

2.12 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains of the Minister for Transport and Technical Services regarding the cost and quality of the recent road re-surfacing at Brig y Don:

Would the Minister advise of the cost of the recent road resurfacing at Brig y Don? Whether it was completed to any known standard, e.g. B.S. (British Standard) standard and whether he is satisfied with the result?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services):

The final cost of the road resurfacing and strengthening works at La Route de la Côte was £111,500. I am pleased to report to the Assembly that only recently I was privileged to be in the company of the Deputy of St. Ouen as we drove along it in the Deputy's very large executive limousine [Laughter] and it may have been the luxurious comfort of the seats but both of us remarked on what a significant improvement to the road had taken place. In the second element of the Deputy's question, when specifying resurfacing works the department applies Britain's national standards for highway works, which is known as the Specification for Highway Works and in accordance with department standard practice, upon completion of a resurfacing project, a formal joint inspection of the works with the contractor is undertaken and a record of defects, called a snagging list is compiled. The defects identified on this snagging list must then be rectified by the contractor within a 12-month defect correction period. I can inform the Deputy that the department has identified already one or 2 areas of concern where we feel that the works may not conform with the tolerances it set out so I am slightly conflicted in that I have enjoyed driving along the road. So, I am satisfied with the general result but then I cannot say that I am also satisfied because I know that there will be advice telling me that there are some defects that need to be corrected.

2.12.1 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:

Obviously, the car in which he was travelling had some superior form of suspension because I [Laughter] have had a number of complaints from parishioners that driving along this stretch of road is somewhat akin to a cobbled street. From personal experience I can say that the resurfaced road is not as smooth as the old road that it adjoins, and I wonder if the Minister could explain why that is?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

Well, it may be that I had been lulled into a false sense of security by luxury transport but I can assure the Deputy and his constituents that the department is in the process of carrying out this formal inspection and I am certain that if, as he says, the road is more akin to a cobbled street that will indeed be rectified. Although I have to say to his constituents - and I regret this - the period of time for corrections to be made is a 12-month period so it may not be something we will be addressing in short order.

Deputy I.J. Gorst of St. Clement:

Perhaps I could make a suggestion to the Minister and his department could see their way clear to issuing my parishioners with BMWs themselves with which to traverse this road so they will not feel the bumpiness.

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

I think I should have to refer the Deputy's constituents to the Deputy of St. Ouen who I am sure must know a very good car dealer.

2.12.2 Deputy C.J. Scott Warren:

While I applaud the fact there are more funds than was the case years ago for road resurfacing works, I would like the Minister to give the House an assurance that there will be funds; that he will work hard to find the funds which the Minister now says is no longer in the budget for minor traffic works. I would like him to give that assurance, Sir?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

It is quite ironic that Deputy Scott Warren asks that question because of course one of the reasons that the department's funds have been depleted over recent times has been her own legislation on planning and appeals. I regret that, like any other Minister, I can give no such assurance because as the Assembly well knows, my business plan is ultimately in the hands of the Assembly itself. Frankly, if Members do not vote enough money either for major road improvements, small road improvements, waste disposal, sewerage treatment works, sea defence works, then I regret that I simply cannot come out with the goods because I do not have the cash.

2.12.3 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:

I thank the Minister for his answers and could I just ask him that when he does revisit the quality of the road surface, could he look not only at the manholes - some of which are causing a slight difficulty - but also there are one or 2 stretches which have a ripple effect in them?

Deputy G.W.J. de Faye:

I can confirm to the Deputy that those are the issues that I am aware of and I am sure that we will find a way of addressing them.