

HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 22 January 2024

Title: Children's Memorial Garden

Contact Officer: Project Officer

Background

In January 2022, the Council agreed to create a Childrens Memorial Garden for the community with a budget of £1,000 via this Committee. A picturesque location was identified in Windrush Cemetery that had archaeological restrictions reducing risk of burial spaces being impacted. The budget only allowed for a small number of features, namely Bench, Metal Archway and Pebble Pond. The Council also planted an attractive plant to grow over the arch, sadly this died due to poor soil condition.



Current Situation

- Due to the budget constraint the garden was delivered the best it could be, but the Council always felt more could be done. Officers have recently identified an opportunity to improve the garden by potentially utilising an a "Britain in Bloom" budget underspend

from the current financial year, which will help promote the garden and enable the community to visit and benefit from it. The additional funds would provide the changes described below, with no change to the current structures.

- The soil quality and archaeological restrictions, prevent the Council from installing fencing and plants/flowers as preferred. Therefore, officers are currently researching plants and vegetation that are suitable for the land to improve the appearance of the garden and mark its area which can be maintained easily.
- The Council has previously created a process for the community to purchase (at cost) a personalised, engraved pebble through the council and have it installed in the Pebble Pond. This will be promoted when the Garden improvements have been completed.

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.

- This report is an update of progress with this project and risks associated with delivery will be managed by Council Officers.
- There is a reputational risk should the garden not be completed to a standard expected by residents by funds already expended.

Social Value

- The memorial garden provides a reflective place which enables parents to remember loved ones.

Financial implication

- Cost of improving the area with planting – currently being explored.
- The request to vire funds from the In Bloom underspend will be a decision for the Stronger Communities Committee (parent Committee for In Bloom) at its meeting on 29th January.

Recommendations

This is a project update however any feedback is always appreciated.

1. Members are invited to note the report and future plans to 'complete' the memorial garden.