

COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – TUESDAY JULY 9TH 2024

Item 10 – To receive and approve a report relating to the renovation of the bench at Splitwind Pond

Background

As mentioned in previous reports (including to the Five Year Plan Advisory Committee on April 25th 2024 and in my Clerk's Report to the Council meeting on June 11th 2024), the bench at Splitwind Pond is being renovated.

The bench has been dismantled with the cast iron ends being sent away for shot blasting and powder coating. Six new slats are required for the seat and part of the back with the remainder of the back to be an oak panel carved by a local resident. £40 has already been spent (March 2023) by the Council to cover the cost of the oak panel.

Current Position

The same company in Woolston who made an excellent job of ends from some of our other benches have undertaken this work at a cost of £160 ex VAT (the same price as three years ago). Payment needs to be made for this work.

The cost of timber has risen markedly since work was undertaken in 2019/20 on other benches. The cost of the oak slats previously used for refurbishments has risen from around £40 per slat to £76 per slat, with delivery from the same supplier increasing from £25 to £200.

As a result, I am suggesting that we use a wood called Sapele instead of oak. Its lifespan is expected to be similar and it costs considerably less, around £18 per "cut to required measurements and rounded" slat with delivery of the six required costing £30. The supplier is based in Somerset and has been in business for some 85 years.

In summary the total costs of the renovations are expected to be as follows:-

a. Cost of Oak for the Carved Back	£40 (no vat and already paid)
b. Refurbishment of Cast Iron Ends	£160 ex VAT
c. Cost of six new Sapele slats	£150 ex VAT
d. Fixings and wood treatment	£50 ex VAT
e. Generator Hire	£50 ex VAT
f. 10% contingency	£40 ex VAT
TOTAL COST	£490 ex VAT (note: includes £40 already spent)

This sum is covered by the £500 allowed for Benches in the 2024/25 Budget without the need to draw on a reserve built up for further replacements.

As the Council's Responsible Financial Officer, I can confirm that section 5.10 of the Financial Regulations approved on June 11th 2024 have been followed.

Recommendation

That the Parish Council continues to proceed with the renovation of the Splitwind Pond bench as outlined above.

David Rigby

Clerk to Copythorne Parish Council

July 1st 2024