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Meeting	Parks and Open Spaces Committee
Date	21st February, 2023
Report Title	Mazurek Way Play Area Memorial / Sensory Space
Agenda Reference	13
Author	David Hunt, Head of Parks & Open Spaces

Officer's Recommendations

1. To recommend Option 2 and leave the area to regenerate naturally.

2. To consider other areas for sensory planting using remaining funds from the Horticultural Work budget 4309/307.

Background

The current shrubs were reduced to ground level by Wiltshire Police Constabulary after an incident that required the shrub beds to have extensive reduction in the authority's search for potential evidence pertaining to the incident.

Options for consideration

1. Sensory Planting

To consider an aspiration to create areas of sensory planting with the added benefit of some informal benches. With grant funding there is a real possibility that planting could take place this spring in the raised planters we have at Ventnor Close Allotment site. This area also benefits from informal benches. The area is secure and could be accessed by organised groups. Insect friendly planting could also take place in this area.

Sensory planting can show many benefits for a broad section of the public. It can be beneficial to people by offering a sight, smell, and touch experience. Coupled with the bonus of a tranquil peaceful area to sit and relax.

2. Leave the area to regenerate naturally

The present shrubs should make a full recovery and thrive from the benefit of a more efficient maintenance program.

There are four planted trees in the area that are good specimens and one self-set that is not a good specimen. This tree is located next to the play area fence, creating a screen from users of the play area. It is our intention to remove this tree.

As there is no budget for reinstating hedges around the play area, replacing the hedges at this specific site may set a precedent in other areas where hedges have been removed. For example, most recently when work was undertaken by utility contractors or emergency services.

3. Install a commemorative feature

To recommend the family/friends of the victim to review the Council's Memorial Bench policy and purchase a bench for the supply, five years maintenance on the open space adjacent to the play area. The cost to the resident would be in the remit of £1,500.00.

4. Plant a memorial tree

For the family to request the planting of a memorial tree. The supply, maintenance for three years and the installation is likely to be in the remit of £1,700.00. The memorial could be a cherry blossom with a small plaque, in the open space adjacent to the play area, similar to other memorial trees.

5. Public Consultation

To ask members of the public who live around the play area to come up with some alternative suggestions of what they would like to see in this area and analyse the results to consider at a later date.