

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE
POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. JOHN**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 5th APRIL 2005

Question

Would the President advise members of the amount spent by the Waterfront Enterprise Board Ltd. on maintenance of the steam clock since it was commissioned, giving a breakdown of the running cost year on year, together with details of the annual cost of maintaining the garden area near and around the steam clock?

Answer

The steam clock and the surrounding public gardens and landscaped areas were designed to compliment the Maritime Museum and were commissioned in 1997.

The original concept was determined working in partnership with the Jersey Heritage Trust which, in addition to the public art, was keen to establish an outdoor area in which static outdoor displays could be mounted by the Trust from time to time. The bulk of the expenditure was funded by a grant from the Tourism Investment Fund with the balance being funded by the Waterfront Enterprise Board Limited (WEB) who also managed the project.

The surrounding gardens were commissioned mindful of the above objectives but also in a long term yet temporary format in anticipation of further development of the site in the future. As a consequence of this, trees are planted in free standing planting boxes.

When the project was commissioned the intention was for the Jersey Heritage Trust to take possession on completion and to assume responsibility for ongoing maintenance and running costs but in the event this never occurred and WEB took on these commitments by default.

As might be expected the maintenance of a steam engine, which was fabricated based upon historically authentic components, is a fairly specialised and labour intensive affair. The average annual costs of maintaining the steam clock in the period from 1998 to the end of 2004 was £14,000 per annum.

The running costs in the same period averaged £6,000 per annum.

The annual cost of maintaining the garden areas was £7,750 per annum.

In the period a further £17,354 was spent on landscaping and planter repairs and replacements and from the year 2000 onwards the provision of a Christmas tree and other festive decorations.

Members will be aware that the fundamental spending review led to a decision to phase out grants to WEB by the end of 2006. In response to this the Company has taken a number of steps to reduce its estate management expenditure in ways that have the least possible impact on the provision of public service and amenity in the areas under its administrative control.

The review coincided with the specialist steam engine maintenance company used by WEB to date going out of business and so the steam clock was one high cost facility that was carefully reviewed. In essence the steam workings have been replaced with electrical fittings designed to provide the same functionality including the blowing of 'steam' at the appropriate times of the day. The cost of these fittings amounted to £2,717.

The result of these changes is to leave the public with essentially the same amenity but to reduce the annual maintenance costs by an estimated £16,000 per annum.

