

Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee

16 July 2025

Part 1 - Public

Matters for Cabinet - Non-key Decision



Cabinet Member Des Keers, Community Services

Responsible Officer Damian Roberts

Report Author Gill Fox

Tonbridge and Malling Community Awards Scheme

1 **Summary and Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To set out a scheme in recognition of local individuals and groups for outstanding contributions to community life and service.

2 **Corporate Strategy Priority Area**

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 This initiative is included in the 2025/26 Annual Service Delivery Plan, with the target to deliver the scheme by the end of 2025.
- 2.3 The Community Awards Scheme will recognise and celebrate individuals, groups and organisations who have made outstanding contributions through volunteering or initiatives that improve the lives of others. It aims to encourage civic pride, community spirit and active citizenship across the borough.

3 **Recommendations**

- 3.1 To **APPROVE** the Community Awards Scheme for Tonbridge and Malling
- 3.2 To **AGREE** categories of awards and the nomination process, as set out in the report

4 **Introduction and Background**

- 4.1 The Community Award Scheme will honour local individuals and groups for outstanding contributions to community life and service. There are numerous groups and individuals who work tirelessly to support others in the borough and this scheme will enable the council to recognise their efforts and thank them for the work they do. Winners will receive a formal certificate signed by the mayor.

5 Proposal

5.1 It is suggested that there are several categories of awards, as follows:

- Individual volunteer of the year
- Young community champion
- Outstanding community group
- Environmental contribution award
- Community safety award

5.2 Depending on the level of response, there may be multiple winners from each category, with an overall winner for the category based on the level of achievement.

5.3 The nomination process would be open to residents via an online form on the website. Nominations must include a short description of the nominee's contribution and impact. A ceremony will be held for the winners and the Cabinet Member will invite the Mayor of Tonbridge and Malling to present the awards, which will be in the form of certificates for each category winner.

5.4 To be eligible for an award, nominees must live, work or volunteer within the borough. Contributions must benefit the local community in a clear and positive way. Political or commercially motivated nominations will not be eligible.

5.5 The nominations will be assessed based on impact, commitment and benefit to the community. A panel of council officers will consider the applications and present to the Cabinet Member for Communities, for final endorsement, ahead of the presentation ceremony.

6 Other Options

6.1 This is a new initiative for the council. Other options have not been considered at this stage. It is suggested that the scheme operates for one year as outlined in the report and a review can be considered upon completion of the scheme.

7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

7.1 Costs will be minimal and limited to in-house printing of certificates, plus light refreshments at an awards ceremony. Costs will be met from within the existing community budget.

7.2 The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 The nominations will be assessed against set eligibility criteria and awards considered by a panel of council officers.

9 Legal Implications

- 9.1 None

10 Consultation and Communications

- 10.1 The Community Awards Scheme will be publicised through the council website, local media, newsletters and social media. Following the ceremony, subject to agreement from the winners, we will publicise achievements to recognise their efforts and inspire others.

11 Implementation

- 11.1 The scheme will launch in August 2025 and close in October 2025. The Awards Ceremony will be held in November.

12 Cross Cutting Issues

- 12.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

- 12.1.1 Limited or low impact on emissions and environment.

- 12.1.2 Climate change advice has been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

- 12.2 One of the award categories is “environmental contribution”. Promoting community effort around the climate change and environmental agenda, will help to raise awareness of the issues and provide practical examples of what can be achieved.

- 12.3 Equalities and Diversity

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users. Efforts will be made to ensure that awards are as inclusive as possible, ensuring that over time, award winners are broadly representative of the rich diversity within the local community.

Background Papers	None
Annexes	None