conduct when serving in your public post, in particular as characterised by the above requirements, by leadership and example.

Upon the Question being put, the Lord Mayor declared the amendment to be carried.

The original Motion, as amended, being before the Court.

Amendment – that paragraph 2 of the Code be amended to read as follows:-

2. You must not *allow individuals or organisations to improperly influence you in the performance of your official duties by means of any financial or other obligations.*

Upon the Question being put, the Lord Mayor declared the amendment to be carried.

The original Motion, including the two amendments, being before the Court.

Amendment – that a caveat is placed on the first bullet point relating to non-percuniary interests of charitable bodies and that it be amended to read as follows:-

- Management board or similar body of any charity or body directed to a charitable purpose which is *likely to seek to affect the policy of the City Corporation or which may have an impact on its services or stakeholders.*

Upon the Question being put, the Lord Mayor declared the amendment to be carried.

The original Motion, including the three amendments, being before the Court.

Further debate ensued on whether the proposed Code as amended and before the Court was too prescriptive and whether the matter should, as a consequence, be referred back to the Standards Committee for further consideration at a meeting to which all Members of the Court should be invited to attend.

Resolved – That the Members' Code of Conduct be referred back to the Standards Committee for further consideration at a meeting of that Committee to be held prior to the meeting of the Court of Common Council on 11 September 2014, to which all Members of the Court should be invited to attend.