

ORE VALLEY GROUP

GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY POLICY

Issue No	3 (reviewed June 2014 to Group Policy)
First Approved	10 March 1998
Last Reviewed	February 2015
Date of Next Review	February 2020
Review Requirement	5 Years

ORE VALLEY GROUP

POLICY ON GIFTS/HOSPITALITY

GENERAL

Introduction

Ore Valley Housing Association is the parent company of the Ore Valley Group, which has 3 subsidiary companies, namely Ore Valley Enterprises, Fife HARCA and Cardenden Heat and power (CHAP).

The Ore Valley Group will seek to manage, record and monitor the way in which gifts and hospitality are received and given from and to the Association and its subsidiaries. This policy should be cross referenced with the Policies below in order to ensure compliance with the relevant standards and good practice:

- Declaration of Interest Policy
- Code of Contact for Staff, Volunteers and Committee
- Payment of Committee Expenses Policy
- Risk Management Strategy
- Whistle blowing Policy
- Complaints and Comments Policy and Procedure
- Staff Training Policy
- Approval of Contractor / Consultants Procedure

RECEIVING GIFTS/HOSPITALITY

Governing Body members, Staff and Volunteers should not generally accept gifts or hospitality of any nature from any person or any company working for, providing a service to, receiving a service from, or who has a live application for housing with the Ore Valley Group.

The Ore Valley Group accepts however that to refuse a 'gift' or hospitality can be seen to be offensive, but diligence must be shown to ensure future favours are not expected in return for accepting gifts or hospitality.

It is not possible to anticipate and expressly provide for all gifts and hospitality. Staff, Governing Body members and Volunteers will need to exercise discretion and sound judgement. The general underlying principle is that gifts and hospitality should be accepted only if they are reasonable within their context and comply with accepted good practice.

All offers received must be declared in the register of gifts and hospitality, by the person receiving the offer - whether or not the gift is accepted.

Gifts or Hospitality should only be accepted if they are not 'material' and in no way could be seen to be 'influencing' Staff, Governing Body members or Volunteers in the running of the Group and its business.

Individuals must not knowingly accept gifts or hospitality which have an estimated value exceeding £25, or where the individual has previously accepted any gift or hospitality from the same source within the last 6 months. (Hospitality within the context of developing project team relationships excepted).

External agencies or individuals tend to direct gifts or hospitality to individuals, whom they perceive to be their key contact. This belies the fact that the Association and its subsidiaries services and performance are generally a team effort. Staff, Governing Body members, and Volunteers are encouraged to share gifts and hospitality in so far as it is practicable to do so.

If there is any doubt over materiality, the offer of the gift or hospitality must be placed initially-before the CEO and if appropriate the Board for a decision.

OFFERING GIFTS

The offering of gifts by Staff, Governing Board members or Volunteers should only be done in the best of faith. Gifts should never be offered where they could be seen to be a bribe for any services or favours - past present or future.

Schedule 7 of the Housing Scotland Act 2001 details the rules to be followed by Registered Social Landlords in respect of payments or the granting of benefits to current or former members of the governing lobby, current or former employees, a close relative of any such person, or any business trading for profit owned or managed by such a person, or their close relatives*

All offers of gifts/donations or hospitality must be authorised by the CEO and will be recorded in the Register of Gifts & Hospitality whether or not the gift is accepted. The Register will be presented to the Board on a quarterly basis.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed as circumstances require, but not less than once every 5 years.

*Gifts, flowers or other tokens of appreciation of less than £50 marking retirement from service, bereavement, qualification, or other significant occasions for Board members, Staff or Volunteers are accepted by Scottish Housing Regulator as out with the scope of this legislation.

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Date of This Review – February 2015.

Date of Next review – February 2020

Frequency of Review – 5 years