

2017.11.14

2.8 Deputy G.P. Southern of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding the Tunnell Street access to the Millennium Town Park: [1(606)]

Given the statement of St. Helier's Director of Technical Services in the Parish Roads Committee's minutes of 18th December 2013, that rising bollards around the Tunnell Street access to the Town Park had been "removed by T.T.S. (Transport and Technical Services) due to the cost", how does the Minister justify his response to my written question on 10th October 2017 that "all decisions and implementation work on these roads were undertaken by the Parish"?

Deputy E.J. Noel (The Minister for Infrastructure):

Firstly, I need to point out that it is quite clear from the minutes that T.T.S. representatives were not present at the Roads Committee meeting. Therefore, it is hard for us to explain why this statement in 2013 was made to the Roads Committee by the St. Helier Director of Technical Services. The 18th December 2013 minutes the Deputy quotes are from the 'A' agenda minutes. Those minutes show that the Parish Roads Committee discussion was in the context of a later modification to the footpaths to the far-eastern end of Tunnell Street, being the St. Saviour's Road end, outside Ruellan's Garage, and is part of a refurbishment project. This is after the park had already been opened for some 2 years and the Parish Tunnell Street pavement works were complete. The decisions made by the Parish Roads Committee in restricting traffic to Tunnell Street are not clear or part of public record. In trying to understand, and to answer the Deputy's question, my officers have written to the Parish to seek sight of the Roads Committee's confidential 'B' agenda, but they were denied. For context, the Parish did not impose any restrictions to traffic on Tunnell Street until January 2016, some 3 years later, when a 'no through' regulatory traffic signage scheme was implemented by the Parish in conjunction with - and forgive my pronunciation here - the La Raccourchet. This is some 6 years after the Parish consultation on measures to control access and 5 years after the park had opened. The Parish knew before the park opened in October 2011 that the States would not be paying for any traffic management measures on Parish-owned roads other than that set out by the T.T.S. Director of Infrastructure and Engineering in the discussions with the Parish.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Minister, if you can bring your answer to a close, please.

Deputy E.J. Noel:

I will complete shortly. I have included the correspondence on the funding discussions with the Parish in my written answer. I stand by my answer that my department does not have any jurisdiction over Tunnell Street or Robin Place. The Parish of St. Helier Roads Committee is the responsible authority and is the only body that can direct changes to its roads layout or operation and implementation work on the roads was undertaken by the Parish.

2.8.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

A supplementary? May I draw attention to the minutes reproduced in his written answer by the Minister? On 27th September 2011 he writes: "I have met with our Minister, Assistant Minister and T.T.S. Chief Officer and we were happy with the solution we discussed in T.T.S. that they would pay full park remediation and full park construction [*et cetera*] but that the Parish will fund all the remaining works in Robin Place, including the laying of the granite cobbles, the street lighting and the rising bollard. We will arrange the transfer of granite materials to your Parish yard in due

course”, *et cetera, et cetera*. “Trust this confirms our discussion and I would appreciate your confirmation of the above.” That was not received. On 4th October ...

The Deputy Bailiff:

Deputy, we do have to come to a question.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

If I may? It is factual.

The Deputy Bailiff:

It still has to come to a question.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

The reply obtained was: “The board were not supportive of paying the rising bollard in Robin Place as they saw this as an integral part of the park project.” So no agreement was reached and yet the department pulled the funding on this particular aspect, is that not the case?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

As my written response clearly shows, that unfortunately in this instance the Deputy has misunderstood or misread the information provided.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Do you have a final supplementary, Deputy Southern?

Deputy M. Tadier:

May I ask ...

The Deputy Bailiff:

Well, yes, if you wish to come in first, you put your light on in time. So, Deputy Tadier, then Deputy Southern, a final supplementary.

2.8.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

Does the Minister deny that his department decided not to proceed with the bollards and that was because of cost reasons?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

I can only repeat, and I know it is against Standing Orders, that my department does not have any jurisdiction over Tunnell Street or Robin Place. The only roads authority that has jurisdiction over that is the Parish Roads Committee. It is very clear from the minutes and from the information that I put out in the public domain in the written answer that the States of Jersey were not going to fund, apart from the supply of some granite, any of the works carried out on the Parish roads of Tunnell Street and Robin Place.

2.8.3 Deputy M. Tadier:

I will ask a supplementary again, but it is the same question. Given the fact that written answer 21 states from the Parish Roads Committee meeting: “It was still the intention to designate road access only at the start of the park but plans for the bollards have been removed by T.T.S. due to the cost.” Now a very simple question, yes or no, does the Minister deny that statement that it was his department that decided not to proceed with the bollards because of cost?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

That statement is incorrect. My department was never going to fund the works on Tunnell Street and Robin Place other than to supply some granite to the Parish. The Parish Roads Committee took the decisions that they made based on whatever discussions they had in their 'B' minutes. We asked them to give us sight of those minutes so we could answer the questions today, and they declined.

2.8.4 Deputy G.P. Southern:

In the light of that statement, could the Minister confirm that in 2012 his department had a contingency of £500,000 from the Town Park project and that was returned to the Minister for T.T.S. and the Housing rolling votes as the project, they say, was complete and did not encounter any significant issues? Does he accept that failure to agree what happened in Tunnell Street was a significant issue?

Deputy E.J. Noel:

No, those funds were transferred as a contingency for the building of the Town Park, not for the roads surrounding the Town Park. That was always clear; the Council of Ministers made it perfectly clear. It is in the written submission that I made public today that it was for the Parish to fund the works on their own roads. They were the masters of their own destiny in this situation.