

RECEIVED

Mr. E.T. Wilde.

PAC(4) MTR124
Ymateb gan Mr. Wilde
Response From Mr. Wilde

5 JAN 2015

27th December 2014.

Darren Millar, Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee,
National Assembly for Wales.

Dear Mr. Millar,

Subject: Formal Complaint of serious maladministration.

Please find attached a copy of my complaint letter and report which I have lodged with the Auditor-General for Wales.

The contents are self-explanatory and I would be most grateful if you will arrange for your Committee to examine the matter on a priority basis given the high level of grave public concern.

Please arrange for the prompt acknowledgement of this letter in order to reassure me of safe receipt.


Yours sincerely,


E.T. Wilde.

COPY

Mr. E.T.Wilde.

27th December 2014.

Huw Vaughan Thomas, Auditor-General for Wales,


Dear Mr. Vaughan Thomas,

Subject: FORMAL COMPLAINT OF SERIOUS MALADMINISTRATION
BY PUBLIC DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED IN THE
RECONFIGURATION OF THE A470 TRUNK ROAD AND ITS
A494 AND A493 JUNCTIONS, DOLGELLAU, GWYNEDD.

I present this formal complaint and the appended report, in the public interest, for your scrutiny, investigation and actions as appropriate.

My report is derived from facts and information which I have gathered from various sources including discussions with officials from public departments involved as well as the Press, road users (resident and visitors) and my personal experiences as a road user.

I have annexed various relevant press cuttings to assist with background understanding.

The consequential effects of this maladministration include serious jeopardy to public safety including the loss of life for at least two road users together with the scandalous wastage of public funds and the prospect of further costs to the public purse at a time of continuing austerity,

Clearly there is a need for urgent remedial action not least to safeguard public safety but I am not seeking the Auditor-Generals intervention in this regard since this would not be appropriate. These issues which I have referred to in my report, are being addressed in other ways and indeed are the subject of at least two public petitions. My chief concerns relate to how and why the problem arose in the first place, and how those responsible can be held to account for the consequences.

I have not found it easy to obtain information from public departments involved, often finding myself going round in circles and gaining the impression of them being economical with the truth.

The public has the right to expect that those publicly funded posts responsible for decision making, have the aptitude, knowledge and experience which is fit for purpose including those responsible for designing road layouts including those to whom such responsibility has been 'contracted out'.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course. Please arrange for this letter to be acknowledged urgently to reassure me of safe receipt.

Yours sincerely,

E.T.Wilde.

cc. Darren Millar, Chairman, Public Accounts Committee, National Assembly Wales

REPORT ON THE DISASTROUS RECONFIGURATION
OF THE A470 TRUNK ROAD AT DOLGELLAU AND THE
A493 AND A494 JUNCTIONS.

BACKGROUND.

The original layout was in place since 1981 and for 33 years there have been public calls for roundabouts to be installed.

At least one Gwynedd Councillor has blamed the Snowdonia National Park Authority Planning Committee for obstructing the installation of roundabouts. In my discussion with the Parks Head of Planning, this was denied.

There is little evidence of any meaningful public consultation by Gwynedd Council or the Trunk Road Agency regarding the new road layout installed in April 2014.

It is disturbing that North Wales Police apparently made no particular objection to the new road layout. In my conversation with a Police Road Safety Officer, I was informed that whilst that Officer shared the popular view that a roundabout (s) would be preferable, he was 'persuaded' to support the design due to the 'precedent' of that design elsewhere.

It is not known if any official motoring organisation was asked for their view.

THE APRIL 2014 COMPLETION OF THE NEW LAYOUT/RECONFIGURATION.

It was with SHOCK AND HORROR that the motoring public whether they were local or visitor, commercial or private had their first experience of the LUDICROUS AND DANGEROUS layout.

The CRITICISM AND CONDEMNATION has/are still is UNIVERSAL.

It is INCONCEIVABLE that such a layout could be implemented without instant recognition of its FUNDAMENTAL FLAWS. Moreover, that such a design could be produced AT GREAT PUBLIC EXPENSE by those so-called 'professionals' overseen by 'managerial layers, is a NATIONAL DISGRACE.

Within weeks ACCIDENTS AND NEAR ACCIDENTS WERE HAPPENING INCLUDING TWO FATALITIES.

The situation was so bad that EMERGENCY TEMPORARY TRAFFIC LIGHTS WERE INSTALLED AT THE A494 JUNCTION, in order to CANCEL OUT/OVERRIDE a scheme which had cost the Taxpayer HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF POUNDS.

There is wide public agreement that the ordinary man or woman in the street with a modicum of common sense could see that the design was at best CONFUSING TO THE ROAD USER and reflecting such a lack COMPETENCE in terms of its conception.

Public petitions have been lodged with the Assembly

RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

There has not been a rush of those who have taken part in the fiasco, wishing to come forward and accept blame. Gwynedd Council were quick to tell me that "it was nothing to do with them" but rather the Assembly Government and its Trunk Roads Agency. The Agency disclaimed responsibility for the

'flawed design' since that work was put out to "EXTERNAL CONSULTANCY"

We begin to see the disfunctional bureaucratic forces at work here especially when we discover that the consultants were in fact "GWYNEDD CONSULTANCY", a creature of Gwynedd Council. In my conversation with the Head of that Consultancy, it is confirmed that they were indeed commissioned to design the road layout but declined to accept any responsibility for its flaws. They justify their perceived impunity on the grounds that they were simply following the Trunk Roads Agency "brief". They did of course confirm that they were paid a fee for the 'piece of consultancy which in turn is paid by the TAXPAYER. It is not known if the work was subject to tender or favour.

I am well aware of the burden on the public purse through gratuitous use of external consultancy by publicly funded bodies and I have read the N.A.O papers on the subject.

In the early days, the employment of external consultants was seen as 'fashionable' though not necessarily matched by usefulness or value for money. Nowadays it is employed routinely, often frivolously in support of disfunctional and inept bureaucracy.

The public is in effect 'double-funding' public posts. We really cannot afford to have the managerial layers 'snap' their fingers to summon a consultant to do their thinking for them.

Whilst we do not expect the Trunk Road Agency to have any expertise in duck farming, we do expect a high level of expertise and competence in Road design.

THE ROLE OF TRANSPORT MINISTER EDWINA HART.

The Minister has now said "We are using CCTV to monitor driver behaviour. This data will be analysed, OPTIONS FOR PERMANENT LAYOUTS WILL BE ASSESSED AND DESIGNS WILL BE COMPLETED THIS FINANCIAL YEAR". What an ABSURDITY. She (the Minister) ALLREADY authorised what was meant to be a PERMANENT LAYOUT which is the one we are talking about which was completed in April this year. Why did the Minister approve the April layout if it had not first been properly ASSESSED and CONSULTED UPON???? Why does she now say she will take account of the Police investigations when the Police did little or nothing to recognise the fundamental flaws which were blindingly OBVIOUS in the first place.?

CONCLUSIONS.

The whole business is SHAMEFUL and given the FATALITIES, it borders on CRIMINALITY. It is a DISGRACEFUL MISUSE OF PUBLIC FUNDS and DEMANDING A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION.

The North Wales PCC has NOW said he supports a re-engineering solution including a roundabout. What a pity he didn't wake up to the obvious from the start.

Our AM Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas has a lot to answer for having done absolutely nothing to condemn the scandal of what has happened. He has failed in his guardianship responsibility of Public funds on behalf of his constituents.

The Public look to the invigilance of the Auditor General and the Assembly Public Accounts Committee to protect them from wastefulness and incompetence and aboveall to bring to account those responsible.

PCC backs road safety solution

THE NORTH Wales Police and Crime Commissioner has backed a re-engineering solution to help make a junction on the A470 at Dolgellau safer.

Winston Roddick QC said at a meeting of his Police and Crime Panel at Conwy there appeared to be a serious accident pattern. Police had recommended a roundabout and re-engineering and he would add his weight to this.

Recently local people have demonstrated and demanded action at a spot where this year there have been two fatalities and several other incidents at the junction with the A494.

DAILY POST SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2014

GWYNEDD

Protests over killer junctions

CAMPAIGNERS are to stage a protest today to support calls for measures to make a busy road junction safer after two deaths.

There have been several serious accidents on the junction of the A470 and A494 in Dolgellau. Locals want proper safety measures installed before more crashes happen at the blackspot.

PAGE 14

Letters

Have your say, go to www.cambrian-news.co.uk/submit-your-letter **Big issue**

Dismayed to see only one Dolgellau councillor at protest

Madam,
I was dismayed to see only one Dolgellau town councillor at the A494 Junction protest on Saturday. Cllr John Raghoobar was the only member of the town council present. Cllr Raghoobar has been very supportive of the protest and has liaised with many parties to facilitate and carry forward the public objection messages to the road's current layout.

It is not acceptable to simply say that the junction has nothing to do with the town council.

As town councillors, they should have been representing the town and be seen to be doing so.

Indeed, the same must be said for the local county councillors - where were they? Cllr Louise Hughes from the neighbouring ward was the only Gwynedd

Council representative there.

As for the higher authorities and politicians - nowhere to be seen. And, let's be honest, it's not often that we do protest in Dolgellau. Maybe they don't need our votes either.

Just think next time you cross that fateful junction - what could you have done to help? Being at the protest last Saturday might have been a good place to start.

To all those who did attend, however, the police, the press, and those who kindly allowed parking on Gareth Jones farm fields - thank you.

The families of lost loved ones, and the injured, do appreciate your support.

Yours etc,
Andrew Evans,
A470 SOS Dolgellau
Facebook Team.

There's a serious lack of road control in county of Gwynedd

Madam,
After reading so much of the road disasters on the Dolgellau by-pass, I still have no idea of the events leading up to the tragedies. When I travelled on the original road, I was often overtaken, though my speed was around 50mph. Some tried to pass me just before the road narrowed. I don't regard this piece of road as a motorway, but as a means of not having to endure the slow progress through

the town. I notice some drivers still race along this stretch. There should have always been a 40mph limit - instead of, as usual, waiting for collisions, for safety measures to be introduced. I do notice there is a serious lack of road control in Gwynedd. I never fail to spot many violations on the highways.

Yours etc,
Chris Smith,
Bryn Deiliog,
Llanbedr.

Campaigners calling for roundabout at 'deadly' junction

Story continued from page one

"For 33 years people have been calling for roundabouts on that junction," said Cllr Hughes.

"As far as I'm aware it's been the reluctance of the national park's planning committee to allow roundabouts that has prevented them from being introduced.

"I understand that the ethos of the national park is to preserve the natural beauty of the landscape, but we're living in the 21st century and there's a lot more traffic on our roads and road safety is paramount.

"Road safety is more important than aesthetic considerations.

"Local people have been angry about this for decades now and there have been numerous, too many to count, near misses on that road.

"Since the opening of the new layout in April there have been two totally preventable deaths on the bypass.

"We've now gone from a dual carriageway to a single carriageway and the slipways have been removed.

"There are now white lines that are distracting to drivers. There's just too much going on."

Cllr Hughes is a member of the A470 SOS Dolgellau group and this

week one woman, who has been involved in an accident at the junction, took to the campaign's Facebook page to share her own experiences.

Linda Morrall wrote: "I would love to be able to come on the 29th.

"But I'm still recovering, unable to drive and scared s***less about travelling that way again. A journey by the way, that I had done frequently. I was visiting my dad on Father's Day.

"Didn't make it! I don't know if the accident by the letter of the law was down to me or not.

"I just knew that things weren't right. Things had changed. Things were confusing. No warning neither. Mine was the accident between the 2 fatalities at that junction."

The woman went on to explain how she had been affected since the accident.

She said: "I don't know if there is a God or not. But I thank him or whoever that I'm alive. Although my life has changed so much. And not for the better.

"I feel so much for those who lost their lives and their families. Something should be done permanently.



Cllr John Raghobar and Gwynedd Cllr Louise Hughes at the Bala junction of the Dolgellau bypass where many accidents have happened

"Putting temporary traffic lights there all well and good. But sort it out! I feel too scared to ever visit my dad again.

"He's 83 and I don't think he understands how I feel."

The A470 SOS Dolgellau protest takes place at the A494 Bala junction on Saturday, 29 November.

Protesters are asked to gather from 10am for an 11am start.

Parking will be available.

Public urged to support protest at 'killer junction'

ROAD safety campaigners are urging people to support a protest calling for the installation of a roundabout at a deadly junction.

Many are expected to gather at an accident blackspot at the A494 Bala junction of the A470 at Dolgellau to call for measures to be taken at the site of two fatal crashes this year.

Organisers have invited First Minister Carwyn

Jones, transport minister Edwina Hart and north Wales police commissioner Winston Roddick to attend the protest on Saturday, 29 November, and speak to concerned locals.

They are angry because they believe changes to the layout of the junction have made it more difficult to negotiate.

Louise Hughes, a Gwynedd councillor in the

neighbouring Llangelynnin ward, believes immediate action needs to be taken at the "killer junction".

She believes the bypass has been problematic since it was constructed in 1981 and that recent changes have made the situation worse.

→ Story continues on page 3

Cambrian News
20.11.14

CAMBRIAN NEWS 11.12.14

Roads are not fit for the 21st century, says AM

CALLS have been made for further study work to be carried out on pinch points and areas of accidents along the A470 in Dolgellau.

Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM believes many of the roads are not suitable for the 21st century, and need to be drastically improved.

His call comes in light of the petition raised by local campaigners concerned about road safety on the A470 bypass in Dolgellau.

Lord Elis-Thomas presented the petition, Changes to A494/A470 junction Dolgellau, to the National Assembly's Petitions Committee in September.

The committee have since been in correspondence with transport minister, Edwina Hart AM, who has confirmed she also shares her concerns about road safety on this



Protesters at the Bala Junction on the A470

by Kathryn Cummings

kathryn@cambrian-news.co.uk

part of the A470.

Mrs Hart said: "Following a number of serious collisions at the junction of the A470 and A494, we implemented temporary safety measures.

"We are now using CCTV to

monitor driver behaviour at two junctions, where the A470 meets the A493 and the A494.

"Once the data has been analysed, options for permanent layouts will be assessed and designs will be completed this financial year.

"Any results of police investigations into the collisions will also be used in the decision-making process."

Lord Elis Thomas said: "I welcome the minister's update on this issue, as it is a great cause for concern to the public and road users.

"I am also pleased to learn a CCTV system has been installed, enabling them to fully analyse the situation and driver behaviour.

"Many of the roads along the A470 were designed in the 1960s

and built in the 1970s, and are simply not suitable for the 21st century.

"I want to see the whole of the A470 improved so the route is of similar safety standard, reducing the risk of any further accidents.

"Improving road infrastructure of this kind is a very appropriate investment as the Welsh economy gradually moves out of austerity and into growth, especially for tourism and better transport connectivity within Wales and between Wales and English regions.

"I am pleased the minister has included this project before the end of the financial year, and I look forward to hearing more about the permanent measures that will hopefully start in April."

Protesters 'will continue the fight' for road safety

CAMPAIGNERS who are urging the Welsh Government to improve safety on a road near Dolgellau say they will continue to fight until there is change.

Protesters gathered at the junction of the A470 and A494 in Dolgellau on Saturday to call for improvements on the road, which has already seen two fatal accidents and a number of other incidents this year, which include installing a roundabout.

Among the group of around 40 campaigners, was Sharon Haddock, the widow of motorcyclist Kevin Haddock, who was killed along the road in July.

Cllr John Raghoobar said he was extremely pleased with the response to the protest but has lost his confidence in local politicians.

Organisers had invited First Minister Carwyn Jones, transport minister Edwina Hart, and north Wales police crime commissioner Winston Roddick to attend the protest.

Cllr Raghoobar said: "We need this road made safe for drivers by next April, before the busy season starts."

by Kathryn Cummings
kathryn@cambrian-news.co.uk

"We are going to keep the pressure on the Welsh Government until something is done, but unfortunately I have lost confidence in our local politicians. There will also be further protests at the site until something is done, we don't want any more lives being lost or any further injuries.

"I'd also like to thank the *Cambrian News* for all the support they have given our campaign."

Nigel Bulmer, from the Bikers Retreat in Dolgellau, has been warning bikers of this route and claims the design of the junction is fundamentally flawed.

He said: "I made concerns to the council on 25 April this year, before these fatal accidents happened.

"The design and in particular the markings on this junction are fundamentally flawed, and whoever designed it needs to be held accountable for the accidents that have happened on that road.



Sharon Haddock and family place flowers at the Bala Junction of the A470 when motorcyclist Kevin Haddock was killed at the spot in July

"There is no room for error on this junction; something needs to be done as soon as possible so I'm completely behind the local campaign.

"During my pep talk with the bikers each day before they go out, I always make them aware of this road and its dangers.

"It's something I never forget to

warn them about as it's that dangerous."

Thousands of people have already signed a petition calling for improvements to the road and the Facebook group, 'A470 SOS Dolgellau', has received over 2,600 'likes'.





Protesters at the Bala Junction on the A470 of the Dolgellau bypass



Protesters walk down the road to the Bala Junction to protest

Protesters 'will continue the fight' for road safety

Protest at car crash blackspot

By **ERYL CRUMP**

Daily Post Reporter
erylcrump@dailypost.co.uk

CAMPAIGNERS are to stage a protest today to support calls for measures to make a busy road junction safer.

There have been several serious accidents on the junction of the A470 and A494 in Dolgellau in recent months.

Two motorists have been killed and another seriously injured, and temporary traffic lights have been put in place.

But locals want the traffic lights removed and proper safety measures installed, with many worried more accidents could occur unless something is done soon.

The A470 SOS Dolgellau campaign was started in July and now has more than 2,600 followers. An online petition submitted to the Wales Government in July collected 1,288 signatures,

Calls for safety measures after deaths on junction

while a paper petition handed to Dwyfor Meirionnydd AM Dafydd Elis-Thomas had another 1,582 signatures.

Scores of people are expected to gather at the blackspot from 11am, including members of the late Kevin Haddock's family.

Mr Haddock, 56, was killed after his motorcycle collided with a car. When members of his family visited the scene of the accident a few days later to lay flowers there was another serious crash just yards away.

The accidents followed a crash between a car and a bin lorry which claimed the life of an 83-year-old man in May.

Linda Morrell, from Wallasey, who was involved in an accident at the junction in June, said: "I

would love to be able to come on the 29th. But I'm still recovering, unable to drive and scared about travelling that way again."

Organisers have invited First Minister Carwyn Jones and Transport Minister Edwina Hart to the protest, but both have said they have prior engagements.

In a letter to the campaign, Mrs Hart said: "We are using CCTV to monitor driver behaviour at two junctions, where the A470 meets the A493 and the A494.

"Once the data has been analysed, options for permanent layouts will be assessed and designs will be completed this financial year. Installation of permanent measures will start in April."

Mr. E.T. Wilde,



12th February 2015.

RECEIVED

16 FEB 2015

Darren Millar AM, Chair,
Public Accounts Committee,
National Assembly for Wales,
Cardiff Bay,
Cardiff CF99 1NA.

Dear Mr. Millar,
Subject: A470 Trunk Road, Dolgellau
Maladministration Complaint.

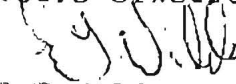
Thank you for your letter dtd. 20.1.15 and since receiving this, I have been busy trying to 'dig' deeper into the various issues.

I am pleased to hear of your Committee's interest and current inquiry into related matters and should you require it, I would be happy to share my experiences and involvement through your evidence gathering sessions. and make no apology for my relentlessness in rooting out inefficiency, wastefulness, extravagance, concealment, corruption or any wrongdoing or misuse of Public funds.

Please find attached copies of my letters to W.A.O and North Wales PCC which I hope you will find of interest.

A prompt acknowledgement of safe receipt of this letter together with your further comments will be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

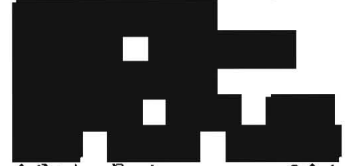

E.T. Wilde,

PS. 

In addition to the enclosures referred to above, I also enclose copy of recent 'Cambrian News' press article about further emergency temporary traffic lights at the A493 junction with the A470 which emphasises the dysfunctionality of the reconfigured Road layout.

COPY

Mr. E.T.Wilde,



12th February 2015.

Your Ref. AGWC/159/14/mjb

Matthew Brushett,



Dear Mr. Brushett,

Subject: A470 Trunk Road Dolgellau - Maladministration
Complaint (My letter dtd. 27.12.14.)

Following your letter dtd. 5.1.15 and our telephone conversation yesterday, I enclose a copy of a letter 20.1.15 which I received from the Minister, Edwina Hart. In this letter, the Minister confirms the inclusion of professional and experienced staff within her Network Management Division but that outside 'consultants' were appointed "to provide improvement options"

I have asked for clarification from Sheena Hague, Deputy director, Network Management Division, as to why it was necessary to appoint outside consultants, particularly given that they got it so disastrously wrong, and indeed information about criteria and levels of incidence for such actions. In relation to the Minister's reference to the Police being part of a "consultation" process, I have also asked Sheena Hague to provide me with any records/minutes which relate to this. I have asked for this because of the Police and Crime Commissioners' press statement that he supports a different engineering solution to the one the Police allegedly supported at the onset.

A copy of my letter to the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner dtd. 12.2.15 pertaining to this is attached.

Since lodging my complaint, I have observed that temporary emergency traffic lights have been installed at the A493 junction with the A470. This is in addition to the similar installation at the A494 Junction which in the interest of public safety has totally cancelled out the expensive so-called reconfiguration/layout installed at considerable public expense and overseen by so-called publicly funded "experts" ??.

Will you please ensure that this correspondence is immediately passed to the engagement team concerned and provide me with a prompt acknowledgement of safe receipt.

Yours sincerely,

E.T.Wilde.

cc. Darren Millar, Chair, Public Accounts Committee.

2014

Edwina Hart MBE CStJ AC / AM
Gweinïdog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy, Science and Transport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref EH/00214/15

Eric T Wilde



20 January 2015

Dear Mr Wilde,

Thank you for your query to my officials regarding the junction of the A470 with the A494 near Dolgellau. I am disappointed to learn that my officials failed to return your call prior to Christmas and I apologise for the delay in you receiving the information that you have requested.

As Minister for Transport, I have responsibility for the motorway and trunk road network in Wales. One of the teams in my department, Network Management Division, is responsible for overseeing the operation, maintenance and improvement of the network. The officials working in this team include professional and experienced transport engineers, project managers and specialist advisors.

The day to day delivery of our duties is delegated to the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent and the South Wales Trunk Road Agent who carry out maintenance work and delivery improvement schemes, by instruction, on our behalf.

We were due to undertake a road resurfacing scheme for Dolgellau bypass in 2014. However, as there was a collision history, particularly at the A494 junction with the A470, consultants were appointed to provide improvement options. Those options were discussed with officials, designers, agents and

the police and the recommendation was to improve the junctions in accordance with current design standards and guidance.

Following implementation of those measures there were a number of serious collisions at the A494 junction. Therefore, we implemented additional temporary safety measures while police investigations are underway. I fully appreciate the road safety concerns that local residents and their representatives have raised with me.

We have been using CCTV to monitor driver behaviour at two junctions, where the A470 meets the A493 and the A494, and data is now being analysed. Installation of permanent measures will start in April.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact Deputy Director of my Network Management Division, Sheena Hague, on telephone [REDACTED] or by email at [REDACTED].

Edwina Hart

COPY

Mr. E.T.Wilde,



12th February 2015.

Winston Roddick QC,



Dear Commissioner,

Subject: The disastrous re-configuration of the A470 Trunk Road at Dolgellau.

In the public interest, I have been conducting an investigation into the circumstances which brought about the adoption of a Road design layout which was fundamentally and obviously flawed despite the involvement of so called experts and a rather vague 'consultation' process which the Minister, Edwina Hart, informs me involved the Police.

I concluded, from all the evidence I had collected, that a serious maladministration had occurred by Public departments involved, which caused me to lodge a formal complaint to the Auditor General for Wales and the Welsh Governments Public Accounts Committee and should you and/or the Chief Constable so require, I am prepared to make a copy of my complaint and report available to you without prejudice to the investigations being conducted by W.A.O

You will be aware of the serious public safety issues arising since the new Road layout was opened including accidents and fatalities and I am aware from a press article (copy attached) that you now support an engineering solution which differs from the one apparently supported at the original design/consultation stage. I have asked the Minister to provide me with copies of any records/minutes which allude to this and I would greatly appreciate you co-operating with such provision from your own records.

I look forward to receiving your general comments in due course. Please arrange for this letter to be acknowledged promptly.

Yours sincerely,

E.T.Wilde.

Cambrian News Thursday 25 December 2014 5

PCC backs road safety solution

THE NORTH Wales Police and Crime Commissioner has backed a re-engineering solution to help make a junction on the A470 at Dolgellau safer.

Winston Roddick QC said at a meeting of his Police and Crime Panel at Conwy there appeared to be a serious accident pattern. Police had recommended a roundabout and re-engineering and he would add his weight to this.

Recently local people have demonstrated and demanded action at a spot where this year there have been two fatalities and several other incidents at the junction with the A494.

New set of traffic lights 'will just cause chaos'

A DOLGELLAU road safety campaigner has criticised the installation of a new set of traffic lights along the busy A470 bypass.

In the past year, a group of campaigners have been urging the Welsh Government to find a permanent solution to improve road safety on the Dolgellau bypass.

There have been four serious accidents on the A494 Bala junction of the A470 Dolgellau bypass since the layout was changed by the Welsh Government in April 2014 to improve safety.

In that time there have been two fatalities, two people seriously injured.

A petition was started, following the death of motorcyclist Kevin John Haddock, calling for a roundabout to be built urgently at the junction.

During December a protest was held at the junction calling for a permanent solution to make the road safer rather than install temporary traffic lights.

The Welsh Government has now installed a second set of traffic lights at the A493 Tywyn junction, which has been met with criticism.

Town councillor, John Raghoobar, who is also an avid campaigner for road safety along the town's bypass, said the new lights are expected to cause chaos for motorists.

He said: "We're opposed to temporary traffic lights on this road, we want a permanent solution and to see work on changing the road starting straight away."

"We haven't heard anything from the Welsh Government which is very concerning as the idea was to have the road done by the summer to help



Traffic control lights have now been placed at a second junction on the A470 Dolgellau bypass at the Tywyn junction following a spate of accidents

by Kathryn Cummings
kathryn@cambrian-news.co.uk

prevent any further accidents.

"These new lights are just going to cause chaos and cause tailbacks on the road.

"The Welsh Government really need to pull their finger out, the whole thing is a pantomime — if the Assembly can't come together to sort out two junctions on a main busy road then they should all resign."

Transport minister Edwina Hart AM said the temporary traffic lights were installed at the A493 junction

after CCTV footage showed examples of dangerous driver behaviour at the junction.

The minister has stressed that they are only a temporary measure until they decide upon the best permanent solution for both junctions in the area.

Cllr Raghoobar said the CCTV footage has proved to the Welsh Government that the road is unfit for drivers.

He said: "I'm certain the reason behind installing these traffic lights is because the Welsh Government has witnessed on these CCTV cameras how dangerous this junction is and how its not fit for purpose."

Dafydd Elis-Thomas supported the petition raised by local campaigners concerned about road safety on the A470 which is currently being considered by the National Assembly's Petitions Committee.

He said: "The initial review has clearly shown the need for better road safety measures on this part of the A470, and I look forward to hearing more about the permanent solutions that will be implemented at the A493 and A494 junctions."

"In the meantime, I hope that the temporary traffic measures will improve the current situation and make the road safer for everyone."

Copy

Mr. E.T.Wilde.

11th March 2015.

Huw Williams, Head,
Ympynghoriaeth Gwynedd Consultancy (YGC),
Gwynedd Council,
Shirehall Street,
Caernarfon, Gwynedd,
LL55 1SH.

RECEIVED

13 MAR 2015

Dear Mr. Williams,

Subject: Formal Complaint of serious maladministration
by Public Departments involved in the reconfiguration
of the A470 Trunk Road and its A493 & A494 Junctions
Dolgellau, Gwynedd.

I lodged the above complaint to the Wales Audit Office and Public Accounts Committee on the 27th December 2014 and I continue to liaise and assist those bodies in their investigations.

You are aware of the serious consequences of the fundamentally flawed design work with serious public safety implications not least the fatalities which have allready occured as well as the considerable inconvenience to the travelling public. Moreover, significant wastage of public funds has allready occured with the real prospect of further costs to the public purse through eventual remedial/corrective works.

I am not sure if you are in tune with the immense public sense of bewilderment that such an expensive project was completed through the supposed application of great 'expertise', only for it now having to be 'cancelled out' with the installation of temporary emergency traffic lights.

The Minister, Edwina Hart, has written to me (copy attached) clearly advising me of the prominent design role attributed to YGC and yet in our telephone conversation yesterday, you seem unwilling to acknowledge the actual dysfunctionality of your design work but rather to cite impedimenta imposed by the Assembly Government via NMWTRA viz the multiplicity of regulatory compliance requirements. You implied in our conversation that you were limited and impeded by these factors, to produce a safe and functional design.

A copy of my response letter to the Minister is attached. It is important that I fully and properly represent YGC role in this piece of consultancy work through my investigation work which I continue to share with WAO and PAC. It is understood that YGC has received payment from public funds for the services provided to this project.

Please provide me with as full account as possible as to your role and that of YGC in this serious matter.

Yours sincerely,

E.T.Wilde.

cc Dilwyn Owen Williams, Chief Executive, Gwynedd Council
Gareth James, Scrutiny & Member Support Manager, Gwynedd Council
Wales Audit Office

Public Accounts Committee, Assembly Government of Wales

copy

SWYDDFA COMISIYNYDD HEDDLU
A THROSEDD GOGLEDD CYMRU

OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER NORTH WALES

Mr E T Wilde

EIn Cyf / Our Ref: WR/JS/931
[FOI.2015.14]

3 March 2015

Dear Mr Wilde

A470 Trunk Road Dolgellau

Thank you for your letter dated 12 February 2015.

I must commend you in taking such an interest in this matter and I will try and assist you as much as I can.

I can confirm that the risk to road users at the A470 trunk road in Dolgellau has been discussed at one of my scrutiny meetings with the chief constable. At that meeting I was presented with information that satisfied me that the option of a roundabout at that junction was a practical option and although a roundabout may occasionally cause delays to road users, the safety of road users outweighed this concern.

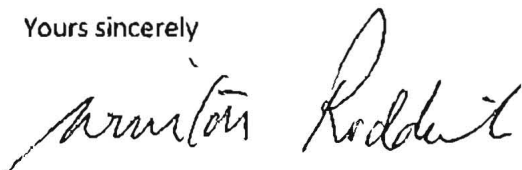
Following my scrutiny meeting with the chief constable I wrote to the Welsh Government expressing my concerns that the option of the roundabout had been dismissed too readily. I am pleased to say that I have received a response from the Welsh Government advising me that the option of a roundabout is still on the table and further advice should be available very soon.

I can see from your letter that you have asked the Welsh Government for records and minutes of their discussions regarding this matter and you wish to see a copy of our records. I do publish all the minutes from my scrutiny meetings and I will send you a copy of my records as soon as they are ready⁽¹⁾, in the meantime to aid your investigation I enclose a copy of the letter that I wrote to the Welsh Government dated 18 December and their response.

Thank you very much for writing to me, and I hope that my letter and record of my meeting will aid your investigation.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely

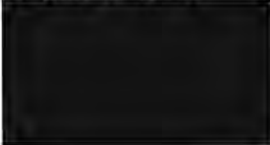


Winston Roddick CB QC
Police and Crime Commissioner

⁽¹⁾Section 22 Freedom of Information Act 2000
encs

copy

Edwina Hart AM



Ein Cyf / Our Ref:WR/GJ/867

18th December 2014

Dear

Re: Traffic conditions, A470 Dolgellau

I was pleased to note the recent change with regard to the funding arrangements for Go Safe. These are most welcome.

My main reason for writing is to express my serious concerns about the traffic conditions on the A470 Road, Dolgellau - specifically fatal road traffic collisions which have occurred at its junction with the A494 Bala Road on 7th October 2012, 23rd May 2014 and 5th July 2014. I understand that the matter is currently subject of Welsh Government investigation and consideration. I have received representations from local people with regard to the level of risk the location presents to road users.

In the course of scrutinizing the actions North Wales Police has taken with regard to the matter, I have been provided with the relevant documentation and briefing and I raised the matter recently at the strategic executive board meeting I hold with the chief constable. The documentation included a report entitled A470 Dolgellau Bypass Feasibility Report On Junction Improvement Options. Paragraph 3.2.3 of this report addresses the 'roundabout option'. For ease of reference, I set out below how the section is worded:

"Traffic flows at their current level and future forecast levels are too low to warrant a roundabout according to design guide recommendations. A roundabout would also cause delays for through traffic on the A470.

'A Cost Benefit Analysis using COBA was conducted for this report for the upgrading of this junction to a roundabout. This study showed a negative benefit due to all through traffic being delayed, minimal changes to accident rates and significant construction costs.

'To comply to the design standard TD 16/07 'Geometric Design of Roundabouts' the roundabout would require road lighting. Lighting a proposed roundabout would raise environmental concerns due to its location within the Snowdonia National Park.

'3.2.2.2 Estimate of costs

'It is estimated that the construction costs of a roundabout at this location is £700,000 to £800,000. There is no allowance for any service diversions in this estimate.' "

"North & Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent, 4 February 2013, A470 Dolgellau Bypass Feasibility Report on Junction Improvement Options, (Ref. CPF 4056 R3)."

copy

Edwina Hart MBE CStJ AC / AM
Gweinidog yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for Economy, Science and Transport



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref WR/GJ/867
Ein cyf/Our ref EH/00048/15

Winston Roddick
Police & Crime Commissioner North Wales

Opcc@nthwales.pnn.police.uk

14 January 2015

Dear Commissioner

Thank you for your letter of 18 December regarding traffic conditions on the A470 at Dolgellau.

I am aware of local concerns about the safety of this junction. I take matters of road safety very seriously and we are looking in considerable detail at the feasibility of various options for the junctions on the bypass.

An advisory 50mph speed limit and temporary traffic signals have been put in place to maintain safety whilst the permanent options are investigated. Since those temporary measures were put into effect there have been no further serious incidents. We have also installed temporary CCTV at the A493 and A494 junctions to fully analyse driver behaviour.

Provision of one or more roundabouts is one of the options still under consideration and I am expecting further advice and recommendations before the end of the month.

I will update you again when I have made a decision on the permanent solutions for the junctions.

Edwina Hart