

**NONSUCH PARK JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
25 JANUARY 2016**

SOUTH & SOUTH EAST IN BLOOM AWARD

Report of the: Head of Operational Service

Contact: Samantha Whitehead

Urgent Decision?(yes/no)

If yes, reason urgent decision
required:

Annexes/Appendices (attached): Annexe 1 – South & South East In Bloom
Marking Sheet
Annexe 2 – South & South East In Bloom
Award Structure

Other available papers (not
attached):

REPORT SUMMARY

This report requests permission to apply for a South & South East in Bloom Award for Nonsuch Park to replace the annual Green Flag Award application.

RECOMMENDATION

That the South & South East In Bloom Award scheme is trialled for 2016 to replace the Green Flag Award scheme.

Notes

1 Background

- 1.1 Nonsuch Park successfully obtained its first Green Flag Award in 2012.
- 1.2 The Green Flag Award, administered by Keep Britain Tidy is a long running award scheme which seeks to recognise the best parks and open spaces in the Country.
- 1.3 Nonsuch Park has applied for and won this award annually since 2012 and during this period Officers have noticed a slight decline in the quality of the judging, assessment and administration of the scheme.
- 1.4 Under the Green Flag scheme the assessments alternate each year between full assessment and 'mystery shops'. The 'mystery shop' assessments are as not as detailed and therefore do not provide such good value.
- 1.5 Despite winning the Green Flag award in the summer 2015, we did not receive the physical 'flag' until late November, despite numerous phone calls and emails to chase its whereabouts.

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- 1.6 The cost of entry to Green Flag is in the region of £300 and whether this represents good value is questionable.
- 1.7 In recent years The London Borough of Sutton declared a move away from the Green Flag Award in favour of an 'In Bloom' scheme. This has prompted Epsom & Ewell Officers to explore alternatives for Nonsuch Park.

2 Proposals

- 2.1 South & South East in Bloom sponsored and supported by Southern Water, is part of the Britain in Bloom, campaign where Boroughs, communities, residents, businesses can work together to improve their environment.
- 2.2 The scheme has three main objectives:
 1. See an increase in the number of people involved in gardening and horticulture and to see the standard maintained or rise wherever possible.
 2. To see improvement in how we care for our environment, including how we care for scarce resources such as water.
 3. How we come together as communities and make a contribution to the above by getting involved and making our Neighbourhoods, Villages, Towns & cities better places to live work and visit.
- 2.3 The 'In Bloom' scheme has a particular category for Large Parks (over 10 acres) and the cost of entry is £50.00.
- 2.4 The format for the scheme is similar to Green Flag but the application process appears simpler. A short application is made by the end of February with judging then taking place in late June, early July.
- 2.5 Judges follow a marking scheme, please see example attached at Annexe 1, which is similar to the Green Flag Criteria
- 2.6 Awards with varying degrees of Merit (please see Annexe 2) are announced in September.

3 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 3.1 It is anticipated that the South & South East In Bloom Scheme will require similar or less resource than the Green Flag Award.
- 3.2 There will be saving of £250 per annum on entry fees.

4 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 4.1 There are no legal implications for the purpose of this report.

5 Risk Assessment

- 5.1 There is a risk that we will not be successful in securing an Award

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- 5.2 There is a risk that the South & South East In Bloom scheme may not be as effective or detailed as the Green Flag scheme and the cost versus benefit of paying more for a detailed assessment may prove to be attractive in future years.

6 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that the South & South East In Bloom Award scheme is trialled for 2016 to replace the Green Flag Award scheme.