

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 12 June 2023
Title: Projects Update
Contact Officer: Project Officer - Nicky Cayley

Background

The purpose of this report is to update members on projects that need further Council decisions.

Current Situation

Covid 19 Memorial

The former administration resolved to install a memorial to mark the Covid-19 Pandemic and agreed on a site at the southern end of the Leys, facing St Mary's Church.

The Welsh slate boulder has been installed – originally one boulder it was cut into two to represent the theme of the memorial – “together” but “apart”.

A bench is on order and a sign with some words written by Cllr Collins to fix to the bench has also been ordered and received. The bench will be installed between the stones, with a view towards the church.

The original budget for this project was £1, 500.00 which was increased by £750.00. The cost of the heather slate stones was £1, 666.67 (excluding VAT) and the sign was £20 (excluding VAT). A bench is £497.00 (excluding VAT) plus carriage (cost dependent upon how many benches the Operations Manager orders at one time).

Members of the working party created to manage this project expressed a wish to have the stones engraved with “Together” on one stone and “Apart” on the other. The slate is a perfect stone for stone carving. The estimate for this work is £1,000.00. To do this, the Council would need to allocate a further budget for the work to be carried out.

Jubilee Garden – Unterhaching Park

Further to the vandalism of the sundial plinth, the Council's works team tried to drill in metal spikes to the bottom of the plinth to come up with a more secure fixing method than concrete alone following a resolution by this committee to try and find a way to complete the install. Unfortunately, during this process, the plinth was fractured with a piece breaking off. A repair has been attempted but it was not successful.

Officers are currently working on ideas to utilise the plinth in an alternative way or to use the sundial itself in another way but do have burial and grounds maintenance obligations which are priority.

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.

Neither of the projects in this report have any environmental issues associated with them.

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.

Members should consider the risk in pursuing and spending further resources on a project which has beset with problems from the outset and on which there is still no clear way forward for completion. However, planting has been sewn in the garden area where this memorial was due to go which may raise questions if the memorial is not installed in some way.

Financial implications

- The task and finish group for the Covid-19 Memorial wish to ask the Committee if it would recommend to Council that an additional budget of £1, 000 be allocated to the Covid-19 Memorial Project at The Leys.
- Funds could be sought from the Community Infrastructure Earmarked reserve which currently has a balance of £59,944 at year end.

Recommendations

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

1. Whether to allocate an additional budget of £1,000 to enable the Covid-19 Memorial to be inscribed by a stone carver and,
2. To delegate authority to Officers to progress the Jubilee Garden at Unterhaching Park as and when they are able.