

FULL COUNCIL

Date: Monday, 13 February 2023
Title: Projects Update
Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk - Adam Clapton

Background

A number of projects, implemented by the Project Officer are entering their final stages.

Current Situation

Happy to Chat Bench

The Bench is due to be installed in the week commencing 6 February 2023. The project, through the auspices of the Stronger Communities Committee is intended to mark the bench near to the Halifax bank on Welch Way/High Street as a chat bench. It will be painted in the town council's new logo colours.

Bike Repair Stand – The Leys

Members will recall the Council was awarded funding from Active Oxfordshire to provide two bike repair stands in Witney. One was installed outside the rear of the Town Hall and the other at The Leys. Regrettably, both were vandalised within a few weeks. Repairs have been carried out on the most damaged stand at the Leys and it is due to be re-installed near the Coffee Shed (within view of CCTV) in the week commencing 6 February after a delay due to frosty weather in January.

Covid-19 Memorial

A further project agreed by the Stronger Communities Committee; resources have delayed its progress. A plan has been agreed to install large natural stones, two metres apart at the far end of the Leys (opposite Poundstretcher). The bench removed for the Happy to Chat bench will be refurbished with new slats, painted and used here. Officers are hoping to have this completed at the beginning of March.

Platinum Jubilee Sundial

This project has been beset with issues, not least the transfer of Unterhaching Park to the Town Council, although a licence to carry out the work was agreed by the District Council for November 2022. The plinth holding the sundial was installed during this time but unfortunately was not of a standard which withstood vandalism within a day of installation.

The Operations Manager has explored options to make this work safely but at this point this does not look possible.

The Council still has the sundial (bought to represent the Late Queen's Jubilee year) and could use this in another way at this location. The circular paved area could also still be planted up with shrubs and two benches relocated to the area if the Council wishes to proceed in the interim.

Children's Memorial Garden

A project via the Halls, Cemeteries & Allotments Committee, this memorial is intended to offer bereaved parents a quiet place for contemplation and reflection at Windrush Cemetery. The agreed plan was to create a natural area in the meadow with a bench and arch with climbing plants and engraved pebbles being added in a dedicated area bearing the names of loved ones.

The arch ordered is not suitable as it is not of a commercial grade so the Operations Manager would recommend returning and ordering edging, to install a bench and paint it sympathetically in colours be-fitting its intended purpose in the interim. This work could be undertaken at the end of February.

Burwell Hall - Boiler

At the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 21 November 2022, the Council agreed to go ahead with replacing the current boiler with a new, efficient gas boiler, rather than the CHP boiler previously considered due to concerns about the life of the current boiler and unknown reliability of CHP. Two contractors have provided quotes, and both have indicated a new water storage heater would also be required. Therefore, the cost of a new gas boiler and water heater is effectively the same cost of the CHP boiler, approximately £20,000 and may be slightly more.

As the boiler appears to be working effectively and potentially the worst of the winter is over, the Operations Manager would like to re-visit CHP boilers before anything is ordered with the agreement of the Council. *Please note, under Standing Order 23(a) a previous resolution can only be rescinded within six months by a motion moved in pursuance of the above recommendation.*

Burwell Hall – Toilets

As agreed, the toilets at Burwell Hall will be upgraded in March from an existing budget for this project. This will include changing the sanitary ware but will not be a full refurbishment.

Defibrillator at King George's Field

Officers are currently chasing the delivery of a defibrillator post-mountable case in order to install this apparatus on a lamp post at site. The electrical components are already in place ready for connection.

Leys Traffic Calming

The OCC consultation on this provided very few responses, with many made from residents outside of Witney. The Town Council is currently seeking the views of residents at Leys Villas, as residents who this will affect the most in order to report back to OCC before a decision is made at Cabinet on 23 February. TVP have advised there are no recent reported anti-social traffic related incidents at The Leys.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019. Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Financial implications

Described here or as stated in the report above.

- The budget for a replacement boiler at Burwell Hall is £30,000 (EMR 372).

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. The continuation of the Unterhaching Platinum Jubilee Project in its current form and the interim works suggested.
2. The suggested interim works to create the Children's Memorial Garden at Windrush Cemetery.
3. Whether to go ahead with the gas boiler replacement at Burwell Hall or re-visit the use of CHP to help with the Council's climate objectives.

Or

4. Defer the continuation of points 1 & 2 to the Deputy Town Clerk in conjunction with relevant committee Chairs or the next meeting of those committees.