

TRAMWAY MATTERS

C.T. MARCH 22, 1902

TRAMWAYS MATTERS.—The following correspondence reveals the attitude of the Bournemouth Town Council towards the Company whose efforts to introduce tramways in this locality have always seemed to provoke hostility at Bournemouth. Mr. Sellon, chief engineer of the British Electric Traction Company, writing to the Town Council said he noted that the communication of the promoters to commence breaking up the roads within the district of Pokesdown, and plans submitted had been passed on from the Pokesdown Urban Council to the Bournemouth Corporation, and that the latter had not approved either of the route or construction plans sent in. He (Mr. Sellon) argued that the Company would have been perfectly within their rights under their Act in not sending the Corporation any plans, but they had done so as a matter of courtesy. The letter continued: "It is necessary to consider your action in this matter as a hostile one, the only object being that attempting to do all in your power to delay the intentions of the Company, and to prevent them doing that for which they have an Act of Parliament to do. The correspondence shows that every attempt has been made to consult you, and that during the period from November 1st to February 20th we are no nearer approval of your Corporation to our proposals. I therefore feel that I am justified in saying that the action of your Corporation in this matter is for the purpose of hampering the intentions of the promoters. I consequently beg to give you notice that I withdraw from any negotiations with you as dating from November 1st, 1901, except in so far that you have received notice of the intention of the Company to open and break up roads, and I have given my Construction Engineer instructions to at once forward plans to the Board of Trade for their approval. I shall make a point of asking them to settle this matter without delay, mainly on account of the fact that you have already by your action, delayed the Company's intentions to commence the work by nearly three months." The letter concluded by stating that it was his (Mr. Sellon's) intention to use asphalt within the district of Pokesdown unless the Council preferred to have a substitute, and he was prepared to consider any other suitable paving.—The reply of the Town Clerk to Mr. Sellon pointed out that the plans, etc., did not come into his hands until after November 9th, the date on which Pokesdown became part of the Borough of Bournemouth. Such plans the Council could not approve of. After this further plans were sent in, but the Council committee disapproved of these also. The letter continued: "From the above it amply appear that there has been no undue delay on the part of the Corporation, and certainly no want of courtesy in considering your Company's proposals. With respect to your observation as the obligation laid by Clause 23 of your Act upon the Company, may I point out to you.....that the Council of the Borough is the County Council, and therefore entitled to have submitted to it the same plans you are bound to submit to the Board of Trade. I entirely repudiate, on behalf of my Council, any intention of delaying or hampering the movements of your Company." The Town Clerk further pointed out that Mr. Prescott and Mr. Howley (officials of the Company) were put in possession of the Council's views on the matter. The letter concluded by saying that the Council had come to the conclusion that wood was the proper material to be used, and they would expect the Company to carry out the agreement entered into between the Company and the Pokesdown Council, the benefit of which now accrues to the Town Council.—The Town Clerk also read a copy of the letter he had sent to the Board of Trade, which defended the action of the Corporation, and pointed out that the Company's proposed alterations "would create new narrow places."