



THE NEWCASTLE CHARTER

Part 5.4F – Protocol – Lord Mayor’s and Sheriff’s Gifts and Hospitality

Notes:-

This constitutes a local protocol and is not part of the Code of Conduct for Members under the Localism Act 2011.

The purpose of this protocol is to provide supplementary guidance to the Lord Mayor and to the Deputy Lord Mayor and Sheriff in respect of gifts and hospitality.

Authorisation

This was approved by the former Standards and Audit Committee on 24 October 2003. Minor changes were made in 2008 to reflect the revised Members' Code of Conduct.

Further changes have been made in 2012 to reflect the new Members' Code of Conduct.

PROTOCOL – LORD MAYOR’S AND SHERIFF’S GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

Introduction

The Lord Mayor and the Sheriff will receive many gifts and invitations of hospitality whilst in office. The Lord Mayor and the Sheriff may also present Civic gifts and arrange for civic hospitality during the year of office.

The purpose of this protocol is to provide guidance with regard to those gifts and hospitality. It does not aim to be comprehensive, but is intended to offer guidance on issues which often arise.

A. Declaration of gifts and hospitality

The Lord Mayor and the Sheriff must declare **all** gifts and hospitality received or declined.

This requirement goes beyond what is required under the Code of Conduct for Members which says that all receipts or offers of gifts or hospitality worth more than £50 must be notified to the Service Manager Democratic Services on behalf of the Monitoring Officer who will record the fact.

The Lord Mayor and the Sheriff are personally responsible for complying with the Code of Conduct for Members but inclusion of gifts and hospitality in the lists maintained under this Protocol shall be sufficient to comply with the Code of Conduct.

B Gifts/Hospitality Received (or declined)

1. Types of gifts

There are three types of gifts which may be received by (or offered to) the Lord Mayor or the Sheriff:

- i. A gift to the Council.
- ii. A gift to the City.
- iii. A personal gift to the Lord Mayor/Sheriff.

2. Definitions of the types of gifts

- i. “A gift to the Council” – a gift received during an official engagement or duty, or in connection with the official role or duties of the Lord Mayor/Sheriff.
- ii. “A gift to the City” – a gift given to the Lord Mayor/Sheriff for the benefit of the City or its citizens.

NOTE: The difference between a gift to the Council and a gift to the City really depends on the intention of the donor. Gifts to the City are quite rare, a recent example being a valuable leatherbound book from the Queen’s artist, the late Mr James Alder, which has been placed in a museum.

Recent gifts to the Council have included a statue from the Mayor of Gdansk, a handpainted picture from the University of Cairo, and a decanter from the Glasgow Phoenix Choir.

- iii. "Personal gifts" – gifts of less than £25 value, including small personal gifts such as a tie, scarf, cufflinks or diary. This category will also include modest prizes from raffles and tombolas etc.

The Professional Assistant to the Lord Mayor will advise in the case of any doubt as to whether an item falls within this category.

To avoid uncertainty, wherever possible, the Lord Mayor's Office will clarify before a visit or function whether any gift is to be for the Council, for the City, or for the Lord Mayor/Sheriff.

3. List of gifts

- i. A list of all gifts received or declined by the Lord Mayor/Sheriff will be maintained by the Professional Assistant to the Lord Mayor on behalf of the Lord Mayor and the Sheriff.
- ii. The list will record the following details: the nature of gift, who the gift was given/offered by, when the gift was given/declined, the value or estimated value of the gift (where an estimate can be reasonably made) and whether it was a gift to the Council, a gift to the City, or a personal gift to the Lord Mayor/Sheriff.
- iii. The list of gifts will be kept in the Lord Mayor's office and then transferred to the personal file in the Service Manager Democratic Services office once the Lord Mayor/Sheriff's year of office has ended.
- iv. The list of gifts will be open to public inspection and will also be available via the City Council's website at the end of the Lord Mayor/Sheriff's year of office.

4. What is to happen to gifts?

- i. Gifts to the Council/gifts to the City: these are to be retained for display at the Civic Centre. (They may be displayed in cabinets in the Customer Service Centre and possibly at reception points). Such gifts may also be displayed at other Council buildings.
- ii. Personal gifts to the Lord Mayor/Sheriff: these are for the personal use of the Lord Mayor/Sheriff.

5. What may the Lord Mayor/Sheriff do with personal gifts?

The following options are available to the Lord Mayor/Sheriff:

- i. The Lord Mayor/Sheriff may keep the gift.
- ii. The Lord Mayor/Sheriff may give the gift to a member of his or her family.
- iii. The Lord Mayor/Sheriff may donate the gift to charity.
- iv. The Lord Mayor/Sheriff may dispose of the gift with the proceeds being held in the Lord Mayor's charity account.

- v. The Lord Mayor/Sheriff may donate the gift to a body directed to charitable or similar purposes.
- vi. The Lord Mayor/Sheriff may donate the gift for a purpose consistent with the Lord Mayor's "theme" for the year of office.

6. List of Hospitality

- (i) A list of all hospitality received or declined by the Lord Mayor/Sheriff will be maintained by the Professional Assistant to the Lord Mayor on behalf of the Lord Mayor and Sheriff.
- (ii) This list will record the following details: the nature of the hospitality, who the hospitality was given/offered by, the value or estimated value of the hospitality (where an estimate can be reasonably made) and when the hospitality was received/declined.
- (iii) The list of hospitality will be kept in the Lord Mayor's office and then transferred to the personal file in the Service Manager Democratic Services' office once the Lord Mayor/Sheriff's year of office has ended.
- (iv) The list of hospitality will be open to public inspection and will also be available via the City Council's website at the end of the Lord Mayor/Sheriff's year of office.

C. The giving of Civic Gifts by the Lord Mayor/Sheriff and Civic Hospitality

- 1. The Council purchases a range of Civic gifts which are available for the Lord Mayor/Sheriff to present to official visitors.
- 2. The type of gift which may be presented to an official visitor is at the Lord Mayor's/Sheriff's discretion, in the light of advice from the Professional Assistant to the Lord Mayor.
- 3. The Lord Mayor and the Sheriff may arrange for the provision of Civic hospitality to official visitors in the light of advice from the Professional Assistant to the Lord Mayor.
- 4. A record of all Civic gifts and Civic hospitality will be maintained by the Professional Assistant to the Lord Mayor. The record will specify the nature of the gift/hospitality, who the gift/hospitality was given to and the date it was given.

The record will be kept in the Lord Mayor's office.

The record of Civic gifts and Civic hospitality will be open to public inspection and will also be available via the City Council's website after the end of the Lord Mayor's year of office.