

FRODSHAM TOWN COUNCIL MEMORIAL BENCH & PATH WORKING PARTY

Notes from Zoom Meeting held on 18/02/2021.

Attendees:- Cllr Phil Griffiths (Team Lead), Vivien Shaw – Frodsham WI, Cllr Bill Stockton, Cllr Bernie Wade

Apologies:- Cllr Ryan McKeown

Memorial Bench

Background.

The Working Party was formed after a meeting of Frodsham Town Council Policy (FTC) Process and Revenue (PP&R) Committee which had received a request for a Memorial Bench to be sited in memory of a recently deceased youngster. Although the Council is sympathetic to the request there are currently no suitable sites available. Moreover, FTC has a Policy Document that states that no more benches can be accommodated.

An idea was put forward that FTC should have one bench for quiet contemplation, prayer etc of those who had lost loved ones and that we should possibly investigate a suitable plinth, wall for the siting of small memorial plaques. Cllr Griffiths agreed to lead a Working Party to investigate options and report back to FTC.

Since then, it was discovered that the original Seats Policy was out of date and not fit for purpose. It is now proposed that rather than just one bench there may be several at different sites around the town. Some of these seats will be dedicated memorial Seats, others may be sited where there is a genuine need.

It has also decided that the Memorial Bench and Memorial Path Working Groups would be merged and report back to the FTC Amenities Committee.

Potential Sites

Any chosen site should ideally be Central, Easily Accessible, Peaceful but not too isolated and finally parking should be readily available. So far potential sites identified :-

- Manley Road Copse. Although parking is difficult there is sufficient parking available down the road by the Scout Hut. Since the meeting Frodsham WI have agreed to take an active interest in the upkeep of the Copse following clearing work funded by FTC
- Marshlands. May be a bit too isolated and subject to antisocial behaviour.
- Top of Frodsham Hill. Although the lower part of the cemetery is full of benches there are none at the top.
- The Town Clerk indicated that there is another site designated during the 1990s with a bench etc but no one seems to be aware of it. Cllr Griffiths to follow up with the Clerk.
- Hob Hey Wood. Access not ideal but feasible.
- Castle Park. Cllr Griffiths has written to CWAC Councillor Lynn Riley as Chair of Castle Park Trustees to identify any possible site. Unfortunately, the last Castle Park Trustee Meeting was cancelled due to it not been quorate. Cllr Griffiths to follow up with CWAC Councillor Lynn Riley.

Identification of potential suppliers.

In line with FTC's procurement strategy, we have now identified two potential suppliers of benches which should ideally be robustly constructed, stylish, durable and as vandal proof as possible. Cllrs Griffiths, Ashton and Wade will work together to select suitable designs to be presented to the Working Group.

Funding.

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It is anticipated that costs for any benches and their ongoing maintenance will be met by any one wishing to have a bench dedicated to a loved one. In order to release benches for reuse it is recommended that such dedications have a finite span of 20 years, although this needs further debate.

Since the meeting the UK Government have announced "The Welcome Back" initiative to provide post COVID regeneration funds, these funds may be used for such things as tree planting and provision of benches. Cllr Griffiths has asked the Town Clerk to identify any funding initiatives.

Memorial Path

1. To ask if the group feel we would benefit from input from outside bodies. For example, The Royal British Legion
2. Agreed we need to employ a Landscape Architect. This could be more cost effective in the long run. A provisional list of specialists has been supplied to the Town Clerk who has been asked to request quotes.
3. Having spoken to someone that deals in this kind of work he has given the following advice.
 - a. Pressure treated wood edging is advisable, since it usually comes with a 25yr. guarantee and eventually biodegrades becoming almost invisible, making the pathway more natural.
 - b. Kerbstones are very expensive and he doubts if they would be suitable with the sandstone having to be dug out to put a base down for them.
 - c. He suggested colouring the sandstone around the monument allowing it to blend in with the natural surroundings.
 - d. We need more suggestions as to the shape.
4. We discussed about having the path to circle the Round Table Plinth, but decided that this would not be feasible due to the unevenness of the surface.

We are now in the process of finding three Landscape Architects. Once we have sourced them, the next stage will be to discuss our ideas and get some idea of costings.

Next Meeting – TBA Following Amenities Committee Meeting on 13/4/2021.