

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism
2.	Date:	17th September 2013
3.	Title:	Catcliffe Glass Cone – Emergency Repairs – Exemption from Standing Orders.
4.	Directorate:	Environment & Development Service

5. Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek Member approval for exemption from Standing Order 47.6.3 (the requirement to invite three written quotations for contracts valued between £20, 000 and £50, 000). This is to allow Conservation Architect, Paul Hewitt to carry out the essential health and safety work on Catcliffe Glass Cone. This work will be carried out in consultation with English Heritage, with the final specifications subject to Listed Building and Scheduled Ancient Monument (SMC) consents.

6. Recommendations

The contract for the health & safety work on Catcliffe Glass Cone is exempt from the provisions of Standing Order 47.6.3 (requirement to invite three written quotations for contracts valued between £20,000 and £50,000) and the contract be awarded as detailed in this report.

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Background

Catcliffe Glass Cone is situated in the village of Catcliffe and is the oldest surviving structure of its type in Western Europe so has particular significance for Rotherham. It is a Grade 1 listed building and Scheduled Ancient Monument. The cone was part of the Catcliffe Glassworks, which was established in 1740 by William Fenney. The glassworks closed during the 1880s with a brief revival in 1900. It was purchased by Rotherham Rural District Council (predecessor of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council) in the 1960s. A sheltered housing scheme was built at a later date surrounding the cone.

Rotherham Council, therefore, has a two-fold duty of care for this site. Firstly, it is responsible for ensuring that the residents of the sheltered housing scheme that surround the Cone can access their homes safely. Secondly, it is responsible for the preservation of the Cone as a Listed Building and Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The upper 20 courses of brickwork to the Glass Cone have decayed to the point where their structure has become unsound. The Cone was closed to the public in 2006 and the following year a full conservation assessment was carried out by Paul Hewitt, Architect, which summarised that an overall budget for the works (at a projected date of 2009-2010) was £641,000. A detailed report was produced.

This report did importantly advise that some emergency repair works are needed to the top of the Cone where due to water ingress and exposure to the elements the upper course of brickwork has become loose. The upper sections of the brickwork also need to be replaced and re-pointed.

It is vital that Rotherham Heritage Services progresses this work and meetings have taken place with the Conservation Architect, Paul Hewitt and Neil Redfern from English Heritage to establish how the work should be progressed.

Due to the nature of the work that needs to be undertaken, it is essential it takes place as soon as possible on health and safety grounds and before the weather deteriorates.

Heritage Services have worked with the Conservation Architect, Paul Hewitt in the past on several projects including the refurbishment of Clifton Park Museum and the restoration of Boston Castle, which have been very successful and his work has been exemplary. It is therefore recommended that the contract for this work be awarded to Paul Hewitt, conservation architect.

8. Finance

A total of £47,194 had been previously approved from the capital expenditure programme to carry out this essential health and safety work and is still committed to this work.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

If this work is not undertaken, it will pose a serious health and safety risk to nearby local residents, as well as visitors to the site and will continue to further deteriorate. Rotherham Council would be liable.

If the work is not overseen by the Conservation Architect, it is likely that the Council would breach the relevant legislation with regard to the Cone's grade 1 listed status as well as an Ancient Monument. English Heritage would also not allow the work to progress unless the Conservation Architect is involved.

Rotherham Council's reputation may also be damaged if the work is not undertaken and be criticised for not preserving this significant structure.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

This contributes to the corporate target of 'Helping to create safe and healthy communities' and in particular with regard to 'People feel safe and happy where they live'. It also contributes to the outcome that 'People enjoy parks, green spaces, sport, leisure and cultural activities'.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Consultation has taken place since 2008 internally with colleagues in Asset Management, Neighbourhoods and Adult Services, as well as Resources (Finance). Externally, consultation has taken place with English Heritage, Paul Hewitt and members of the public living in the sheltered housing scheme.

Contact Name: Lisa Broadest, Manager, Heritage Services
Tel: (01709) 336623. Email: lisa.broadest@rotherham.gov.uk