QUALITY PARISH COUNCIL

Chale Parish Council
chaleparishcouncil.gov.uk

Chale Parish Council Isle of Wight

Gifts and Hospitality Protocol

1. Introduction

This protocol provides rules (set out in bold type) and guidance for members and staff of the Parish Council.

2. General Caution

2.1 Treat with extreme caution any offer or gift, favour or hospitality that is made to you personally which may possibly be perceived to be in connection with your position as a Parish Councillor.

2.2 Your personal reputation and of your Parish Council can be seriously jeopardised by the inappropriate acceptance by you of a gift or hospitality.

2.3 The acceptance of favours, gifts and hospitality is not always unlawful or inappropriate. The decision for you in every case is whether or not it is appropriate to accept any gift or hospitality that might be offered to you, having regard to how it might be perceived.

2.4 No hard and fast rules can be laid down to cover every circumstance as to what is appropriate or inappropriate. This protocol offers general principles to enable you to make your own decisions.

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 your Parish Council.

3.2 The onus would be on you to disprove corruption in relation to a gift from a person holding or seeking to obtain a contract from your Parish Council.

4. Limits of Guidance

4.1 This protocol does not apply to:

4.1.1 Gifts and hospitality you may receive from family and friends (as a birthday or other festival presents) that are not related to your position as a Parish Council member. You should, however, question any such gift or hospitality offered from an unusual source.

4.1.2 The acceptance of facilities or hospitality provided to you by your Parish Council.

4.1.3 Gifts given to your Parish Council that you accept formally on your Parish Council's behalf and are retained by the Parish Council and not by you personally.

5. Meaning of Gifts and Hospitality

5.1 The expressions ‘gifts’ and hospitality’ have wide meanings and no conclusive definition is possible.

5.2 Gifts and hospitality include the: • offer of favours, or the promise or implied promise of future favours, gifts or hospitality. • free gift of any goods or services. • opportunity to acquire any goods or services at a discount or at terms not available to the general public • opportunity to obtain goods or services not available to the general public. • offer of food, drink, accommodation or entertainment or the opportunity to attend any cultural or sporting event. • use of a free car.

5.3 Common gifts include pens, diaries, calendars and other business stationery, articles of clothing, books, flowers and bouquets. You should, however, be cautious when purchasing anything, when additional services, privileges or advantages are offered, which might be related to your position as a member of your Parish Council.

6. Appropriate Gifts and Hospitality

There are some circumstances where you may accept gifts and hospitality as being in the normal course of your duties as a member, for example:

6.1 Civic hospitality provided by another public authority

6.2 Normal and modest refreshment in connection with any meeting in the course of your work as a Parish Council member (e.g. tea, coffee, and other normal beverages and biscuits)

6.3 Tickets for sporting, cultural and entertainment events which are sponsored or promoted by your Parish Council or bodies to which you have been appointed by your Parish Council, and the tickets are offered in relation to that sponsorship or promotion.

6.4 Small low value gifts (below £50.00, such as pens, calendars, diaries, flowers and other mementos and tokens).

6.5 Drinks or other modest refreshment in the normal course of socialising arising consequentially for Parish Council business (e.g. inclusion in a round of drinks after a meeting)

6.6 Modest meals provided as a matter of courtesy in the office or meeting place of a person with whom your Parish Council has a business connection.

6.7 Souvenirs and gifts from other public bodies intended as personal gifts (e.g. arising from twin-town and other civic events).

7. **Principles to apply in relation to Gifts and Hospitality**.

In deciding whether it is appropriate to accept any gift, favour or hospitality, you must apply the following principles:

7.1 Do not accept a gift, favour or hospitality as an inducement or reward for anything you do as a Parish Council member. If you have any suspicion that the motive behind the gift or hospitality is an inducement or reward, you must decline it.

7.1.1 Reward includes remuneration, reimbursement and fee, offered, paid, promised or implied.

7.2 Do not accept a gift or hospitality of significant value or whose value is excessive in the circumstances.

7.3 Do not accept a gift, favour or hospitality if acceptance might be open to misinterpretation. Such circumstances will include gifts and hospitality:

7.3.1 From parties involved with your Parish Council in a competitive tendering or other

procurement process, including from other Parish Council members.

7.3.2 From applicants for planning permission and other application for licences, consents and approvals in which your Parish Council has an involvement, including applications from other Parish Council members.
7.3.3 From applicants for grants, including voluntary bodies and other organisations applying for public funding from your Parish Council.
7.3.4 From parties in legal proceedings with your Parish Council.
7.4 Do not accept a gift, favour or hospitality if you believe it will put you under any obligation to the provider as a consequence.
7.5 Do not solicit any gift, favour or hospitality and avoid giving any perception of so doing.

8. Gifts received and donated to a Chairman's Appeal.

8.1 It may be customary for some Parish Council members on receiving gifts of value not to retain these personally but to pass them to the Chairman for use in relation to a charity appeal.
8.2 Parish Council members may continue to do this, but should indicate this intention to the provider and make this clear on the registration form.

9. Registration of Gifts and Hospitality

9.1 The Code of Conduct for your Parish Council provides that: A member must, within 28 days of receiving any gift or hospitality over the value of £50.00, provide written notification to the Monitoring Officer of the responsible authority of the existence and nature of that gift or hospitality.
9.2 Whilst the notification requirement in the code is limited to gifts or hospitality over the value of £50.00 members are encouraged to give notification of any significant gift or hospitality they receive.
9.3 Members must complete the gifts, favours and hospitality registration form for all notifications.

10. Reporting of Inappropriate Gifts and Hospitality offered.

It is a criminal offence for a person corruptly to give or offer any gift, reward or advantage as an inducement or reward to you for doing of forbearing to do anything as a member of your Parish Council. You must immediately report to the Monitoring Officer at the Isle of Wight Council, any circumstances where an inappropriate gift or hospitality has been offered to you.

10.1 You may thereafter be required to assist the Police in providing evidence.

Policy Adopted and Ratified May 2022
Reviewed 13th May 2026
Next Review May 2027

DAVE STEWART

Notification of Receipts of Gifts, Favours or Hospitality

What was the gift, favour or hospitality? (give full description)

……..

……..

…….

What is your best estimate of its market value or cost?

…….

…….

…….

Who provided it?

…….

…….

…….

When & Where did you receive it?

…….

…….

…….

Signed:……

Name in Capitals:…….

Dated:…….