

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL  
RECREATION & LEISURE COMMITTEE  
6<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

**Officer:** Michelle Farmer – Committee Officer and Executive Assistant

**Shrewsbury Town Council Memorials**

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**Purpose**

To inform the Recreation and Leisure Committee of a renewal policy for Memorials on Shrewsbury Town Council land.

**Background**

Shrewsbury Town Council offer memorials on their land which can range from trees, shrubs or benches.

In 2012, Shrewsbury Town Council introduced a 10-year lease on any new memorials placed on Shrewsbury Town Council Land, the majority being in the Quarry and the Dingle. The memorials are either a new memorial bench and a plaque or a memorial shrub and a plaque. The lease can be renewed after this period if the applicant wishes to do so.

In the Quarry Park there are 75 benches of which 48 are on 10-year leases. (The other 27 benches were put in place before 10-year lease system was implemented.)

In the Dingle there are 57 benches in place and only 7 of these are on a 10-year lease.

A total of 132 benches are in place within the Dingle and the Quarry.

**Renewal of Existing leases as per the existing policy.**

10-year leases are now coming up to their expiry date so the Town Council would like to implement a programme for rolling renewal leases on payment of the appropriate fee. Enquiries elsewhere have suggested £250.00 for a memorial bench and £50.00 for a memorial shrub & plaque as an appropriate fee.

If the applicant wishes to continue with their memorial in the location an application form would be completed agreeing to this new 5-year lease.

If the applicant does not wish to continue with the lease the inscription plate/plaque would be removed from the memorial bench. These memorials will then be offered to someone else on our Memorials waiting list. Plaques would be stored for 12 months should they wish to collect. Following the 12-month period the plaque will be sent for recycling.

The Memorial Policy has also been updated to incorporate the new 5-year renewal.

### **Process for Dealing with benches outside the existing Policy**

As highlighted above there are 77 out of 132 benches that were agreed pre-Town Council and there is very little paperwork to determine agreements or contacts of those who entered into agreements.

Some of these benches are coming to their lifecycle and are in need of replacement. These can follow the new style of benches elsewhere in the Quarry. The difficulty remains in the Dingle where there is uniformity in the wooden benches.

Given that inscriptions will have been on these benches for well in excess of the current 10-year policy, it is proposed to commence a programme of renewal. This is unlikely to be an easy task given the lack of contact details. In the same kind of process in identifying cemetery memorials, notices shall be placed on those affected benches, in the Quarry noticeboards and on the Town Councils website to give notice that the plaque will be removed. The 5-year renewal policy as identified will be made available.

### **Conclusions**

The existing attached Policy on the dedication of Benches, Trees and Shrubs within Town Centre Parks has been redrafted to reflect the need for a renewal process.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.**
- (ii) That the amended Policy on the Dedication of benches, trees and shrubs within the Town Centre Parks be approved;**
- (iii) That the suggested fees be accepted;**
- (iv) That a new procedure on dealing with SABC benches on Town Council Land Policy be approved.**