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| <b>Committee:</b> | <b>THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b>                        |
| <b>Date:</b>      | <b>13 February 2023</b>                               |
| <b>Title:</b>     | <b>The Gifts and Hospitality register for Members</b> |
| <b>Author:</b>    | <b>Monitoring Officer</b>                             |
| <b>Purpose:</b>   | <b>For information</b>                                |

### **Background**

1. This report is presented to the Committee as part of its work of monitoring standards within the Council.
2. Gwynedd Council's Code of Conduct for Members makes it compulsory for members to register any offer of a gift, hospitality, material benefit or advantage above the value of £25. Such offers must be registered whether accepted or not.

### **The Protocol**

3. The Council adopted a Protocol for Members on Gifts and Hospitality in 2004. Following the then publication of a new Code of Conduct and Guidelines by the Ombudsman the Standards Committee reviewed the Protocol and presented its recommendations to the Council. The Council adopted the current Protocol, incorporating the Committee's suggested amendments on 2 May 2013.
4. A copy of the Protocol is attached as Appendix 1.

### **The Register**

5. The forms are kept together and form the register. This Committee has in past discussed whether the register should be published on the Council's website. It was decided then (2004) that it should not be. By now, the Council must publish its register of Members' Interests on the website but no such obligation exists in respect of the register of Gifts and Hospitality.

### **Harmonisation**

6. There has been a recent move to consider harmonisation of the threshold between authorities on a voluntary basis. From a survey of authorities it appears that the values range from £20 - £25 for gifts and up to £50 in one instance for hospitality. The majority appears to be set at £25. It would be timely for the Committee to consider this issue.

There is an argument for trying to harmonise the levels. The Code of Conduct is common for all authorities in Wales and in the absence of some particular local circumstance the need for a particular level would appear to be common.

**Recommendation**

8.The Committee is asked to:

(a) note and accept the report

(b) offer any observations on the report and the proposed harmonisation.