

TO: RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 10th September 2002

SUBJECT: MONITORING OF THE JEPHSON GARDENS PROJECT

FROM: LEISURE AND AMENITIES

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This is to inform members on the progress and monitoring of the Jephson and Mill Gardens Heritage Lottery Project.

1. BACKGROUND

2.1 Members will be aware that the last report referred to the progress on the eight contracts and this report is intended to update progress on these.

1. PERFORMANCE REPORT

3.1 Contract 1 - Minor Repairs and Restoration to Monuments and Features.

This contract comprises of repairs to the Jephson Temple (listed grade 2), the Wiles Obelisk (listed grade 2), the Davis Clock (listed grade 2) and the repairs to the Arbor. All this work is complete with an overall saving on Contract 1 of £36,927

3.2 Contract 2 - Specialist Mechanical and Electrical Repairs and Restoration of the Hitchman Fountain.

The work on the Hitchman Fountain is now complete and total savings £21,920 were achieved. There have been some operational difficulties since they were switched on but these issues are being addressed, and the Fountain appears to be working satisfactorily. No new work on the Crown Fountains have been carried out as part of this HLF award except for the illumination, but we are having problems with the filters which are blocking up with pond weed and silt. Members will remember the lake was cleaned out seven years ago and new jets installed, but the floods during Easter destroyed much of this work with large deposits of silt getting back in to the pond. Water Techniques are the company who refurbished them in 1998 and has been maintaining them since. The situation will be reviewed and resolved as soon as possible.

3.3 Contract 3 - The Boathouse Refurbishment.

The boathouse is complete and the project costs are now showing an overspend of £20,731 on this contract which has been offset against the savings from contracts 1 and 2.

The boathouse has been operating throughout the summer and is continuing to provide boating services which add interest to the park and garden's. The services provided are meeting some of the demands of teenagers and young people and this goes a long way towards contributing to the action plan for Best Value Outdoor Recreation.

We are very pleased with the progress made to date and the fact that there are now boats back on the river.

3.4 **Contract 4 - Mill Gardens External Works Package.**

This contract is now completed. The community play provision, is being enjoyed by large numbers of young children and the open space provision adjacent to Wiles Road is being used again after re seeding earlier in the year.

Saving achieved on this contract is £40,199. The Local Authority Ombudsman found in favour of the District Council following complaints from some local residents and the area has very suffered little from vandalism since opening and has reduced significantly the anti-social behaviour which previously dominated the area. **The play area has just received a Civic Award from the Leamington Society.**

3.5 **Contract 5 - Restoration and Repairs - Aviary.**

The contract for the restoration of Aviary is in progress. Tompkins Construction Ltd have made good progress on the restoration and demonstrated a good understanding of the issues involved. However the catering franchisee has requested some changes which have had a time and cost implication. This means it is now most unlikely that this facility will be operational until next spring, and we the costs have been contained within the budget for this contract. Mercat are the new caterers, who will also operate the new restaurant in the Jephson Gardens and the café in the Royal Pump Rooms. The contract was signed Thursday the 22nd August 2002.

3.6 **Contract 6 - Restaurant and Temperate House.**

Practical Completion issued. The contract is now practically complete though an extensive list of snagging items remains. The internal bridge link is still to be fitted which has delayed the commencement of contract 8. Clearance of the river bank has been completed.

Mercat are the new franchisee for the restaurant and the lease was signed along with the Aviary on the 22nd August 2002. The fit out, including the kitchens is now being carried out and it is hoped to be open mid- October 2002.

The educational facility is now complete and it is intended that Warwickshire College will be occupying the building from the Autumn term onwards.

Rentokil Tropical Plants is the successful contractor for the soft landscaping works in the Temperate Glass House as approved by the Executive on the 19th August 2002. The returned figure was £171,075. It is hoped to make a small saving on this sum, and planting of the Temperate House will commence during October this year.

The cost of the building is consistent with David Langdon & Everest's cost estimate of April 1998 of £2,009,111. Anticipated outturn costs are within 8% of that estimate £2,166,754 although the target cost savings included within the HLF bid have not been achieved principally due to :-
 impact upon the proposals of the 1998 flood
 additional costs in piling the building following the soils investigation.
 time delays and inflation caused by flood re-design and revised planning application.

Consequently the contract is £556, 025 over the bid budget allowance.

The contingencies and hard landscaping elements from this contract have been transferred to contract 8. (£65,000)

3.7 **Contract 7 - Jephson Gardens External Works.**

Work is in progress. Contingences have now been spent on the contract and it is likely to exceed the tender figure of £497, 964 by about £2,000. This figure may be exceeded if delays on Contract 5 and 6 continue to restrict access to complete areas in Contract 7. The savings of some £320,000 from the bid estimate from contract 7 are apparent on the ground where the reduced specification on the footpaths is noticeable.

Area by area snagging lists have been provided to the contractor who is reluctant to rectify these until all areas can be accessed.

It is anticipated that completion will be November 2002.

3.8 **Contract 8 - Landscaping of the Temperate Glass House**

As referred to earlier, Rentokil Tropical Plants are the new contractor, specifically for the internal landscaping of the Temperate Glass House. Work is programmed for mid October 2002. This will allow the plants to be moved from the nursery in Holland to their new location. This is a very exciting project that requires specialist contractors to undertake the work. .

1. **FINANCIAL POSITION**

4.1 The details of the financial position is set out in Appendix A, Revision..... The overall cost summary is indicating a £6,347 overspend with variations of between £35,971 and £42, 318 projected, with a further contingency of 5,000 for on-going client costs giving a total projected overspend of £47,318.

Additional matching funding reduces this sum to £37,549 and the Client and Design Team members will be asked to try and deliver the total project on budget.

5. **PROJECT SUMMARY**

5.1 Whilst it remains likely that the project will be complete prior to the contract end date of 31st December 2002, the cost remains an issue which needs resolving. An additional grant request to HLF is under consideration to ensure completion of all the works and add back in some key items omitted during the course of the works as part of the saving strategy.

With the exception of the new build element which was severely affected by the flood situation, cost management on the project has been effective. Contracts 1-7 and 8 are currently estimated at some £508, 707 less than the HLF cost plan.

5.2

The Works undertaken in the Gardens have been well received by users of the Gardens and a number of complimentary comments have been received. It will be nice to see the project finished now as it is expected to provide a major boost to tourism in the district

Nigel Bishop
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Background papers : Previous reports to Executive, Scrutiny and the former Leisure Committee

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