

Awards and Incentives Policy

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a basis on which staff can determine when incentives, rewards or awards can be given to customers and other individuals for becoming involved in projects, initiatives, special events and surveys, and what these should be.

Underpinning principles

We acknowledge that customers may have different motivations for wanting to get involved, and that incentives or rewards may encourage participation where there is an insufficient number of customers who want to volunteer, or where we wish to thank and acknowledge the contribution made by customers.

This guidance does not cover the incentives, rewards or awards that may be offered by external organisations working on our behalf.

The Social Housing Regulator's Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard 2017 is relevant to this policy. This is where the Government outlines expectations around involving tenants and customers in the work of their housing providers. Although the Standard doesn't touch on incentives, awards and rewards, it's a wider set of standards that we are accountable to upholding.

Guidance

Where we need customers to be involved or to follow a call to action, we may offer them incentives, rewards or awards as well as reimbursement for expenses, to ensure that we obtain a reasonably sufficient sample of views and opinions, and to reward people for giving up their time on an informal basis. The use of these incentives is also likely to widen the range of customers who get involved.

Some of the activities that might come within the scope of this policy include:

- attendance at focus groups
- taking part in community clear ups
- responding to surveys
- involvement in community improvement works or events
- taking part in staff recruitment or the selection of contractors
- participation in projects putting customers at the heart of shaping and influencing our services

- getting involved in project teams, where incentives for involvement will be decided and agreed as part of the project business case.

Sometimes it will be more a case of recognising customers for their contribution, rather than giving them an incentive or a reward. For example, children and adults may be given certificates for taking part in community events such as community clear ups, be mentioned in our regular customer update, or acknowledged for what they have done by a post on our website or on social media. Customers who work with us may also be recognised through specific events such as our Customer Awards.

Vouchers, gift tokens, gifts or other prizes (not cash) may be given to customers as an incentive or reward for taking part in involvement or other activities. Gifts will depend upon the age of the person concerned; e.g. branded goods to adults, 'goodie bags' to children.

The value of any vouchers, gift tokens, gifts or other prizes is to be determined by the manager sponsoring the project or process and should reflect the type of contribution being offered by our customers.

Prize draws may be used to encourage participation where we want a large number of customers to respond, in order to make our sample representative, e.g. completing survey forms. Rewarding everyone in such scenarios would not represent good value for money.

The value of any prizes, where winners are chosen at random, is usually multiple and reduced in value in descending order, for example:

- 1st prize – £50 in vouchers
- 2nd prize – £20 in vouchers
- 3rd prize – £10 in vouchers.

The values of these prize draws must not exceed the limits given above unless the manager sponsoring the project or process has given authority for this, e.g. where we need to ensure the participation of a particular group of customers because this will significantly benefit our organisation.

If there is a debt on the customer's account, we will give customers the option to have the value of any voucher, gift token, gift or other prize credited to their account to reduce the balance owed or take it as a voucher.

If a voucher, gift token, gift or other prize is being given as a result of a customer being successful in a competition, our competition terms and conditions policy will apply, a copy of which can be found on our website.

We recognise that not everyone necessarily wants a financial reward or may feel uncomfortable accepting one when participating in activities. Where this is the case, we will support customers to donate the value of their voucher to Selwood’s chosen charity of the year.

Scrutiny Team

To recognise the commitment of members of the Scrutiny Team to making sure our services are effective, and that our ways of working take into account our customers’ perspective, they will each be given £30 in vouchers every month, plus a monthly £10 contribution to home working expenses.

Monitoring

The relevant manager must ensure that a record is kept of all monetary expenditure associated with this policy, along with the names and addresses of any recipients.

Evaluation

The use of incentives, rewards and awards will be reviewed during the forecasting process.

Signpost

- Compensation policy
- Competition terms and conditions policy
- Expenses policy
- Gifts and hospitality policy

Guidance Review Date – March 16th 2021

Decision-making Record

Date	Meeting / Minute Reference	Version / Amendment
11 January 2018	Verena Buchanan	1
16 March 2021	Executive	2

