

## 1.15 ELECTED MEMBERS GIFTS AND BENEFITS POLICY

<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>1.15</b>	<b>Date Commenced</b>	17/07/2013
<b>Date Adopted</b>	16/07/2013	<b>Resolution Number</b>	16/07/2013/006
<b>Review Timeframe</b>	4 Years		
<b>Last Review Date</b>	November 2020	<b>Next Scheduled Review Date</b>	November 2020
<b>Policy Responsibility</b>	Chief Executive Officer		

### Document History

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date Amended</b>	<b>Details Comments e.g. Resolution Number</b>
1.2		

### INTRODUCTION

The local community have a right to expect the business of Council to be conducted with integrity, fairness and impartiality.

Elected members includes councillors and all representatives of Council committees.

### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

1. Provide guidance to Elected Members for the appropriate, consistent and transparent treatment of offers or receipt of gifts and benefits.
2. Complement the provisions of the NT Local Government Act and any other legislative or relevant codes and policies.

---

### POLICY STATEMENT

Elected members and representatives of Council committees should take all reasonable steps to ensure that they, their spouse, children and/or dependents do not solicit or accept gifts, benefits or hospitality from a commercial entity, which could be interpreted as an indirect means of influencing the employees' official duties. Further, all employees must not actively solicit any gifts or benefits.

### PROCESSES

An Elected Member or representative of a council committee must not seek or accept any payment, gift or benefit intended or likely to influence, or that could be reasonably perceived by an impartial observer as intended or likely to influence an Elected Member to:

- act in a particular way (including making a particular decision)

- fail to act in a particular way
- otherwise deviate from the proper exercise of his or her statutory duties.

A gift is considered to be of a nominal value if it is a token. These are generally mass produced and include:

- Marketing trinkets;
- Corporate mementos;
- Inexpensive pens and pencils;
- Notepads; or
- Key rings.

A gift or benefit with a value less than \$30 is considered of nominal value.

Elected members and Committee representatives, however, should avoid accepting such items on a continued basis or accepting multiple items.

#### **VOLUNTARY DECLARABLE BENEFITS**

A voluntary declarable benefit is defined as one of the following:

- A gift given because the elected members role on Council and
- A gift valued at greater than the nominal value
- A series of gifts over time (1 Year) which is greater than twice the nominal amount.
- Significant hospitality from a commercial enterprise
- Cash of any amount or goods that are easily transferred to cash.

#### **GIFT AND BENEFITS REGISTER**

Council shall keep a Voluntary Gifts and Benefits Register for elected members and representatives of Council Committees in an electronic form.

Elected Members and representatives of Council committees may make entries on the Voluntary Register by providing details to the Senior Administration Officer who will record the details in the Elected Members Gifts and Benefits Register.

The register will include:

- Date of Declaration
- Recipient
- Description of declarable benefit
- Estimated value
- Date offered
- Person making offer
- Organisation
- Reason for offering Declarable benefit.
- Accepted/ refused

## **SITUATIONS NOT COVERED BY THE POLICY.**

1. When a gift or benefit is of nominal value only.

2. Workplace hospitality.

Common hospitality and entertainment, such as coffee, biscuits or light refreshments associated with work meetings does not fall within the definition of a gifts and benefits.

3. Group Invitations to Christmas parties or Cocktail parties.

Judgement is required to test that the underlining reason for the invitation. They should ensure that they will not be compromised or perceived to be compromised by the acceptance of the invitation.

4. Conference or seminar,

Dinners, lunch or social functions that is included as part of fees for a Conference or Seminar are not included.

## **PUBLIC INSPECTION**

The Elected Members Voluntary Gifts and Benefits Register is available for public inspection upon request.