

2020.09.08

12 Deputy G.J. Truscott of St. Brelade of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the contract to maintain the Railway Walk: (OQ.214/2020)

No, it is crystal clear, Sir, thank you. Given that the contract to maintain the Railway Walk expired at the end of October 2019, will the Minister explain why this contract thus far has not been extended and indicate when he intends to invite tenders for it?

Deputy K.C. Lewis (The Minister for Infrastructure):

The maintenance contract for the Railway Walk that the Deputy refers to has in fact been extended on a monthly basis and is continuing to operate normally. Subject to limitations that COVID restrictions have placed on all our landscape contracts, a new type of landscape maintenance contract has been prepared by this department and this will be applied to all G.H.E. contracts once it has passed the necessary checks and balances. This is based on U.K. standard form of contract for landscape maintenance work, the J.C.L.I. (Joint Council for Landscape Industries) contract and the U.K. standard specification and the landscape specification. The new contract has been adapted to Jersey law and passed as a compliance by the Law Officers and has also been checked over and approved as health and safety compliant. It is now awaiting procurement checks and once these are completed it is hoped that the new contract will be out to tender via the portal in the first quarter of 2021. Until then the contract will be extended under the existing terms.

4.12.1 The Connétable of St. Brelade:

Can I ask the Minister whether he expects that the public perception of the maintenance of the Railway Walk will be improved by the issuing of a new contract? Because I can assure him the present perception of the maintenance is not high.

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

I am not quite sure what the question was there but obviously with the new contract there will be more terms and conditions applied and that standards will be very, very high. This will be down to our senior engineers to monitor.

The Connétable of St. Brelade:

I thank the Minister.

4.12.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Will this new contract take into consideration - and can he assure Members that it will - aspects of the living wage by subcontractors engaged by his department?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

I do not have the fine details but that is something I would support.

4.12.3 Deputy G.J. Truscott:

I thank the Minister for his reply. I am extremely disappointed that nothing really seems to have happened since the beginning of the year. Since the lockdown the track has been used quite extensively and the state of the Railway Walk has deteriorated somewhat. In my reply to my Written Question 280 in 2019 regarding maintenance of the Railway Walk, the Minister stated there was to be a significantly revised and updated contract that was to go out for retendering at the

beginning of the year. Why has it taken this long to get things moving? Could the Minister also explain that the money set aside for the contract, is it still there for future work?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Yes. As I have just pointed out, the existing contract has been extended to the contractor. I agree, I also want the Railway Walk to be kept in a very high state, both for locals and tourists. It is one of our jewels in the crown. For people cycling from west to east or vice versa, it is a wonderful facility that we have inherited. I do want it maintained to a very high standard and I will be impressing that on the new contractors, as well as the old ones.