

HALLS, CEMETERIES AND ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

Date: Monday 12 September 2022

Title: Children's Memorial Garden

Contact Officer: Project Officer - Nicky Cayley

Background

At the Halls. Cemeteries and Allotments Meeting on 17 January 2022, members discussed the idea for a Children's Memorial Garden: -

After discussion it was agreed that the garden be located at Windrush Cemetery with exact siting to be agreed. Members indicated that the garden should be relatively small, include benches for people to sit and reflect, have a willow arch entrance if possible and a planted area. It was agreed that this should be a Town Council project.

Recommended:

1. *That, the provision of a Children's Memorial Garden at Windrush Cemetery be supported; and*
2. *That, officers be requested to develop the scheme on the basis outlined at the meeting.*

Current Situation

The Project Officer has worked with the Operations Manager on several concept ideas for this project and has held a site meeting with Cllr Jones as Chair of the Committee and Cllr Gwatkin. Officers have worked through several possibilities for the garden.

Officers would like to put forward a design to be sited where one of the large oak trees is on the land that the Council cannot bury in due to archaeological remains. It's close to one of the rights of way so has a trodden path adjacent to it and the area has recently been cut with a grillo machine. The Council currently has a bench in stock that could be refurbished to look as good as new which could be sited under the tree, and the works team could also create a pond which would be excellent for biodiversity but also very tranquil and a lovely place for reflection. The pond could be edged with stone that is currently stored at The Leys Depot.

For parents who would like to remember their child in a little more personal way, the Council could offer engraved pebbles, that could be placed either around the pond or around the base of the oak tree, or could direct parents to where they can purchase the pebbles from. This would have a very natural appearance in keeping with the area.

The projects Officer could also work with the Ranger on a type of planted memorial archway if still wanted, as he has ideas about which type of planting might work well at this site. Members may feel, however, that this is not necessary.

Environmental impact

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

The proposal would support and increase biodiversity with the inclusion of a pond.

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. There are no risks associated with this project.

Financial implications

The cost of this project is in terms of the Works Team's time to construct the pond and refurbish the existing bench.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and if they wish to go ahead with the proposal from officers.