



FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Fordingbridge Town Council, Kings Yard, 23 Salisbury Street, Fordingbridge, SP6 1AB

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Code of Conduct (Employees)

Policy Review Adopted: February 2020

Last Review: June 2025

Next Review : June 2028

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT

1. GENERAL

- 1.1** Local Government employees must, always, be seen to be acting fairly and impartially. The acceptance of gifts and hospitality is a sensitive area where your actions can be easily misconstrued. There are always risks in accepting a gift of hospitality. Much of what is acceptable practice in the private sector is NOT acceptable in local government employment. Unlike private industry, actions of Council Officers are open to public scrutiny. Actions should be such that employees would be able to explain and rationalise them to anyone. These guidelines will help judge what sort of gift and what level of hospitality is acceptable.
- 1.2** There are some general rules that apply:
- (i) Always say no if you think the giver has an ulterior motive
 - (ii) Be sensitive to the possibility that the giver may think that even a small gift or humble hospitality will elicit prompt service or preferential treatment.
 - (iii) Never accept a gift or hospitality from anyone who is, or may be in the foreseeable future, tendering for any contract with the Council, seeking planning consent, or in dispute with the council, even if you are not directly involved in that service area.
 - (iv) Always refuse expensive gifts. As a gauge a bottle of wine or spirits would not be considered acceptable.

2. GIFTS

- 2.1** Small items like biscuits, chocolates, diaries, pens may be accepted provided the gift is inexpensive and provided they do not conflict with the general rules.

3. HOSPITALITY

- 3.1** A gauge of what is acceptable is whether this Council would offer a similar level of hospitality in similar circumstances.
- 3.2** Working lunches are generally acceptable as a way of doing business.
- 3.3** Invitations to corporate hospitality events must be judged on their merits. Provided the general rules apply. It may be acceptable to join other company/organisations as guests at sponsored cultural/sporting events, or other public performances, as a representative of the Council. It may also be acceptable to join other guests at a company/organisation special events, such as jubilee celebrations or similar. Acceptability depends on the appropriateness of the invitation, in terms of the level of hospitality and the status of the invited employee. In all cases the employee's Head of Service/Line Manager must be consulted.
- 3.4** Paid holidays or concessionary travel rates are not acceptable. Neither are offers of hotel accommodation or the use of company flats.
- 3.5** When visiting a company i.e., to view equipment the Council is considering purchasing, ensure the expenses of the trip are paid by the Council. Refreshments

and a working lunch may be accepted but be careful to ensure that the Council's purchasing and/or tendering procedures are not compromised.

3.6 Acceptance of sponsored hospitality built into the official programme of conferences and seminars related to the employee's work is acceptable.

3.7 Offers to speak at corporate dinners and social gatherings or events organised for example by a professional body where there is a genuine need to impart information or represent the Council may be accepted. It is acceptable for a spouse/partner to be included in this sort of invitation

3.8 Any invitation should be to you in your profession/working capacity.

4. Register

4.1 Except for the small acceptable items described, all gifts and hospitality received should be entered into the register held by Fordingbridge Town Council.

5. Employee's Duty

5.1 If you are in any doubt about the acceptability of any gift or offer of hospitality, it is the employee's responsibility to consult their Head of service/Line Manager.

Fordingbridge Town Council Gifts and Hospitality Register April 01 (insert year)- March 31(insert year)

[illegible]

End of Policy