

Committee: Standards Committee	Date: 28 th November 2014
Subject: Gifts and Hospitality - Special Provisions for Ceremonial Office Holders	Public
Joint Report of: The Town Clerk and the Comptroller & City Solicitor	For Decision
<p>Summary</p> <p>At the meeting on 11th September 2014, the Standards Committee considered, in consultation with all Members of the Court of Common Council, revisions to the Members' Code of Conduct, including the introduction of a mandatory registration regime for gifts and hospitality. On the 16th October 2014, the revised Members' Code of Conduct was approved by the Court of Common Council with an implementation date as of 1st January 2015.</p> <p>During the discussion on at the Standards Committee's meeting on 11th September, it was agreed that the new guidance for Members, which would be circulated as part of the annual update process with a view to all updates being completed by 1st January 2015, incorporate some clarification about the special provisions for ceremonial office holders (paragraph 9). <i>The</i> Committee was of the view that those provisions could be extended to cover additional ceremonial roles, such as the Lord Mayor Locum Tenens, but requested that further consideration be given by the Committee to the existing arrangements so that the issues could be clarified, and thereafter set out in full, in the revised guidance to Members at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Alderman Sir David Wootton (Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen) and William Chapman, the Private Secretary & Chief of Staff have been invited to attend the Committee's meeting on 28th November 2014 to clarify the existing arrangements in respect of the Lord Mayor and, where relevant, other ceremonial office holders.</p> <p>Recommendations: That Members of the Standards Committee note the existing arrangements in respect of special provisions for ceremonial office holders and comment on how this aspect should be incorporated in the revised <i>Guidance to Members</i> (Members' Code of Conduct).</p>	

Main Report

Background

1. The revised Members' Code of Conduct, which was approved by the Court of Common Council on 16th October 2014 (Appendix 1) now incorporates a range of

categories relevant to non-pecuniary interests (paragraph 7) and will, as of 1st January 2015, require registration by all Members and Co-opted Members.

2. At the Standards Committee's meeting on 11th September 2014, Members were advised that, following the introduction of a revised Members' Code of Conduct, revised guidance would be circulated to all Members and Co-opted Members along with a copy of their own declaration and a request to update the Declaration in-line with the new registration requirements. As the revised Members' Code of Conduct will take effect on 1st January 2015, the guidance needs to be approved with some urgency so that the annual update to the Members' Declarations can proceed and the relevant correspondence circulated to all Members and Co-opted Members as soon as possible.
3. The revised *Guidance to Members* (Appendix 2) brings together some guidance that was previously made available to Members in respect of their responsibilities under the Code of Conduct. It also reflects the new requirements in respect of non-pecuniary interests and the mandatory registration of gifts and hospitality.
4. With regards to the special provisions for ceremonial office holders in respect of gifts and hospitality, as set out in paragraph 9 of the revised Members' Code of Conduct, at the meeting on 11th September 2014 the Committee requested clarification about the existing provisions and queried whether the provisions could be extended to other ceremonial roles such as the Lord Mayor Locum Tenens. To enable Members to consider this aspect in full and approve the revised wording of the *Guidance to Members* at the earliest opportunity, Alderman Sir David Wootton (Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen) and William Chapman, the Private Secretary & Chief of Staff have been invited to attend the meeting on 28th November 2014.

Conclusion

5. In light of the recently approved changes to the Members' Code of Conduct, the Town Clerk's Department will write to all Members and Co-opted Members in early December with a request that each Member's Declaration be reviewed and, where necessary, updated by 1st January 2015. To ensure that all Members are fully aware of all of the requirements of the revised Members' Code of Conduct, including the special provisions for ceremonial office holders in respect of gifts and hospitality, Members are asked to comment on the existing provisions and agree as to how this aspect should be incorporated in the revised *Guidance to Members* (Members' Code of Conduct).

Background Papers

- Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 11th September 2014
- Report of the standards Committee to the Court of Common Council on 16th October 2014.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Revised Members’ Code of Conduct (as of 1st January 2015)

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