

Declaration of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Policy (for Officers)

Live from 1 April 2025

Annual evolution changes to this policy are shown in red text each year

This policy has been produced collaboratively by Internal Audit, Human Resources and Law & Governance

Author: Nigel Stannard, Head of Audit & Management Assurance

Version: V2025.1

Review Date: Annual evolution, next due April 2026



1. Purpose Statement

- 1.1 The purpose of the policy is to protect the Council and employees against conflicts of interest and allegations of impropriety. The public must be confident that decisions made by employees of whatever nature are made for good and proper reasons and are not influenced inappropriately by the interests of individual employees, their relatives or friends.
- 1.2 The Council is entitled to put in place a series of precautionary measures to ensure that conflicts or potential conflicts of interest are notified to the Council at an early stage.
- 1.3 The [Bribery Act 2010](#), and the [Local Government Act 1972](#) are relevant.
 - The Bribery Act 2010 makes it an offence for an employee to give advantage to someone in return for favours in relation to the Council's business.
 - [Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972](#) requires that employees notify the authority in writing of any direct or indirect financial interests which they have in any Council contracts, or proposed contracts, of which they become aware. Breach of Section 117 is a criminal offence subject to a fine.
- 1.4 All but incidental gifts and hospitality received by a council employee may be perceived as a potential conflict or may be viewed as a potential bribe. The Council generally requires all but incidental gifts and hospitality to be declared on Form 1 or Form 2 as appropriate.

2 Who the policy applies to

- 2.1 This policy applies to all BCP Council employees, including casual, part-time and temporary staff including those supplied by employment agencies.
- 2.2 This policy does not apply to BCP 'maintained' schools' employees where an individual school policy exists. A BCP 'maintained' school may use all or parts of this policy if they wish to do so.

3 This policy replaces

- 3.1 This policy replaces sections of any legacy Councils' respective Code of Conduct or any standalone policies, procedures or guidance of legacy Councils relating to conflicts of interest and or accepting/declaring gifts or hospitality.
- 3.2 This policy operates in conjunction with the BCP Council Code of Conduct for employees and the disciplinary procedure. The BCP Code of Conduct states 'Employees are required to follow the 'Declaration of interests, gifts and hospitality policy' (this policy).

4 Approval process

- 4.1 The Audit & Governance Committee reviews and annually approves the policy as part of their role to ensure the adequacy of governance arrangements in place to prevent fraud and corruption.

5 Links to Council Strategies

- 5.1 This policy supports BCP Council's Corporate Strategy, specifically the core value "we have integrity" and also supports "we are a modern, accessible and accountable council".

6 The Policy

In relation to Conflict of Interest

- 6.1 A conflict of interest is a conflict between the public duty and the private interest of an individual in which that individual private capacity interest could improperly influence the performance of their Council duties and responsibilities.
- 6.2 Employees may hold interests for which they cannot see obvious potential conflict. However, caution is always advisable because others may see it differently. It will be important to exercise judgement and to declare such interests where there is otherwise a risk of imputation of improper conduct. The perception of an interest can be as damaging as an actual conflict of interest.
- 6.3 The Council requires all employees to declare the following interests:
- a direct or indirect financial interest in any contracts with the Council or under consideration by the Council. The financial interests of a person with whom you live also counts for this purpose (this is a requirement of Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972; it is potentially a criminal offence not to declare such an interest);
 - a financial interest or employment or other role in any business or organisation, **such as a directorship**, which has a business, funding or regulatory relationship with the Council;
 - any personal membership that they or their partner/relative/close friend may have with any organisation or association not open to the public without formal membership and/or commitment of allegiance and/or has secrecy about rules or membership or conduct;
 - any partner/relative/close friend who has an interest in an organisation which could have a relationship with the Council; and
 - any partner/relative/close friend who works for the Council or is a BCP councillor.

This list is not exhaustive, employees should additionally refer back to 6.2 and consider whether their specific job role or personal circumstance requires any further declaration.

- 6.4 Appendix A includes the definitions of the terms used in this section.

In general terms – Relating to receiving gifts and hospitality

- 6.5 If it is likely that a typical member of the public would think that a specific gift or incidence of hospitality is inappropriate, then it probably is and should therefore be declined. It is always better to be cautious and politely decline any offer of a gift or hospitality.
- 6.6 The overriding principle is that employees should not compromise their position as public service workers by accepting gifts or hospitality and allowing themselves to reach the position where they might be, or might be thought by others to have been, influenced in making a certain decision as a consequence.
- 6.7 Employees must:

- Treat any offer of a gift or hospitality if it is made to them personally with extreme caution;
- Not receive any payment or fee other than their salary;
- Never accept cash or cheques or other monetary gifts (including gift vouchers) of any kind*;
- Always refuse offers of gifts, hospitality or services to them (or their family members) from organisations or persons who do, or might, provide work, goods or services, to the Council or who require a decision from the Council**; and
- Always report any such offers above to their line manager.

*Any exceptions to this specific policy bullet point must be agreed in writing by the Chief Executive and lodged with the Monitoring Officer.

**Incidental promotional gifts, such as calendars, diaries, pens, mugs etc. may be accepted, but should be declared if the total estimated value is £25 or more.

In specific terms – Relating to receiving gifts

- 6.8 A gift is any item or service that an employee receives free of charge. It also includes any goods or services which are personally offered at a discounted rate or on terms not available to the general public. It does not include staff offers / discounts which are negotiated corporately.
- 6.9 When deciding whether or not to accept an offer of a gift, the context is very important. An offer from an organisation seeking to do business with, or provide services to, **or receive services from** the Council or **are** in the process of applying for permission or some other decision from the Council should not be accepted, regardless of the value of the gift. By contrast, a gift estimated to be worth less than £25 given at Christmas by a service user as a gesture of appreciation to an employee will generally be acceptable.
- 6.10 Employees must declare (on Form 1 or Form 2 as appropriate) all instances where gifts are accepted or where they are declined except in these specific circumstances:
- Employees may accept a gift which is a one-off or infrequent gesture, from a service user and which has only a small or token value, estimated to be less than £25 in value, without making a declaration or obtaining the approval of a more senior officer.
 - **Incidental promotional items such as a calendar, diary, pen with an estimated total combined value of less than £25 from a representative of an organisation or persons who, or might, provide work, goods or services to the Council or who require a decision from the Council may be accepted without needing to be declared.**
- Note, employees should always politely and courteously decline a gift if the estimated value is more than £25 or becomes more frequent than one-off.*
- 6.11 If as a result of their employment an employee becomes aware that he or she is likely to become a beneficiary in a service user's Will, this must always be reported to their line manager and Service Director to consider any appropriate action. If as a result of their employment an employee becomes a beneficiary in a service user's Will, this must always be reported to their line manager and Service Director. The employee must not accept the bequest, regardless of its size or value unless granted explicit permission by their Service Director. Permission is very unlikely to be granted unless the legacy is of little financial value, such as a sentimental item.
- 6.12 In exceptional circumstances a gift from a third-party representative (not a service user) may be accepted if the employee is accepting the gift of behalf of the Council (or

residents) and they deem that refusing the gift would cause significant offence; for example, a gift from a 'twinning association'. In this circumstance the relevant Corporate Director or Service Director must be informed as soon as possible, and they will decide what will happen to the gift and will complete an officer decision record.

In specific terms – relating to receiving hospitality

- 6.13 Hospitality **for the purpose of this Policy** is the offer of food, drink, accommodation or entertainment or the opportunity to attend any cultural or sporting event offered as a result of being employed by BCP Council.
- 6.14 Employees may accept hospitality including invitation to events or functions where the employee is demonstrably representing the Council. e.g. opening ceremonies, trade shows, events where they are invited to speak, events hosted or sponsored by the Council, working lunches provided to enable the parties to continue to discuss business, refreshments offered in connection with any meeting, meals or refreshments funded by other public sector partners as part of joint working or collaboration, meals or refreshments provided as part of a ceremony or event to promote or launch a project or initiative supported by the Council.
- 6.15 Hospitality accepted, after applying 6.14 above, must be declared (on Form 1 or Form 2) as appropriate if the estimated value is more than £50. Hospitality accepted, as per 6.14 above, does not need to be declared if the estimated value is less than £50.
- 6.16 The following hospitality should not be accepted***:
- hospitality of any kind attended in the employee's own time and/or where the employee is not demonstrably representing the Council;
 - hospitality offered to a partner/relative/close friend (of the employee);
 - hospitality from a tenderer in the immediate period before tenders are invited or during the tender process. If employees are carrying out site visits as part of the tender process, they can accept the offer of light refreshments (only) provided it is proportionate and not extravagant;
 - Lavish or extravagant hospitality including meals; or
 - Offers of holidays, overnight stays, air or rail travel, use of a company's own holiday accommodation, after dinner speaker celebrity events, sporting or cultural events (e.g. theatre tickets, football match, golfing event).

***Any exceptions to these specific policy bullet points must be agreed in writing by the Chief Executive and lodged with the Monitoring Officer.

- 6.17 Hospitality declined, after applying 6.16 above, must be declared (on Form 1 or Form 2 as appropriate) if the estimated value is more than £50. Hospitality declined, as per 6.16 above, does not need to be declared if the estimated value is less than £50.

In specific terms – relating to giving hospitality

- 6.18 Only Service Directors, Corporate Directors and the Chief Executive have authority to approve expenditure to give hospitality; where they consider this to be in the interests of the service or the Council and is capable of public justification.

In specific terms – relating to BCP Council receiving and giving sponsorship or donations or prizes

6.19 Where an external organisation or individual wishes to sponsor a BCP Council activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, or make a donation or give a prize to the Council this policy will apply. Only Service Directors, Corporate Directors and the Chief Executive can approve acceptance of sponsorship, donations or prizes, where they consider this to be in the interests of the service or the Council and is capable of public justification, including consideration of the following criteria:

- Does the sponsorship/donation contribute to the Council's Corporate Objectives?
- Is there a risk of damage to the Council's reputation?
- Could it be construed as influencing Council decisions, for example, procurement?
- Will there be any additional or on-going resource requirements associated with the donation (e.g. officer time, maintenance costs)?

6.20 From time to time BCP Council may choose to sponsor, or give grants or prizes, for example sporting and cultural events such as exhibitions, plays or performances, or games. Only Service Directors, Corporate Directors and the Chief Executive can approve the giving of sponsorship, grants or prizes where they consider this to be in the interests of the service or the Council and is capable of public justification.

6.21 No employee or any member of the employee's family should receive any benefit from such sponsorship, grant or prize in a direct or indirect way without there being full disclosure, in advance of the award, to their line manager (and must declare on Form 1 or 2 as appropriate).

7 How to use this policy

7.1 Whilst implementing the requirements of this policy employees must follow the 'Procedures for declaring interests, gifts and hospitality (accepting and declining)' in Appendix B.

8 Roles and responsibilities

8.1 Core roles & responsibilities of all Employees

- Make a personal declaration to their Line Manager/Team Leader/Head of Service and keep this declaration up to date as required (Form 1 or Form 2 as appropriate).
- Nil declarations are required for employees who use their own discretion to make eligibility decisions, award decisions or grant permissions (for example planning officers and officers who approve grants). Where local service arrangements exist this policy requirement must also be complied with.
- Work with the Line Manager/Team Leader/Head of Service to agree any mitigation (of conflict risks) actions or strategy.
- Maintain discussion with the Line Manager/Team Leader/Head of Service at one to one meetings to ensure on-going review of the mitigation actions or strategy.
- Declare on Form 1 or Form 2 as appropriate any gifts or hospitality accepted or declined (*One-off gifts from a service user or incidental promotional items such as calendars and pens, with a total estimated value of less than £25, do not need to be declared*).

8.2 Additional roles & responsibilities of Line Managers/Team Leaders/Heads of Service

- Regularly promote and ensure Policy compliance in their teams/service areas.
- Where a potential conflict of interest is declared by an employee, assess any risk to the Council and the employee.

- Work with the employee to agree any mitigation (of conflict risks) actions or strategy and document this on the employee's declaration (Form 1 or Form 2 as appropriate).
- Escalate to the Service Director any issues that cannot be satisfactorily agreed.
- Ensure all completed Form 1s are held centrally within the Service Directorate.
- Maintain discussion with the employee at one to one meetings to ensure on-going review of the mitigation actions or strategy.
- Lead on any disciplinary action that may be necessary where employees have failed to comply with this Policy.

8.3 Additional roles & responsibilities of Heads of Service (Tier 4 officers, including any acting)

- Make a personal declaration on Form 2 of interests, gifts and hospitality (accepted and declined), to the Monitoring Officer; nil declarations are required, and officers must keep this declaration up to date as required.

8.4 Additional roles & responsibilities of Service Directors (Tier 3 officers, including any acting)

- Make a personal declaration on Form 2 of interests, gifts and hospitality (accepted and declined), to the Monitoring Officer; nil declarations are required, and officers must keep this declaration up to date as required.
- Regularly promote and ensure Policy compliance in their teams/service areas.
- Securely & confidentially store (for their Service area) all employee declarations of interest, gifts and hospitality accepted and declined in the prescribed BCP Council format (Form 1).
- Determine any mitigation (of risk) actions or strategy in escalation instances, where the employee, Line Manager/Team Leader/Head of Service have been unable to agree.
- Escalate to the Corporate Director any issues that cannot be satisfactorily agreed.
- In exceptional circumstance, determine what happens to gifts which have been wrongly accepted by an employee in their service area.
- In the case of an employee being a beneficiary in a service user's Will, determine the appropriate course of action in line with 6.11.
- Lead on any disciplinary action that may be necessary where a line manager/team leader/head of service has failed to comply with this Policy.

8.5 Additional roles & responsibilities of Corporate Directors (Tier 2 officers, including any acting)

- Make a personal declaration on Form 2 of interests, gifts and hospitality (accepted and declined), to the Monitoring Officer; nil declarations are required, and officers must keep this declaration up to date as required.
- Promote and ensure Policy compliance in their teams/service areas.
- Seek annual assurance from Service Directors that arrangements relating to this policy are operating effectively within their directorates.
- Lead on any disciplinary action that may be necessary where a Service Director (Tier 3 officer) has failed to comply with this Policy.

8.6 Additional roles & responsibilities of the Monitoring Officer

- Make a personal declaration on Form 2 to the Chief Executive, of interests, gifts and hospitality (accepted and declined); nil declarations are required, and the Monitoring Officer must keep this declaration up to date as required.
- Promote and ensure Policy compliance in their teams/service areas.
- Securely & confidentially store Head of Service, Service Director, Corporate Director and Chief Executive (Council Tier 4 officers and above) declarations of interest, gifts and hospitality accepted and declined in the prescribed BCP Council format.
- Prepare an annual report to the BCP Audit & Governance Committee summarising the declarations of interest, gifts and hospitality (accepted and declined) of the Council's Tier 4 officers and above.

8.7 Additional roles & responsibilities of the Chief Executive

- Make a personal declaration on Form 2 of interests, gifts and hospitality (accepted and declined), to the Monitoring Officer; nil declarations are required, and the Chief Executive must keep this declaration up to date as required.
- Promote and ensure Policy compliance amongst the Corporate Management Board (CMB).
- Securely store the Monitoring Officer's declarations of interest, gifts and hospitality accepted and declined in the prescribed BCP Council format.
- Lead on any disciplinary action that may be necessary where a Corporate Director (Tier 2 officer) has failed to comply with this Policy.

9 Enforcement and sanctions

- 9.1 Employees must comply with the requirements in this Policy. Failure to do so is a disciplinary matter, and disciplinary action may be taken, regardless of whether the actions amount to a criminal offence.
- 9.2 Criminal charges will apply if an employee fails to declare an interest in a contract or proposed contract or they or a relative have abused their position to influence Council contracts for their or their relative's gain.
- 9.3 It is also a criminal offence for any employee to demand or accept a gift or reward in return for allowing oneself to be influenced as a local government employee.

10 Further information and evidence

- 10.1 Employees should be aware that:
- Under the Bribery Act 2010, both individuals and organisations are liable for conviction in court, imprisonment and/or fines if found guilty of an offence;
 - Fraud is defined as "deliberate deception intended to provide a direct or indirect personal gain"; and that
 - Corruption is defined as the "abuse of entrusted power for private gain".
- 10.2 Any queries or concerns about whether a particular interest or offer of, or the receipt of a gift or hospitality is appropriate, or if any clarification is required about this policy employees should approach their line manager in the first instance.
- 10.3 If a line manager is unable to answer the query, the line manager, can seek clarification from the Head of Audit & Management Assurance, the Head of Human Resources or the Monitoring Officer.

Consultees

The following individuals/groups have been consulted during this year's evolution of this policy:

Name
Internal Audit
Statutory Officers Group

Equalities Impact Assessment

Assessment date	Reviewed as part of this years' evolution. Minor amendments have been made which have been assessed by Service Unit Equality Champion as having no equalities impacts. Updated EIA assessment as per Appendix D.
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Document Control

Approval body	Audit & Governance Committee
Approval date	27 February 2025
V2020.1 – March 2020	Policy introduced w.e.f. 1 st April 2020.
V2021.1 – March 2021	Annual policy refresh. Introduced Nil declarations requirement for employees who use their own discretion to make eligibility decisions, award decisions or grant permissions (using Form 1). Some minor wording amendments. Amended Tier 2 Officer requirements relating to assurance from Service Directors. Appended EIA screening tool.
V2022.1 – March 2022	Annual policy refresh. Clarified need to for employees to comply with this policy when using their own discretion to make eligibility decisions, award decisions or grant. Added responsibility of Line Managers/Team Leaders/ Heads of Service to ensure all completed Form 1's are held centrally within the Service Directorate. Added responsibility of Service Directors to, in the case of an employee being a beneficiary in a service user's Will, determine the appropriate course of action. Updated definition of corruption as "abuse of entrusted power for private gain". Introduced Officer decision record required for the acceptance of gifts that are done to avoid causing significant offence. Clarified that the Gifts flowchart does not apply to a gift from a third-party representative (not a service user) which may be accepted if the employee is accepting the gift of behalf of the Council (or residents) and they deem that refusing the gift would cause significant offence. Amended Gifts flowchart to clarify that any gift of value over £25 from a representative of organisation or persons who do, or might, provide work, goods or services to the Council or who require a decision from the Councils should never be accepted. On Forms 1 and 2 added sections for the approving manager to detail why they have made their decision about the declaration/gift/hospitality. Added Appendix E – Frequently Asked Questions. Added if as a result of their employment an employee becomes a beneficiary in a service user's Will, this must always be reported to their line manager and Service Director and also clarified that permission to accept is very unlikely to be granted unless the legacy is of little financial value, such as a sentimental item.
V2023.1 – March 2023	Annual policy refresh. List of areas the Council requires all employees to declare interests expanded to include consideration if their job role or personal circumstance requires any further declaration (and added to Appendix B flowchart). Guidance added on the Council giving/receiving donations and clarification made for giving/receiving sponsorship. Additional clarification made of terms used re officer tiers in Appendix A.
V2024.1 – March 2024	Added In Year Minor Amendments and Editing Log. Added confidentially store declarations to responsibilities of Service Directors and the Monitoring Officer.
V2025.1 – February 2025	Added directorship as a business role example that requires declaring if there is a business relationship with the Council (para 6.3 & Appendix B). Added wording to clarify employees should not accept gifts from an organisation the Council is receiving services from (para 6.9). Clarified guidance on accepting incidental promotional items with a value of less than £25 (para 6.10). Minor wording change regarding definition of hospitality (para 6.13). Added guidance on the Council receiving and giving prizes (para 6.19-6.21). Added link on how to edit PDFs in MS Word on Form 1 and Form 2 in Appendix C.

In Year Minor Amendments and Editing Log

The Chief Finance Officer & Monitoring Officer have primary responsibility for developing, maintaining, and implementing the RIPA & IPA Policy. Where changes affect the powers or responsibilities of councillors approval of the Audit & Governance Committee is required.

It is recognised there may be a need to clarify or update certain elements of the Declaration of Interests, Gifts & Hospitality Policy from time to time, this may require minor amendments or editing. The Chief Finance Officer has delegated to the Head of Audit & Management Assurance the ability to make minor amendments and editing changes. Any such changes will be logged in the table below.

Date	Description of amendments or editing	Page
-	-	-

Appendix A – Definitions of terms (relevant to para 6.3)

“Partner” means a spouse, civil partner or the other member of a couple consisting of two people who are not married to each other but are living together as a couple.

“Close Friend” means someone who you know well and whom you regard with liking, affection or loyalty. A closer relationship is implied than that of mere acquaintance or work colleague.

“Relative” means a parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, cousin, step-child/sibling/parent, mother/father/son/daughter/brother/sister in-law. All of the aforementioned include adoptive relationships and relationships of full blood or half blood and including the relatives of the employee’s partner. For these purposes, relative also includes a guardian or special guardian or ward.

“Business” means any company, partnership or other business arrangement in which the employee has an interest, whether in the form of shares, dividends, bonds, or otherwise and where the value of that interest exceeds 5% of the value of the business. Business also includes any business in which the employee is employed.

“Business Interest” and “business relationship” shall be construed in relation to the terms “Business” and relationship to “Partner”, Close Friend” and “Relative” above.

“Business Associate” means a person with whom the employee has a business relationship.

“Tier 4 officer or above” = Head of Service, Service Director, Corporate Director, Chief Executive.

“Tier 4 officer” = Head of Service or equivalent (senior officer who formally reports directly to a Tier 3 officer)

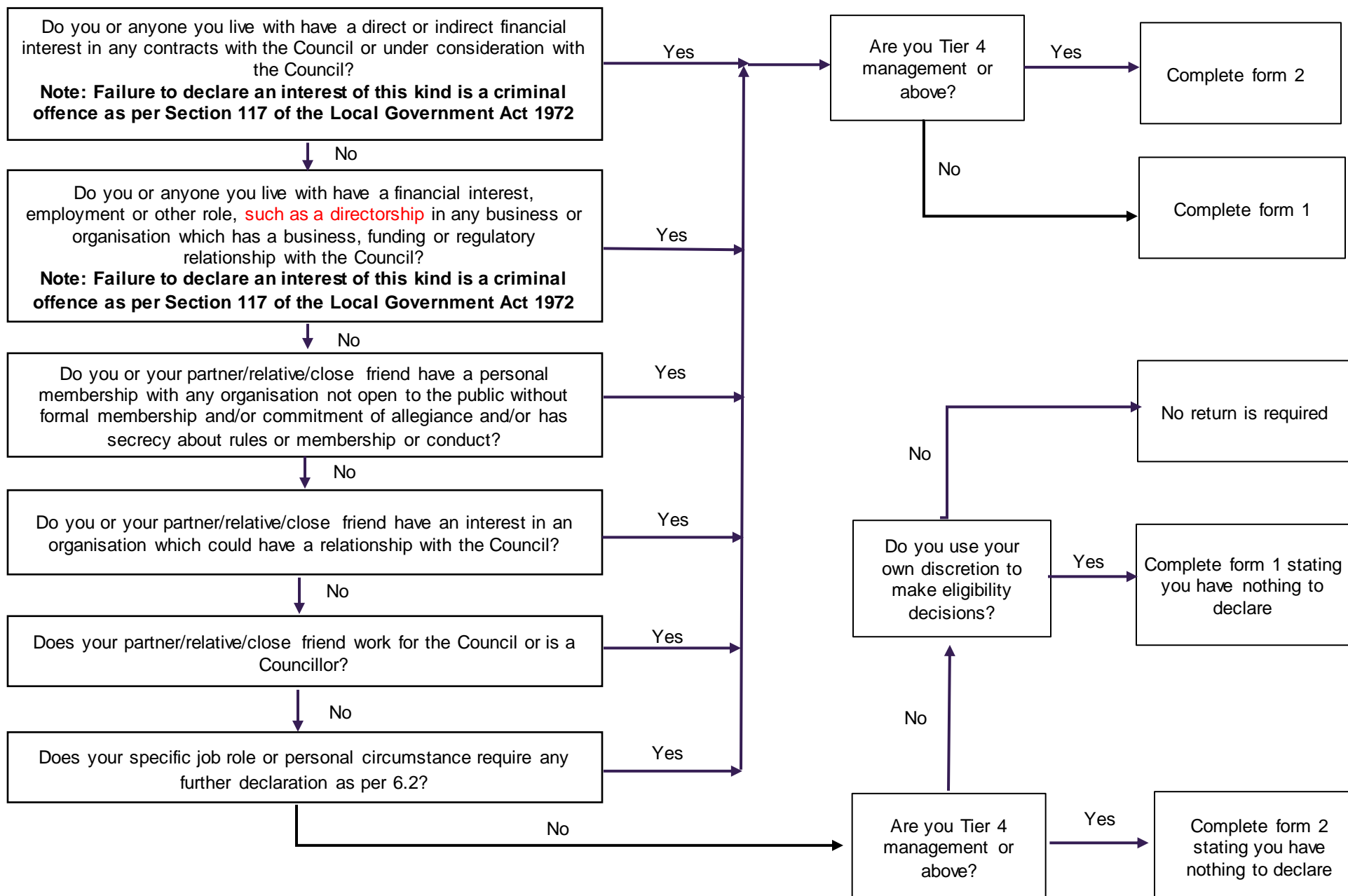
“Tier 3 officer” = Service Director

“Tier 2 officer” = Corporate Director

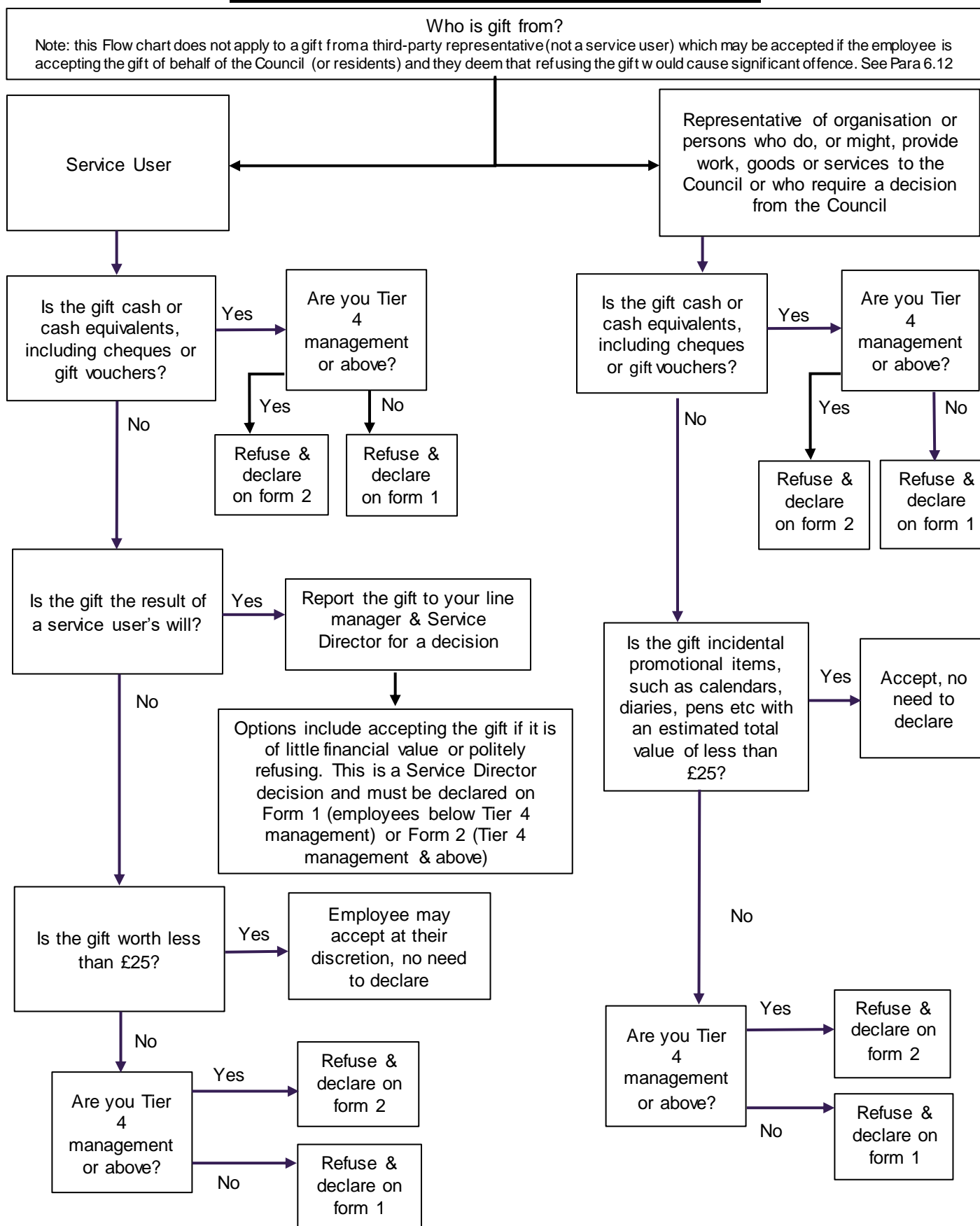
“Tier 1 officer” = Chief Executive

Appendix B – Procedures for declaring interests, gifts and hospitality (accepting and declining)

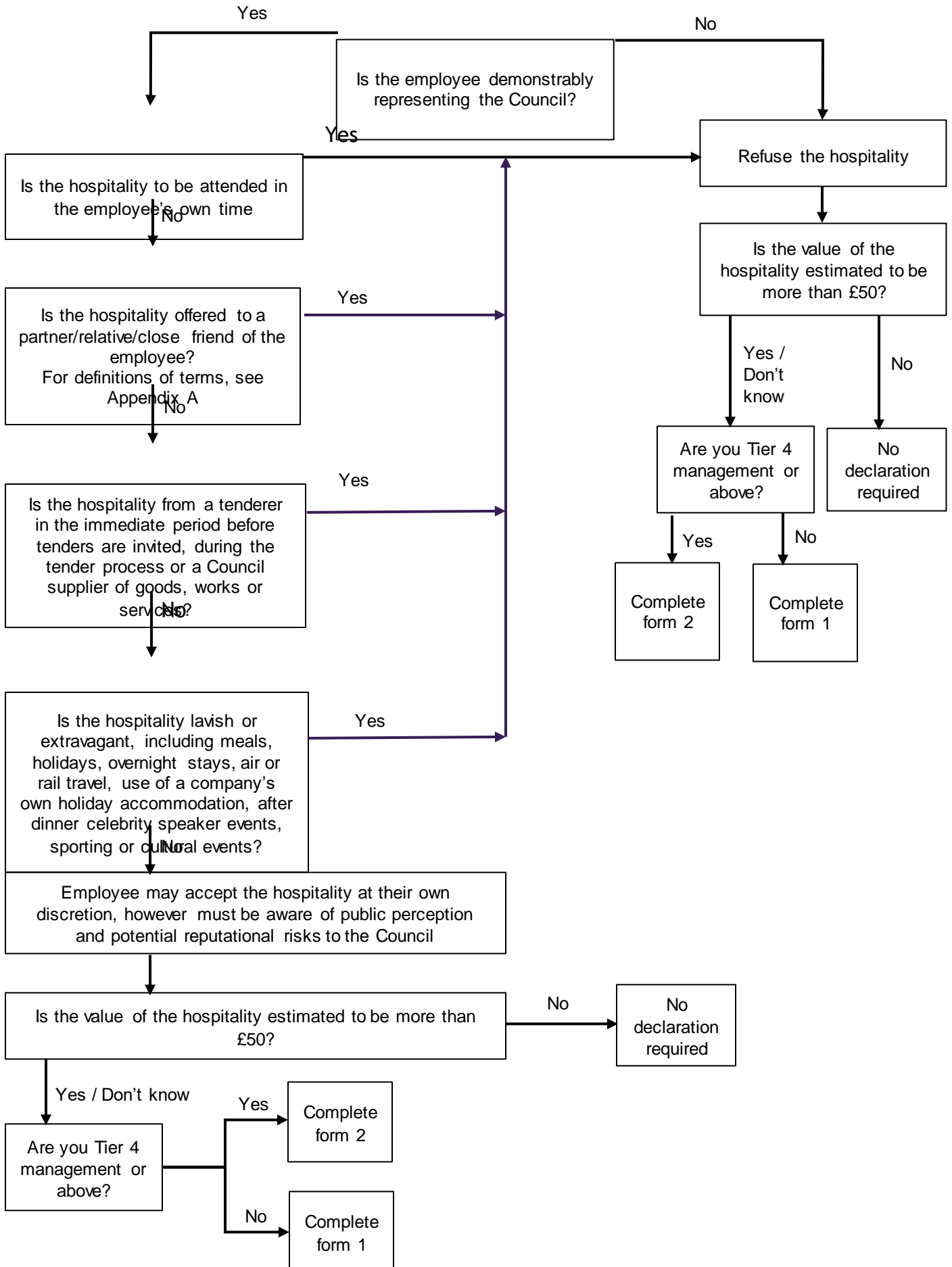
Declarations of Interest procedure (6.1 to 6.3)



BCP Gifts Flowchart (6.8 to 6.12)



Hospitality flowchart (6.13 to 6.17)



DECLARATION OF INTEREST, GIFTS OR HOSPITALITY



FORM 1

(To edit this PDF see: [How to edit PDFs in Word](#))

PART A – To be completed by the employee making the declaration

Employee Name:																	
Job Title:																	
Service:																	
Section / Team:																	
Date of Declaration:																	
Type of Declaration:	<table><tr><td>Other Employment</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Close Personal Relationship</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>Gift and / or Hospitality</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Financial Interest</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>Business Interest</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Personal / Other Interest</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr><tr><td>Organisation not open to the Public</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>'Nil' Return</td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr></table>	Other Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Close Personal Relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gift and / or Hospitality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	Business Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal / Other Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organisation not open to the Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	'Nil' Return	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Close Personal Relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>														
Gift and / or Hospitality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>														
Business Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal / Other Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>														
Organisation not open to the Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	'Nil' Return	<input type="checkbox"/>														

Please provide as much detail as possible in relation to your declaration.

In the case of other employment, please include details relating to who the other employer will be, the nature of the role (including duties and responsibilities) and the times/days that you are proposing to work.

In the case of gifts and hospitality received, please include details of the donor, the reason for the offer and the estimated value.

In the case of a close personal relationship with a fellow employee, please provide details of that person.

Please forward your completed form to your line manager for consideration.

PART B - To be completed by the approving manager

The Manager is responsible for considering the contents of this form and making a decision on the declaration.	
I confirm that I consider:	Please tick
The declared personal interest or offer of gift or hospitality to be acceptable within the employee's role and no further action is required	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reason(s) why this declaration is acceptable	
The declared personal interest or offer of gift or hospitality to be acceptable within the employee's role, providing that the changes and/or actions detailed below are completed.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reason(s) why this declaration is acceptable subject to the following changes and mitigating actions	
The declared personal interest or offer of gift or hospitality to be unacceptable within the employee's role for the reasons detailed below.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reason(s) why this declaration is unacceptable and action to address	
Line Manager's Name:	
Job Title:	
Date:	
A copy of the completed form should be e-mailed to the employee and a copy held centrally within the Service Directorate	

DECLARATION OF INTEREST, GIFTS OR HOSPITALITY



FORM 2 (for Tier 4 Officers and above)

(To edit this PDF see: [How to edit PDFs in Word](#))

PART A – To be completed by the employee making the declaration																	
Employee Name:																	
Job Title:																	
Service:																	
Date of Declaration:																	
Type of Declaration:	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Other Employment</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Close Personal Relationship</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gift and / or Hospitality</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Financial Interest</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Business Interest</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Personal / Other Interest</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Organisation not open to the Public</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>'Nil' Return</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Other Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Close Personal Relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gift and / or Hospitality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	Business Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal / Other Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organisation not open to the Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	'Nil' Return	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Close Personal Relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>														
Gift and / or Hospitality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>														
Business Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal / Other Interest	<input type="checkbox"/>														
Organisation not open to the Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	'Nil' Return	<input type="checkbox"/>														
<p>Please provide as much detail as possible in relation to your declaration.</p> <p>In the case of other employment, please include details relating to who the other employer will be, the nature of the role (including duties and responsibilities) and the times/days that you are proposing to work.</p> <p>In the case of gifts and hospitality received, please include details of the donor, the reason for the offer and the estimated value.</p> <p>In the case of a close personal relationship with a fellow employee, please provide details of that person.</p>																	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 250px; width: 100%;"></div>																	
<p>Please forward your completed form to your line manager for consideration</p>																	

PART B - To be completed by the approving manager

The Manager is responsible for considering the contents of this form and making a decision on the declaration. In situations where the declaration relates to a Service Director, approval should be sought from the relevant Corporate Director. For declarations involving a Corporate Director and the Chief Executive, approval should be sought from the Monitoring Officer (i.e. Director of Law & Governance). For the Monitoring Officer's declaration, approval should be sought from the Chief Executive.

I confirm that I consider:

Please tick

The declared personal interest or offer of gift or hospitality to be acceptable within the employee's role and no further action is required.

☐

Reason(s) why this declaration is acceptable

The declared personal interest or offer of gift or hospitality to be acceptable within the employee's role, providing that the changes and/or actions detailed below are completed.

☐

Reason(s) why this declaration is acceptable subject to the following changes and mitigating actions

The declared personal interest or offer of gift or hospitality to be unacceptable within the employee's role for the reasons detailed below.

☐

Reason(s) why this declaration is unacceptable and action to address

The declared 'Nil' Return to be acceptable.

☐

Line Manager's Name:

Job Title:

Date:

A copy of the completed form should be e-mailed to the employee and to the monitoring.officer@bcpcouncil.gov.uk.

Appendix D - Equality Impact Assessment: conversation screening tool

Policy/Service under development/review:	Declaration of Interests, Gifts & Hospitality
What changes are being made to the policy/service?	Annual policy refresh including clarifications of business relationships, gifts, prizes and hospitality definitions.
Service Unit:	Finance
Persons present in the conversation and their role/experience in the service:	Chief Internal Auditor Service Equality Champion
Conversation dates:	10/02/2025
Do you know your current or potential client base? Who are the key stakeholders?	Key stakeholders are all BCP Council employees, including casual, part-time and temporary staff including those supplied by employment agencies
Do different groups have different needs or experiences in relation to the policy/service?	All characteristics have been considered, and no groups with different needs or experiences have been identified as a result of these changes
Will the policy or service change affect any of these service users?	No as these changes apply equally to all BCP Council employees
What are the benefits or positive impacts of the policy/service change on current or potential service users?	None identified
What are the negative impacts of the policy/service change on current or potential service users?	None identified
Will the policy or service change affect employees?	Yes, as this policy applies to all BCP Council employees
Will the policy or service change affect the wider community?	No, as this policy only affects BCP Council employees
What mitigating actions are planned or already in place for those negatively affected by the policy/service change?	No negative impacts have been identified, thus no mitigating actions are required
Summary of Equality Implications:	No equalities implications have been identified as a result of the changes to this policy

Appendix E – Frequently Asked Questions

Not sure if you need to make a declaration? read through these FAQ or scenarios to help you decide.

Are you an Officer who is below Tier 4? *Tier 4 officer or above = Head of Service, Service Director, Corporate Director, Chief Executive.*

- You must complete a 'base' declaration (Form 1) but only if you have something to declare, your completed declaration needs to be sent to your Service Director who is responsible for keeping it safe and confidential in a local record.
- Keep your 'base' declaration up-to-date in as near to real time as possible, to do this in practice simply add whatever needs adding or deleting from your base declaration and re-send to your Service Director.

Are you a Tier 4 Officer or above? *Tier 4 officer or above = Head of Service, Service Director, Corporate Director, Chief Executive.*

- You must complete a 'base' declaration (Form 2) even if you have nothing to declare, your completed declaration needs to be sent to the Monitoring officer, monitoring.officer@bcpcouncil.gov.uk who maintains the safe and confidential corporate record. This record is commonly known as the senior officer record of declarations.
- Keep your 'base' declaration up-to-date in as near to real time as possible, to do this in practice simply add whatever needs adding or deleting from your base declaration and re-send to the Monitoring Officer.

Do you recruit new staff?

As part of your induction responsibilities, you need to make all new employees aware of the BCP Policy and explain the requirement, or not depending on grade, to produce a 'base' declaration Form 1 or 2.

Are you a temporary or casual employee?

The policy applies to all BCP Council employees, including casual, part-time and temporary staff including those supplied by employment agencies. You need to make a declaration as guided by the Policy.

I cannot see any conflict, so why do I need to make a declaration? its none of the Council's business what I do in my spare time.

A conflict of interest is a conflict between the public duty and the private interest of an individual in which that individual private capacity interest could improperly influence the performance of their Council duties and responsibilities.

Employees may hold interests for which they cannot see obvious potential conflict. However, caution is always advisable because others may see it differently. It will be important to exercise judgement and to declare such interests where there is otherwise a risk of imputation of improper conduct. The perception of an interest can be as damaging as an actual conflict of interest.

What type of interests do I need to declare?

- a direct or indirect financial interest in any contracts with the Council or under consideration by the Council. The financial interests of a person with whom you live also counts for this purpose (this is a requirement of Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972; it is potentially a criminal offence not to declare such an interest);
- a financial interest or employment or other role in any business or organisation which has a business, funding or regulatory relationship with the Council;
- any personal membership that they or their partner/relative/close friend may have with any organisation or association not open to the public without formal membership and/or commitment of allegiance and/or has secrecy about rules or membership or conduct;
- any partner/relative/close friend who has an interest in an organisation which could have a relationship with the Council; and
- any partner/relative/close friend who works for the Council or is a councillor.

What type of gifts do I need to declare?

A gift is any item or service that an employee receives free of charge. It also includes any goods or services which are personally offered at a discounted rate or on terms not available to the general public. It does not include staff offers / discounts which are negotiated corporately.

When deciding whether or not to accept an offer of a gift, the context is very important. An offer from an organisation seeking to do business with or provide services to the Council or in the process of applying for permission or some other decision from the Council should not be accepted, regardless of the value of the gift. By contrast, a gift estimated to be worth less than £25 given at Christmas by a service user as a gesture of appreciation to an employee will generally be acceptable.

Are there any gifts I can accept without making a declaration?

Employees may accept a gift which is a one-off or infrequent gesture, from a service user and which has only a small or token value, estimated to be less than £25 in value, without making a declaration or obtaining the approval of a more senior officer. Please note, employees should always politely and courteously decline a gift from a service user if the estimated value is more than £25 and/or becomes more frequent than one-off.

If the gift is from a representative of an organisation or persons who, or might, provide work, goods or services to the Council or who require a decision from the Council and is incidental promotional items such as a calendar, diary, pen etc with an estimated total combined value of less than £25, then these may be accepted without needing to be declared.

What if I have been included in someone's Will, in my capacity as a Council employee (provided a service to the individual)?

If as a result of your employment you become a beneficiary in a service user's Will, you must always report this to your line manager and Service Director. You must not accept the bequest, regardless of its size or value unless granted explicit permission by your Service Director. Permission will only be granted where the legacy is of little financial value, such as a sentimental item.

Can I accept gifts on behalf of the Council?

In exceptional circumstances a gift from a third-party representative (not a service user) may be accepted if the employee is accepting the gift of behalf of the Council (or residents) and they deem that refusing the gift would cause significant offence; for example, a gift from a 'twinning association'. In this circumstance the relevant Corporate Director or Service Director must be informed as soon as possible, and they will decide what will happen to the gift.

What type of hospitality (offered) can I accept?

Employees may accept hospitality including invitation to events or functions where the employee is demonstrably representing the Council. e.g. opening ceremonies, trade shows, events where they are invited to speak, events hosted or sponsored by the Council, working lunches provided to enable the parties to continue to discuss business, refreshments offered in connection with any meeting, meals or refreshments funded by other public sector partners as part of joint working or collaboration, meals or refreshments provided as part of a ceremony or event to promote or launch a project or initiative supported by the Council.

Hospitality accepted, fitting the above criteria, must be declared (on Form 1 or Form 2) as appropriate if the estimated value is more than £50. Hospitality accepted, fitting the above criteria, does not need to be declared if the estimated value is less than £50.

What type of hospitality (offered) must I refuse?

The following hospitality should not be accepted***:

- hospitality of any kind attended in the employee's own time and/or where the employee is not demonstrably representing the Council;
- hospitality offered to a partner/relative/close friend (of the employee);
- hospitality from a tenderer in the immediate period before tenders are invited or during the tender process. If employees are carrying out site visits as part of the tender process, they can accept the offer of light refreshments (only) provided it is proportionate and not extravagant;
- Lavish or extravagant hospitality including meals; or
- Offers of holidays, overnight stays, air or rail travel, use of a company's own holiday

accommodation, after dinner speaker celebrity events, sporting or cultural events (e.g. theatre tickets, football match, golfing event).

***Any exceptions to these specific policy bullet points must be agreed in writing by the Chief Executive and lodged with the Monitoring Officer.

Hospitality declined, after applying criteria above, must be declared (on Form 1 or Form 2 as appropriate) if the estimated value is more than £50. Hospitality declined, after applying criteria above, does not need to be declared if the estimated value is less than £50.

Can I give hospitality to colleagues or a third party and charge it to my p-card, budget or the Council more generally?

Only Service Directors, Corporate Directors and the Chief Executive have delegated authority to approve expenditure to give hospitality; where they consider this to be in the interests of the service or the Council and is capable of public justification.

What are the sanctions in place?

Failure to follow the Policy is a disciplinary matter, and disciplinary action may be taken, regardless of whether the actions amount to a criminal offence.

Criminal charges will apply if an employee fails to declare an interest in a contract or proposed contract or they or a relative have abused their position to influence Council contracts for their or their relative's gain.

It is also a criminal offence for any employee to demand or accept a gift or reward in return for allowing oneself to be influenced as a local government employee.

Who can I check with, if I have a specific question regarding this Policy?

If a line manager is unable to answer the query, you or the line manager, can seek clarification from the Head of Audit & Management Assurance, the Head of Human Resources or the Monitoring Officer.