

**Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums**

**Employees - Interests and Gifts and Hospitality Policy**

Name of governing body: Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums Strategic Board

Date of approval by governing body: December 2018

Date for review: December 2021

**Employees - Interests and Gifts and Hospitality**

**Guidenote on TWAM and Newcastle City Council Policies.**

Staff at Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM) are employed by Newcastle City Council (NCC). This means, all TWAM employees are required to follow policies and procedures found or referenced within NCC’s [Employee Booklet](https://365newcastle.sharepoint.com/sites/POC/hr/PayPensionsRetirement/Documents/Employee%20Booklet%20(Updated%20April%202016).pdf%23search=employee%20booklet).

In addition to these, or in situations where circumstances dictate that a TWAM-specific document is necessary (for example, where named TWAM staff members must be included as points of contact), TWAM has produced its own policies and procedures for employees to follow.

This Policy is one such example.

**Personal Interests**

Individuals must not allow their outside activities (personal interests) to interfere with the work of TWAM or to affect their ability to carry out their role effectively.

A ‘conflict of interest’ is considered to be any connection or association with a third party that is (or appears to be) against the best interests of TWAM, or which could enable you to be reasonably suspected of using your position within TWAM to gain an unfair advantage for or from a third party.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are not placed in a position that risks, or appears to risk, compromising your role or statutory duty. You should not be seen to be securing a personal benefit or valuable gift or hospitality by virtue of your job.

# Register of Employee Interests

The Employee Register of Interests is a corporate register which holds details of any financial or other interests that employees may have which could conflict or be seen as conflicting with TWAM’s interests. It forms part of TWAM’s arrangements for ensuring that we meet the highest standards when carrying out TWAM’s business.

**Questions to ask yourself:**

* Am I, or might I be, in a position where I (or my family/friends) could gain from the connection between my private interests and my employment with TWAM?
* Do I have access to information which could influence purchasing decisions?
* Could my outside interest be in any way detrimental to TWAM or its users’ interests?
* Do I have any other reason to think I may be risking a conflict of interest?
* Am I graded at N6 or above, and want/have a job in addition to my work with TWAM?

If the answer to any of these is ‘Yes’ or ‘Maybe’ - **Declare it!**

**There are seven forms available for making Declarations:**

* Form CCE 1: Used to declare relationship with contractors or suppliers
* Form CCE 3: Used for approval of outside interests & employment.
* Form CCE.4: Used for financial or non-financial interest which could conflict with TWAM’s interests.
* Form CCE.5: Used if a member of staff has a financial interest in a TWAM contract.
* Form CCE.6: Used for membership of a secret society or organisation
* Form CCE.7: Used for declaring gifts accepted and significant gifts refused
* Form CCE.8: Used to request the Director’s approval before accepting any offer of hospitality

To declare an interest please complete the appropriate form(s) and forward to the Director’s office.

These forms are available from the G:\Corporate Policies\Interests, Gifts & Hospitality Policy folder.

# Gifts and Hospitality

In the normal course of undertaking your job you may be offered small gifts or hospitality. These guidance notes are designed to ensure that as a result of the offer, you do not put yourself or TWAM at any risk.

Gifts and hospitality can be given to individuals and/or to TWAM. In defining these categories it is important to set out which:

* can be accepted;
* cannot be accepted;
* should be recorded in TWAM’s Gifts & Hospitality Register.

Gifts (defined as items given without the expectation of receiving anything in return) should not be accepted where they may appear to be disproportionately generous or could reasonably be construed as an inducement to affect a business decision. If you are offered gifts or other benefits (or your partner and family members are offered gifts) arising from your official duties, this could cause a conflict between your private and public duties.

You must not accept any gift or other benefit offered to you, or your partner or a family member, by:

* any person you have provided services to in the course of your official duties or their partner or a family member;
* any person associated with an organisation which has, or wishes to have, dealings with TWAM.

You must declare any offer of a gift or benefit on the form: CCE.7: and say what action you have taken. The only exception to this rule is where the gift is of token value up to a maximum of £25. A gift will be considered token if by virtue of its nature or branding it has no material commercial value, that is to say, no unrelated third party would reasonably be expected to purchase the item for a sum in excess of £25.

The list below sets out the types of gifts which staff are likely to encounter and which may normally be accepted without disclosure:

Calendars Mugs; Mouse mats

Diaries Stationery Badges

Key Rings Coasters Ties/Scarves

Desk Organisers Commemorative Books Baseball Caps

Pens Umbrellas

Although offering gifts is common practice in the business world particularly at Christmas time, you should refuse them politely. If, for example, a gift is simply delivered to your place of work, there may be a problem returning it, in which case, you should report this to the Director.

# Responsibilities

**All staff** are responsible for:

* thinking carefully before accepting any gift or hospitality;
* consulting their line manager, in the first instance, or senior manager if in any doubt as to the right thing to do;
* being aware of the arrangements and procedures for reporting offers of gifts and hospitality;
* reporting, where appropriate, any expensive gifts and/or significant hospitality received by completing a declaration form for recording in the Gifts and Hospitality Register;
* informing their line manager if they suspect that they have been offered an expensive gift or significant hospitality with corrupt intent;
* not accepting gifts valued at more than £25.

# Hospitality

Careful consideration should be given to offers of hospitality. Offers that could reasonably be construed to give the impression that the officer is being inappropriately influenced should be refused. Public perception is important and this guidance is designed to protect you whilst you are carrying out the duties of your job.

Offers of hospitality are common in some fields and it would not be practical or necessary to refuse every offer. Details of these circumstances and guidelines for officers in dealing with offers are set out below.

The permission of the Director should be sought before accepting any hospitality unless specific provision is made for it in this policy.

* Light refreshments (e.g. tea, coffee, biscuits, sandwiches) provided as part of an acceptable event (e.g. working lunch, exhibition launch) are acceptable and do not need to be registered.

* Any officer receiving an invitation to dinner or a more formal event, or if he/she has any misgivings about any offer, should request (senior manager) permission before responding. This can include dinner, a concert or a sporting event.

* Consideration should be given to who is making the offer, what is their relationship to TWAM, and whether it is likely that they will want something from TWAM.

* The timing of the offer could be significant. If the offer comes from someone who is expecting any sort of decision from TWAM (i.e. contract, grant) the offer should be refused.

* Is it reasonable to expect that TWAM be represented at the event? If so, is the officer the appropriate person to represent TWAM? Would it be more appropriate for the Director, a Senior Manager, or the Chair of the Strategic Board to be present?

* Is it necessary for the officer to be present to receive information of use to TWAM or to give information on behalf of TWAM?

* Will the officer be the only invitee? If so, the invitation should normally be refused.

* Is the hospitality too generous for the event? There is a danger that such offers could be perceived as an attempt to influence.