

Item No. 6.2	Classification: Open	Date: 12 July 2023	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		New Civic Award – Climate Champion Award	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All wards	
From:		Constitutional Steering Panel	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council Assembly note the report from the Constitutional Steering Panel and agree to establish a Climate Champion Award as part of the council's civic awards programme.
2. That Council Assembly ask officers to further develop nomination and award criteria and that this is considered by the Audit and Governance Committee.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. Since 1997 the London Borough of Southwark presents civic awards annually to people who live or work in Southwark who have demonstrated exceptional community spirit. Awards are made by the audit, governance and standards (civic awards) sub-committee, after nomination by any member of the public.
4. In addition to the rarely conferred Freedom of the Borough, the council has recently introduced a Southwark Together award. Conventionally the other Civic Awards have included:
 - The Liberty of the Old Metropolitan Borough of Bermondsey
 - The Liberty of the Old Metropolitan Borough of Camberwell
 - The Liberty of the Old Metropolitan Borough of Southwark
 - The Young Citizen of the Year Award
 - The Mayor's Discretionary Award
5. The council has declared a climate emergency and said that it will do all it can to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030. The council's climate strategy and action plan set out our approach. The task is huge, and we will only reduce the borough's carbon emissions with everyone in the borough playing their part to reduce carbon and support a more sustainable future.

6. There is excellent work going on across Southwark, from individuals, community groups, businesses and others. Given the importance of climate change and the crisis we face, the council is looking for ways to promote examples of excellence and celebrate those who are making an outstanding contribution to tackling climate change in the borough.
7. The cabinet member for climate emergency, clean air and streets has asked officers to consider the introduction of a specific climate award alongside the other civic awards so that excellence in this area can be rightly recognised alongside excellence in other aspects of the borough's life.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

8. The council would establish a new award as part of the civic awards. This would be "The Climate Champion Award". The civic awards subcommittee of the audit and governance committee would consider applications and make the award to an appropriate nominee
9. As part of the selection process, the Climate Change Director would be asked for comments on applicants in order to assist the committee with making their decision.
10. Criteria for the new Civic Award should be "an individual, group or organisation which has championed tackling the climate emergency in Southwark and/or contributed to a more sustainable future".
11. Criteria for the award should include identifiable qualitative and quantitative impact on climate change, including bringing together members of our communities, inspiring others, and building engagement and action on tackling climate change in the borough.
12. Criteria should emphasise outstanding work in the area, as opposed to scale, size etc. However, scale or size could also be a factor in impact of the area of work/event/project etc.
13. Criteria should include significant impact on promoting carbon reduction or tackling climate change. It should include an action which has also reduced inequality or tackled injustice related to climate change.
14. Eligibility for the new award will be in line with the other civic awards i.e. the council accepts nominations for any individual whose unpaid voluntary activity is unrelated or additional to the nominee's current employment, or from any community group, organisation or business which is based in and/or benefits the Southwark community.
15. Elected members or council employees cannot be nominated (other than for other work) but can nominate others.

16. Awards would be limited to one per year. Nominees for the award could also be considered for other categories of civic award if the committee felt these were more appropriate. The committee may also decide that a nominee for another civic award would be appropriate to receive the climate champion award.
17. The council would promote this new award alongside other awards and use this as a way of encouraging interesting in climate change and also to showcase some of the excellent work going on in the borough.
18. As set out in recommendation 2, Council Assembly asks officers to further consider the nomination and award criteria and to bring a report to the Audit and Governance Committee for them to review, make changes and agree to the nomination and award criteria for the Climate Champion Award.

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

Policy implications

19. The new award is consistent with the council's declaration of a climate emergency made in March 2019, and the council's strategy and action plan agreed in 2021. The strategy and action plan highlights that climate change will only be tackled with everyone playing their part and highlights the need to engage the community and innovate to find solutions.

Community impact statement

20. The new award will contribute to recognition of outstanding work in the area of climate change. Our approach to tackling climate change is to support a fair transition, where our climate work not only reduces carbon but also tackles inequality to support the development of a fairer and more equal society. Our climate approach recognises that not everyone will experience the effects of climate change equally and that those with the least resource are often the most effected by climate change.
21. As part of the selection, we would encourage the committee to consider awards that not only celebrate excellence in the climate action, but also which are aligned with the values we set out in our strategy, particularly support of a fair transition.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement impact statement

22. As this theme cuts across all the Civic Awards, the criteria should make clear that any nomination for any of the other awards can be automatically considered for this new award – if the proposer so wishes.
23. This award would be open to all individuals and organisations as set out in paragraphs 10-14. The council, in promoting the award, would take steps to ensure that as wide a groups of people as possible are aware of the award to encourage a diversity of applicants.

Health Impact statement

24. None in the context of this report

Climate impact

25. This award will promote action to tackle climate change. We would expect that promotion of the award and engagement in the process encourages further action and the council's commitments to reduce carbon.

Resource implications

26. The award ceremonies will be held as part of the existing Southwark Civic Awards and can be managed within existing staff and financial resources.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Assistant Chief Executive - Governance and Assurance

27. Council assembly has the responsibility to take decisions in respect of functions which are not the responsibility of the cabinet and which have not been delegated by council assembly to committees, sub-committees or officers; which in this instance includes creating a new civic award.
28. The responsibility for considering the process by which the decisions with respect to civic awards applications are to be taken falls to the audit, governance and standards (civic awards) sub-committee and its parent body, the audit, governance and standards committee.
29. This is consistent with the recommendation for council assembly to agree the concept for the climate change award, and for officers to report to the audit, governance and standards committee before November 2023 to consider the criteria.

Strategic Director of Finance

30. None in the context of this report.

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None.	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Chris Page, Climate Change and Sustainability Director		
Report Author	Chris Page, Climate Change and Sustainability Director		
Version	Final		
Dated	28 June 2023		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title		Comments Sought	Comments Included
Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance		Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance		No	N/A
Cabinet Member		Yes	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team			28 June 2023