

FRODSHAM TOWN COUNCIL MEMORIAL BENCH WORKING PARTY

Notes from Second Zoom Meeting held on 3/12/2020.

Attendees:- Cllr Phil Griffiths (Team Lead), Vivien Shaw – Frodsham WI, Cllr Ryan McKeown, Cllr Lucy Sumner, Cllr Bernie Wade, Cllr Caroline Ashton

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.

Potential Sites

This was discussed in some depth at our last meeting but we were asked by Chair of FTC to review all properties owned by FTC plus others such as Castle Park which we did. We were also asked to consider Working Party Membership so Cllr Ashton was asked to join the team to provide some more background in addition to the strong guidance already provided by Vivien Shaw. Both have a wide knowledge of our local environment. Cllr Ashton felt that Hob Hey Wood could be a possibility but after some discussion this idea was rejected as being unsuitable for disabled access. We quickly reviewed all other properties as asked but after some debate where further exploration of the use of Marshlands was put forward but again not selected on previous grounds

Any chosen site should be Central, Easily Accessible, Peaceful but not too isolated and finally parking should be readily available.

Manley Road Copse seems to tick most of the boxes. Although parking is difficult there is sufficient parking available down the road by the Scout Hut. A vote was taken and it was unanimously decided to advocate that Manley Road Copse be proposed as the optimum site to Frodsham Town Council.

Site Clearance and Maintenance

Currently Manley Road Copse is in need of some TLC. Various options were discussed such as asking Hob Hey Wood Friends if they would be interested in supporting the site if sufficient funding were made available. Contracting a local landscaping company to clean up and maintain the site. There is a strong drive to ensure support and maintenance of the site is provided locally in order to support our local economy in these trying time rather than from external contractors. Vivien Shaw indicated that the WI are actively considering a proposal to maintain the site.

Construction and participation of other Focus Groups, Schools.

Now that a suitable site has been identified the it is anticipated that local schools and other groups could be contacted to see if they are interested in the design and construction aspects. In particular we'd like to see buy in from our own teenagers so this could be n ideal project for Helsby High School pupils.

Funding.

It is anticipated that costs for this Project will be met by FTC, however approaches will be made to other bodies (English Heritage, CWaC, Round Table, Rotary Club) with a view to Grant procurement.

Next Steps.

FTC PP&R Committee will be asked to formally endorse the selection of Manley Road Copse as the preferred location for the Memorial Bench.

Following this we will then consider how to engage with other interested local parties, review funding options and check whether we need any formal planning permission.

Next Meeting will be arranged following FTC PP&R Meeting on 21 December.