

# PARKS AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

24<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2021

## WOODLAND CEMETERY

### Benches

There are a few benches in the Cemetery, some of which have started to deteriorate and will need to be replaced.

The recent memorial benches which have been purchased and placed in Filham Park are made from recycled plastic, and families contribute towards the costs of the bench, plaque and any fittings, the Council pay for the delivery, installation and VAT with an arrangement that the Council maintains the bench for a minimum of ten years. If after this time a bench is damaged or needed replacing, the family would be approached in the first instance to replace the bench before the opportunity is offered to others on the waiting list.

Two of the benches in the Cemetery are being replaced in this way but a further bench may have been purchased in the past by the Council in memory of a past Councillor.

Members are asked if they wish to replace this bench or offer the family the opportunity for them to purchase a bench in line with other families, and if they do not wish to then offer this to other families who would like one.

It is **recommended** that Members agree the policy for the purchase of future Memorial Benches in the Cemetery and elsewhere as detailed above to ensure the policy of this Council on this matter is clear.

It is **recommended** that the family of the Councillor named on the bench that needs replacing be offered the opportunity to purchase a new bench as per the above policy.

### Memorial Trees

Within the Cemetery trees and shrubs have been planted by the Council and in some cases a stake with a plaque placed in front by families to remember loved ones.

The families pay a small donation to cover the cost of the wood and plaque. Two of the trees now need replacing and Members are asked to consider if they would like families to purchase the actual tree.

This would be a suitable species decided by the Parks Ranger to be suitable for the location. Where possible a choice will be given to the family from a list provided by the Park Ranger.

The family would make a donation of the cost of the tree and any plaque and stake and the Council would pay for the delivery etc the same as the memorial benches.

It is **recommended** that this Committee adopts the above approach for memorial trees.

### **Memorials and decorations**

Some families have adorned trees and grave plots with tributes to loved ones.

In our booklet we state no chippings, kerbings or other variation and mention no plastic flowers.

This ensures that grass cutting can take place safely and to a good standard. It also ensures the appearance of the cemetery is preserved.

However, many of the graves now have additional ornaments, solar lights and plastic guards with chippings etc.

It is **recommended** that deed holders are written to with regard to any plots with items on graves other than an agreed Memorial and vase. They will be given a suitable deadline, and one reminder to remove the items, after which the Parks team will remove the items that do not comply with the Council's guidance.

The cemetery booklet will be updated to bring it up to date with any decisions made today and any other updates as required.

Pauline Cleal  
Senior Finance Officer

Jonathan Parsons  
Town Clerk