

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY - 19 JANUARY 2012

QUESTION FOR PORTFOLIO HOLDER **UNDER STANDING ORDER NO.20**

Question from Cllr Mrs Thompson for the Portfolio Holder – Sustainable Development and Transport

With reference to Exhibition Way bridge as per Appendix 2 of the Agenda, I note £45,000 has been earmarked for maintenance to ensure the structure over the railway is safe. As this bridge has a locked gate preventing unrestricted vehicular access, please could the Portfolio Holder advise if the bridge is currently capable of supporting all types of vehicles, i.e. fairground, agricultural etc.

If in due course Exhibition Way extended into Eastern Fields as part of a scheme for residential development at the Old Brickworks (should planning permission be granted by the City Council), would this £45,000 maintenance make the bridge structure suitable for this increased vehicular use?

Is ECC responsible for the total cost of keeping this bridge in good repair as part of an agreement with Network Rail or do Network Rail have some liability?

Answer

Councillor Sutton, as Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development and Transport responded to the question stating that the Exhibition Way Bridge was sound and the capacity suggested for vehicles is up to 40 tonnes.

Clearly further changes have to be made if the link road to the Old Brickworks site is developed. The £45,000 would be used for routine maintenance only. There is currently cycle access, but if any new development went ahead then the road layout would need to be changed. Devon County Council would still have to agree any firm proposals on this. It is the responsibility of the City Council to ensure the Exhibition Way Bridge is kept in good order.

Councillor Mrs Thompson asked an additional question as to “what would bring the bridge up to acceptable standard and was the City Council engaged with Devon County Council on what the adoptable standard should be”?

Councillor Sutton replied that there were no firm proposals for the bridge as planning permission had yet to be granted for the Old Brickworks site and any subsequent approval for the link road. She did not know about the adoption standards, but it related to highway layout rather than bridge strength.