

MEETING REPORT

Meeting: Parks & Open Spaces, 13th November 2023
Agenda item: PA23/021
Report subject: Cemetery Memorial Trees – in principle agreement
Report author: K Elliott-Turner, Town Clerk

It has been suggested that in addition to our memorial bench package we offer for the cemetery, we may also wish to consider introducing a memorial tree package.

The Town Clerk is proposing to introduce a new mapping system (Parish Online), which would have multiple uses and benefits across the council's operations. An example falling within this committee's remit, would be to map out locations of existing memorial benches, and identify locations for new memorial benches.

In terms of memorial trees, space is limited within the cemetery, however the Parks Officers, Senior Finance Officer (who administers the cemetery) and the Town Clerk will look to identify potential locations for memorial trees, to be mapped on the new system.

The Parks Officers and SHDC tree officer will be asked to advise on most suitable type of tree for soil type, space available, ongoing maintenance – leaf collection, root spread, to be reported back to committee.

Once these stages are complete and initial findings show that this is something which can be pursued, committee will be asked to consider a package cost, to include purchase, planting and maintenance for the first year (i.e. watering, rabbit guards if required). A memorial tree policy would include conditions such as: the town council will plant the tree and whilst they will endeavour to maintain the tree, they will not take any responsibility should trees die after the first season of planting; should the tree die within the first year, the town council will take responsibility for replacement of the tree; the requested tree is the memorial and does not constitute a burial plot, therefore the scattering of ashes will not be permitted. There are other conditions which may be considered, should committee wish to introduce a cemetery memorial tree package.

Note

Should members wish to consider expanding memorial tree package into our parks and open spaces, it is proposed that the mapping exercise showing existing trees is completed first, and this is returned back to committee, together with consideration to ongoing maintenance, liabilities, etc.

PROPOSAL: To consider an in-principle agreement to introducing a cemetery memorial tree package, subject to satisfactory initial investigations