

Report of Head of Museums and Galleries

Report to Chief Officer Culture and Sport

Date: 3 July 2017

Subject: Remedial conservation and collections management assistance at Armley Mills on the Designated Industrial Collections.

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Appendix number:		

Summary of main issues

1. Leeds Museums and Galleries have funding from Arts Council England through the Major Partner Museum programme which is to be used for the conservation of collections and improvement of collections storage and display.
2. Following the severe Boxing Day 2015 floods at Armley Mills we have been working with an outside contractor, I.D. Howitt's Ltd in challenging and difficult circumstances to arrest decay of objects, to get the site back to where it was prior to the flood and to improve it further for the benefit of visitors. Due to the nature of the work we are not able to carry out this work in-house and require assistance.
3. We propose to continue to engage I.D. Howitt's Ltd to carry out remedial conservation work to items affected by the flooding, to assist us to develop the site further by improving collections items, storage and display. We have tried to find other contractors to undertake this kind of work and the field is extremely limited in this specialist area of industrial collections moves and restoration; we have not been able to find any other contractors who are able to quote for or undertake this work.

Recommendations

1. The Chief Officer of Culture and Sport is recommended to approve the waiver of Contracts Procedure Rule No 8.1 and 8.2 - Intermediate Value Procurements (Quotations) to allow for the appointment of I.D. Howitt's Ltd.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide information on the proposed appointment of I.D. Howitt's Ltd. to assist with remedial conservation following the floods and assist with improving collections storage and display at Armley Mills without undergoing a tendering process and gain approval for proceeding.

2. Background information

- 2.1 Leeds Museums and Galleries have four designated collections – Fine Arts, Decorative Arts, Natural Sciences and Industrial History. The Designation scheme administered by Arts Council England on behalf of the government recognises the national and international status of collections held outside the national museums. Armley Mills holds the majority of the Designated Industrial Collections.
- 2.2 The flooding at Armley Mills on Boxing Day 2015 covered the site with large quantities of water, silt and debris, moving large pieces of collection across the site. This has left a legacy of issues with water and silt sitting in objects causing decay from the inside which we need to arrest and items located in inaccessible places. Whilst we have carried out much of this work there are still some areas that need addressing.
- 2.3 In a climate of austerity there has been limited investment and maintenance of collections at Armley over the past few years; the flooding has added to these issues and has brought into focus the state of the collections stored outside especially. We would like to arrest decay and cosmetically restore a number of items improving the overall look of the site, improving collection care, long term preservation and access to the Designated collections at Armley Mills. In this instance we intend to allocate up to £20,000 to the project. This will include:
- 1) Clearing quadrangle = £2300
 - 2) Jubilee Shed works = £3500
 - 3) Restoration of small wagons = £3000
 - 4) Crane restoration = £9000
 - 5) Contingency = £2200

3. Main Issues

3.1 Reason for Contract Procedure Rules Waiver/Invocation

The situation at Armley Mills is not easy or straight forward, with many access and Health & Safety issues to be considered as well as the large nature of works and the need for significant heavy lifting equipment and specialist engineering knowledge to carry out the proposed works. We have built up a good working relationship with I.D. Howitt's Ltd team on site. They are aware of all the issues and are exceedingly capable undertaking works to a very high standard and have all the requisite qualifications to use large moving and lifting equipment. They have been working to improve the situation at Armley since being called on in the immediate aftermath of the flooding in an emergency situation. We would like to continue to work with them as we feel they are uniquely placed both with the engineering knowledge and understanding of the specific issues around working

with objects which are part of a Designated collection coupled with the heavy lifting and H&S expertise.

4. Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 This work will improve access to collection items and enable greater engagement by visitors on site.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 We are trying to improve access to collections for all by moving items, restoring and interpreting collections. This is impossible for us to undertake this work with staff on site given the large and heavy nature of the material concerned.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 Spending Money Wisely. The cost of this work is being recovered by funding from Arts Council England Major Partner Museum programme. No LCC funding is required.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 We believe this is the most cost effective solution.

4.4.2 We have tried to find other contractors to undertake this kind of work in the past and the field is extremely limited in this specialist area of industrial collections moves and restoration.

4.4.3 We have not been able to find any other contractors who are able to undertake or quote for this work.

4.4.4 Value for money is sought here by working with a local firm who are trusted and work to an extremely high standard.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 The Chief Procurement Officer has previously advised that it would be lawful for the Council to waive Contracts Procedure Rule 8.1 and 8.2 in these circumstances, provided that the Chief Officer of Culture and Sport is satisfied that there are compelling reasons to do so.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The supplier has a proven track record with us and has already supplied high quality service to budget, to time and to the standard we require.

5. Conclusions

5.1 The appointment of this contractor represents the best value for money and will improve the site and collections at Armley Mills, providing our visitors with a better quality visitor experience.

6. Recommendations

6.1 The Chief Officer, Culture and Sport is recommended to approve the waiver of Contracts Procedure Rule No 8.1 and 8.2 - Intermediate Value Procurements (Quotations) to allow for the appointment of I.D. Howitt's Ltd.

7. Background documents¹

7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.