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Meeting: Recreation, Amenities & Environment Committee, Item RAE4.11

Date: 19th October 2021

Author: Assistant Town Clerk (Planning & Amenities)

Subject: Proposed Copse in Collett Park

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update councillors on the proposed copse in Collett Park and to consider if it should be part of the initiative for the Queen's Green Canopy to celebrate HM the Queen's 70 years on the throne.
- 1.2 To consider the proposed design to date and to agree to the quoted costs.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The previous Town Clerk had discussions with both Cllr Kennedy and the contractor on the design and positioning of a proposed copse. There appears to be some differences between these discussions.
- 2.2 Following a proposal for a copse in the vicinity of Allyn Saxon drive in Collett Park, Councillors resolved at the February 2021 Collett Park Management Committee Meeting:
"The Town Clerk to seek a detailed, costed design for a wooded area with hard landscaping and to present at a future meeting."
- 2.3 Councillors resolved at the August 2021 RAE meeting that:
"The councillors wished to create a Queen's Green Canopy in Collett Park and for the council to work with the SM Horticultural Society, the community and others to arrange for the planting of trees."
- 2.4 The work done by officers is based on discussions that the previous Town Clerk had with contractors, and therefore this work is presented as 'Phase 1' of works on a wooded copse. If the committee wish to extend this in the future, then these proposed works facilitate that.
- 2.5 Bare-root whips must be planted between November and March and as such, in order to incorporate this copse for the Queen's Green Canopy initiative, works must commence this year.
- 2.6 Since the August meeting of the RAE committee, the Shepton Mallet Horticultural Society has clarified their position on the copse/Queen Green Canopy initiative. Rather than wishing to be an

integral part of our activities, an individual member was encouraging the Town Council to participate and spread the word. Therefore, work has been done to scope the ability and costs of our contractors to complete the planting works for Phase 1. Wider community participation could be considered for any potential extension as a Phase 2 and installation of hard landscaping to include the standing gate post stones.

3.0 Proposal

- 3.1 From information obtained from the contractor following their discussion with the previous Town Clerk, it is proposed to create a copse in the top right hand corner of the football field at a size of approx. 1575m² (please see Appendix A). This area already has four mature trees and it is suggested that a free pack of 105 whips are applied for from the Woodland Trust to develop the copse. The cost of the planting and associated items would be no more than £500.
- 3.2 For this copse not to incorporate the standing stones or a defined path at this time if the committee wishes to extend it further around the football field in the future. Instead, a mowed grass pathway to be included through the copse by allowing the grass around the trees to grow longer, benefitting wildlife.
- 3.3 For a Phase 2 extension of this copse to be considered at a future meeting.

4.0 Town Plan Reference

Protected Environment

Protect and improve Trees, Woodland, Wild Flower Areas and Habitats	Work with partners and landlords to consider opportunities for planting more trees and woodlands and wild flower meadows, hedgerows and open spaces that might be neglected To aspire to owning /managing a community woodland or countryside park
Protect and improve Biodiversity and Ecology	Work with other agents to identify the vast wealth of biodiversity in the area and to ensure that it is provide with the right habitats for growth
Protect and improve Collett Park and its Green Flag Status	Improve the facilities in Collett Park and other open spaces to offer a range of habitats that include new woodland, wild flower areas, edible beds, community gardens, at the same time improving access, information and offering a wider range of activities

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The costs for creating Phase 1 of a wooded copse as part of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative to not exceed £500

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 For councillors to agree to the creation of a copse for the Queen's Green Canopy as described in this report and associated appendices.
- 6.2 For councillors to authorise the Assistant Town Clerk in conjunction with the Marketing, Communications and Community Engagement Officer to apply for tree whips from the Woodland Trust
- 6.3 For councillors to agree for a Phase 2 extension of this copse and associated hard landscaping to be considered at a future meeting for completion in late 2022 or early 2023, the next bare-root tree planting period.