

# LOWER SEVERN (2005) INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

## GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY POLICY

### Policy Application

The guidance set out in this document applies both to Members of the Board and to its employees. It is also intended to apply to those who carry out works on behalf of or at the request of the Board.

So far as Board Members are concerned, this policy guidance supplements the requirements of the Member Code of Conduct and should be read in conjunction with that Code.

### Policy Objective

The purpose of this policy document is to provide guidance to Members and staff on the action that can, or should, be taken in the event that they are offered gifts/hospitality. Although there are limited exceptions for small value gifts/hospitality, the general rule is that anything at or over an estimated value of £ 25.00 should be registered to protect both the individual and the Board. It is most important that this requirement is observed so as not to bring the Board into disrepute. In any case of uncertainty, the Principal Officer should be consulted.

### Detailed Guidance

1. Members and employees should treat with extreme caution any offer of a gift or favour or hospitality that is made to them personally. The person or organisation making the offer may be doing or seeking to do business with the Board or may be applying to the Board for some decision to be taken in his favour or someone with whom he is connected.
2. There are no hard and fast rules about the acceptance or refusal of hospitality or tokens of goodwill. For example, working lunches may be an appropriate way of doing business provided that they are approved by the Principal Officer and provided that no extravagance is involved. In the same way, it may be reasonable for staff to represent the Board at a social function or sporting event organised by outside persons or organisations. If the value of the hospitality is estimated to exceed £25.00 however, it should be recorded in the register.
3. Each Member or employee is personally responsible for all decisions connected with the acceptance or offer of gifts or hospitality and for to avoid risk of damage to public confidence. The receipt and details of gifts and hospitality should always be reported to the Principal Officer. When hospitality has been declined, those making the offer should be courteously but firmly informed of the procedures and standards operated by the Board and told why hospitality cannot be accepted.
4. Members and employees should not accept significant personal gifts from contractors and outside suppliers, although the Board will allow Members and employees to keep insignificant items of token value such as pens, calendars and diaries. Such insignificant items do not require recording in the Gifts and Hospitality register provided that their estimated value does not exceed £25.00.
5. Acceptance by Members and employees of hospitality through attendance at relevant conferences and courses is acceptable where it is clear that the hospitality is corporate rather than personal and where the Member or employee is satisfied that any purchasing decision will not be compromised. However, if the value of such hospitality is estimated to exceed £25.00 per person, then as a precaution the item should be disclosed in the register.
6. Members and employees should register any offer of a gift or favour or hospitality that is refused.