

Minutes of a Public Meeting

held on Tuesday 15th January 2013 at 7.00 pm
in the Village Hall Linton on Ouse

Present

B Marston (Chairman Parish Council), M Croft (Vice Chairman Parish Council), County Councillor G Dadd (Member of N.Y.C.C. responsible for Highways), County Councillor Patmore, District Cllr. Rooke, N. Smith (Area 2 N.Y.C.C. Highways Manager), Representative of Messrs Jacobs, (Contract Managers), W. Frost (Parish Clerk), and some 45 members of the public.

Introduction

Cllr. Marston explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the contract for the repair of the Kyle Bridge and other matters concerning Highways that materially affected the parish of Linton on Ouse. He then introduced the various members of the team attending the meeting. Cllr. Dadd spoke generally about the work of the Highways team and the budget available to the County for road maintenance and introduced N Smith.

Report

Mr. Smith gave details of the work entailed following damage to the road structure at the Kyle Bridge. The integrity of approx 130 metres of highway had been compromised by the flood in late September with areas of road totally washed away and gas, B.T. and water services exposed. The road was of considerable age and was not to modern standards, however initial inspections had not indicated the seriousness of the damage and it was not until a full survey was undertaken that the extent of damage was determined. It proved necessary to pile the sides of the road with 9 metre piles to reinforce the integrity of the road, which had cost a six figure sum. Further problems had occurred on the 26th November 2013 when a second flood had caused damage to materials already laid. This meant that some 600-1000 tonnes of material had to be removed from the work completed and replaced, which led to further delays. Between Christmas and New Year further water ingress delayed the contract even further and although it had been hoped to open the route by means of single track with traffic light control before Christmas this had not been possible. Mr. Smith finally confirmed that there would be further delays and the scheduled target of the bridge reopening on the 21st January would be missed because it was not possible to lay the tarmac surface at the moment because of low ground temperatures and until current temperatures increased it would not be possible to carry out further work.

Response by Public

The Public were then invited to comment. The principle concerns expressed by the public were that at no time did it appear that N.Y.C.C. had given priority to the contract and that many of the delays could have been avoided if more personnel had been employed on site and those who were on site had been gainfully employed during all of their working hours. Also that greater supervision to the contract had been given at a senior level throughout the contract. Many speakers expressed their anger that when they had visited the site at various times they had observed contractors either sitting in their vehicle or even asleep. In most instances only three or four contractors were on site at any one time. Many visits had been made during week-ends when it appeared that no one was working on site, despite assurances that the contractors were working seven days a week. Michael Keegan, a Linton resident, succinctly expressed the concerns over the lack of progress to loud applause. Mr. Smith commented that he was unaware of the lack of work on a week-end as he believed that work was proceeding on a seven day basis and he would investigate the comments made by the public.

Speakers also raised the problems of the diversion route into and out of the village during the bridge work and the appalling damage to the highway along the route, the lack of meaningful signage both in the initial stages and subsequently. Mr. Smith assured those attending that this would be dealt with once work on the bridge was completed. Other matters raised included the flooding of the highway at Linton Woods Lane end and the lack of support from Highways concerning damaged drains in the area of the flooding. Cllr. Rooke explained at length the action he was already taking and what he believed was necessary by N.Y.C.C. to resolve the problem.

Following close questioning Mr. Smith informed the meeting that before the bridge could reopen there was approximately seven days work to allow traffic, controlled by lights to use the bridge and then another 7-10 days work to finalise the contract. The work necessary was entirely dependent on ground temperatures being higher than at present, so that the road surface could be laid.

Chairman's Closing Remarks

Cllr. Marston thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.35pm.