

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Environmental Services Portfolio Holder 16 March 2010
AUTHOR/S: Chief Executive / Corporate Manager (Community and Customer Services)

BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION

Purpose

1. To gain formal agreement to change the Best Kept Village Competition action for 2009/10 to Community Pride and Village Hero Awards and set out the proposed timeline and format for the awards.

This is not a key decision, however, the report relates to a current Council action.

Background

2. The Council actions for 2009/10 include an action to "introduce our own Best Kept Village Competition".

Considerations

3. Following a discussion at the last Portfolio Holder meeting, some research by officers and a meeting between the Portfolio Holder, the Chairman and officers in January 2010 it was suggested that the Best Kept Village Competition action should be amended to Community Pride and Village Hero Awards. The reasons stated were:
 - (a) that a Best Kept Village Competition would not allow all South Cambridgeshire villages an equal chance at winning due to their size and other demographical differences;
 - (b) similarities to the categories covered by the Cambridge Evening News community awards, which the Council has previously sponsored;
 - (c) an understanding that the Village of the Year awards previously run by Cambridgeshire ACRE would not be taking place in 2010 due to the withdrawal of sponsorship by Calor.
4. It is suggested that the Community Pride and Village Hero Awards are open to all parish councils in South Cambridgeshire for nominations. A short summary outlining the purpose of each of the awards is set out below:

Community Pride Awards – South Cambridgeshire District Council would like to celebrate the excellent work that parish councils do to make the district a place in which residents can feel proud to live.

Village Hero Awards - South Cambridgeshire District Council would like to pay tribute to residents who have made a significant contribution to their local community. Parish councils would be requested to nominate up to one person each.

5. Should the amendment to Community Pride and Village Hero Awards be accepted, it is suggested that the awards work towards a timeline that would allow presentation of

the awards to take place at the same ceremony as the Council's Best Kept Garden awards for tenants. The suggested timeline, along with a process chart, is available at Appendix A. If the timeline is acceptable the awards will need to be announced / publicised to parish councils by the end March 2010.

6. It is unlikely that the nominations will be completely comparable and it is therefore suggested that a panel of approximately six elected members and officers make the decision as to who the winner and runners up are for each award. Rather than setting specific assessment criteria for each award the nominations would each be judged upon their own merit, based on the information provided in the nomination forms (see draft forms at Appendix B) and the panel's decision will be final. It is hoped that the Portfolio Holder and the Chairman will both be willing to be on the panel.
7. The Chairman has been successful in gaining sponsorship for the awards from:
 - Scotsdales Garden Centre – venue for the award ceremony (and Best Kept Garden awards).
 - Hill Residential – funding towards the awards ceremony.
 - Agar Signs – plaque for the parish council winning the Community Pride Award.

All sponsors will be recognised on the nomination forms, correspondence materials and at the awards ceremony.

Options

8. The available options are:
 - (a) To agree to change the Best Kept Village Competition action for 2009/10 to Community Pride and Village Hero Awards.
 - (b) To reject the proposed change from Best Kept Village Competition to Community Pride and Village Hero Awards.

Implications

9. Financial	None.
Legal	None.
Staffing	The awards process will be project managed from within the Community and Customer Services and will require officer assistance with design of the publicity materials, the judging and ceremony. Staff resources have been identified.
Risk Management	The main risk identified is the tight timeline, which requires the awards to be publicised by the end March 2010. A suitable event /method to communicate the awards is yet to be identified, however, possible suggestions are via the meeting between Cabinet and parish councils to be held on the 23 rd March and/or via email and hard copy nomination forms to all parishes.
Equal Opportunities	All nominations will be considered equally.

Consultations

10. The following people have been consulted and support the proposed amendment:
 - (a) The Chairman, Councillor Charles Nightingale
 - (b) Kelly Quigley, Communications Officer

- (c) Teresa Lucey, Resident Involvement Manager
- (d) Andy O'Hanlon, Arts Development Officer
- (e) Jane Cusworth, PA to the Chief Executive

Effect on Strategic Aims

11.	<p>Commitment to being a listening council, providing first class services accessible to all.</p>
	<p>Commitment to ensuring that South Cambridgeshire continues to be a safe and healthy place for all.</p>
	<p>Commitment to making South Cambridgeshire a place in which residents can feel proud to live.</p> <p>This action was agreed within the Corporate Aims, Approaches and Actions for 2009/10 onwards. The awards will celebrate the excellent work that parish councils and local people are doing in South Cambridgeshire.</p>
	<p>Commitment to assisting provision for local jobs for all.</p>
	<p>Commitment to providing a voice for rural life.</p>

Recommendations

- 12. The Portfolio Holder is recommended to agree to change the Best Kept Village Competition action for 2009/10 to Community Pride and Village Hero Awards.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Corporate Aims, Approaches and Actions for 2009/10 onwards

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