

“ELECTRICITY WILL BE HERE SOON”

RE-ASSURING NEWS FOR EARBY

PROBABLE COST OF CURRENT

“The electricity undertaking is a matter that has been delayed so long that people are beginning to take it with a pinch of salt when we tell them the supply is going to be here very soon,” said the Chairman of the Earby Urban District Council (Mr. J. Berry) at a monthly meeting of the Council on Wednesday evening. Those present, in addition to the Chairman, were Messrs. W. Atkinson, T. Payne, W. Turner, J. Judd, W.R. Graham, A. Oates, with the clerk (Mr. Ben Hindle) and other officials.

The Chairman said the construction of the overhead cables from Nelson to Barnoldswick and Earby was actually in progress, and they were informed the supply would be available in Earby in the course of two months. Already, the Council had approved a scale of charges which in his view, compared with many other districts, were very reasonable, and the prices should be an attraction to prospective electricity consumers. The public would have a supply as soon as it was turned on into the district and would be able to connect up straight away. With regard to connecting up the supply, the council had decided to make a concession in the cost of laying the cable through gardens and private land, to the extent of a maximum of 10s. The cost of the cable would be about 3s.6d. a yard, and the Council had decided that up to 10s. they would pay for the cable into the house. Beyond that sum the customer would have to pay, but in most cases three yards of cable - roughly obtainable for 10s.- would be sufficient. The concession only applied in cases where houses were connected up at the time the adjoining main cable was laid.

Mr. Turner thought the public in general did not understand a feature of the rate scale, based on 20 per cent. of the rateable value on scale “A” of the property occupier. If there was a better understanding there would probably be more consumers when the supply was available. “Certain rumours are going round the district that electricity is going to be dearer than gas,” he said. He had tried to dispel that impression and had pointed out that the cost of lighting an ordinary cottage house by electricity would not be more than one shilling a week. He asked if he was justified in having made that statement.

The Chairman said the scheme worked out so that if the rateable value of a house was £10 a year - as it would be approximately in the case of a cottage house - the occupier or consumer would get the first 100 units at 1 1/4 d.a unit plus an annual charge of £2 (20 per cent. of the rateable value) which would bring it to 50s. a year. For a shilling a week the consumer would get ordinary lighting requirements from the first 100 units. It might be that a consumer wanted ordinary lighting requirements, but instead of, say, a fifty candle power light in his living room, wanted a 100 c.p. light. In that case he would get the extra fifty candle power at a rate of a penny a unit instead of 6d. One of the very appreciable points in this scheme of charges on the rateable value was the fact that all the current could go through one meter, and there was only one meter rent to pay. It was assumed that all units used in excess of 100 units would be for domestic power purposes. Although more than 100 units might be consumed for lighting purposes they would only be charged at the rate of a penny per unit in excess of the first hundred. The ordinary lighting requirements in the case he had cited as an example could be supplied with 100 units per year. All used in excess of that amount would cost the

consumer a penny per unit.

SHILLING A WEEK

Mr. Turner : It is an acknowledged fact amongst electricity users in other towns that for an ordinary house 1s. a week will practically cover the whole of the lighting requirements in the house.

Mr. Graham : The same will apply here will it not?

The Chairman : Yes. In the case of £10 a year as the rateable value, it works out at approximately one shilling a week.

Mr. Oates asked if anything had been with regard to the making up of Longroyd Road. "I should like to see it done before another year." he added.

The surveyor said plans were being prepared for the street works. "It must be borne in mind nothing could be done until the electricity cables were laid," he said.

The Chairman said the resolution to make up the street had definitely been passed by the Council and the reason the work had been delayed was due to the fact that they did not wish to make up the street and then have to tear it up again in order to lay cables along it. Furthermore, at the time the resolution was passed they had a great amount of other work on hand. He hoped they would be able to carry out the work in the way they had carried out other private street works in the district. "It will be a great satisfaction to people in that area to know that plans are being prepared and there is a prospect of the work being carried out," he added.

Mr. Hartley : Do I take it this work will be kept in the background until there is a demand in that district for electricity sufficiently to warrant the laying of a cable?

The Chairman : All the plans have to be made out and if the thing goes forward a few months are bound to elapse before we are in a position to make up the street. When it is on the point of being made up and the electricity undertaking is working - we believe a supply will be here in two months time - our own staff will be able to carry out the extension of the cable down Longroyd Road. That is assuming there is a reasonable demand and, judging from the number of enquiries for current we are hoping that it will be a district we shall be able to supply with a cable

A "SIGNING - ON" HARDSHIP

The provision of improved facilities for those from Earby who are drawing unemployment relief was a matter which engaged the attention of the Council for some time. The clerk stated in his unemployment returns for the month that there were 69 men, 65 women and two boys out of work, a total of 136. Five men and five women were also temporarily unemployed. The number of unemployed was greatly in excess of the figures going back over the past two years. Many outdoor workers - chiefly men, had been deprived of work through the frost, and the position was that although there was a large increase in the number of unemployed outdoor workers, there was a decrease in the number of unemployed indoor workers. As time went on, however, many of them would be absorbed.

Mr. Payne asked if better arrangements for “signing on” could not be made for Earby weavers. A scheme was in operation at one time whereby they could “sign on” in the town.

The Chairman explained that when that scheme was in force the arrangements were made through the Earby Weavers Association. The association lent a room free of charge to the Labour Exchange in order to give better facilities to weavers in the town.

Various efforts had been made before to get an office at Earby, but the Minister of Labour would not sanction one as they were within the prescribed radius of the Barnoldswick exchange. “So far as I understand,” he said, “the exchange at Barnoldswick is not permitted to spend any money in the district on office equipment. It does look rather hard that people have to go to the inconvenience and expense of signing on at Barnoldswick when probably arrangements could be made to do it here. I am quite favourable to a proposal that enquiries should be made to see if anything can be done with regard to improving matters for the people who, unfortunately, have to “sign- on”.

BETTER FACILITIES URGED

Mr. Turner agreed. At one time, he said, the Weavers Association were quite willing to lend the authorities an office. He understood that in the opinion of the Minister of Labour the provision of an office at Earby was considered unnecessary expense, “It is not a matter of unnecessary expense,” he added ironically, “in the matter of wear and tear of shoe leather of the people who have to go to Barnoldswick.” Whichever way the weavers went to Barnoldswick they had to spend money from their unemployment relief in getting to Barnoldswick to draw it. “I shall heartily support a resolution from this council to the Ministry of Health to see if it was not possible to get an office in this district.

The Chairman : Can we ask for improved facilities. It is against the regulations and they would probably point that out.

Mr. Payne said that of the troubles of the present system, apart from the question of expense, was that weavers often lost the opportunity of “sick work.” It not infrequently occurred when an employer wanted an unemployed man or woman for “sick weaving,” that when he sent he found he or she had left the Barnoldswick exchange.

Mr. Oates : That has happened at our place. When we have sent for weavers we have found they have left soon after breakfast for Barnoldswick.

Mr. Turner thought it was not equitable that weavers should lose half a day from home, or the chance of work, through having to go to Barnoldswick.

Mr. Oates : I cannot see why they should not send a man here to the Weaver’s Institute or some other office.

The Chairman : There is this much to be said about signing on at Barnoldswick. It is only twice a week and that is a concession. They are excused signing on Mondays. Barnoldswick people have to sign on every other day.

On the motion of Mr. Turner, seconded by Mr. Payne, it was decided to write to the Ministry

of Labour asking for better facilities.

WATER ENGINEER'S DIFFICULTIES

The Water Engineer, Mr.H. Prichard, in his report to the members of the Water Committee, stated that during March, the Bleara Moor Reservoir had gradually lost ground and the water level had been 6 feet below the overflow weir at the end of the month. The yield at the inlet had been gauged at 34,286 gallons per day, whilst the consumption had been approximately 45,000 gallons per day. The Kelbrook reservoir had been only a foot down at the same date in spite of the fact that portion of Earby which lay between the station and the New Road had been supplied from Kelbrook. It had been only by the exercise of great vigilance and judicious apportionment of the Council's several sources that a regular supply had been maintained.

The number of bursts on the Council's mains for the month had been six, and there had also been numerous bursts on service pipes. Private meters had been damaged by the frost. In conclusion, Mr. Pritchard pointed out that the rainfall for the month was only 0.92 in., as compared with 2.84 in. for the corresponding period last year. The total rainfall for the last three months had been only 3.27 in. as compared with 19.03 for the first three months of last year. The statistical report showed that the yield at Old Spring Well during the month had been 718,166 gallons, and at Bleara Moor Reservoir 591,000 gallons, making a total of 1,309,166 gallons as against 3,708,000 gallons the preceding month.

FARM IMPROVEMENTS NECESSARY

That during the month the whole of the farms within the urban area had been inspected by the Sanitary Inspector and the Veterinary Officer of the West Riding County Council was reported at the meeting of the Health Committee. It was stated that, as a general rule, farm premises were not up to the required standard of cleanliness. Some of the properties required alteration and repairs. The Sanitary Inspector drew attention to the alterations needed on the Council's own farms. While accepting the report, the committee resolved that the Sanitary Inspector submit particulars of the necessary improvements to the committees in charge of the properties.

Earby's low birth rate in proportion to the mortality was the subject of special reference in the quarterly of the Medical Officer of Health (Dr.A. Falconer) who attended the meeting. Births totalled seven (two males and five females), equivalent to an annual birth rate of 4.6 per thousand, while there had been 35 deaths (ten males and 25 females), equivalent to an annual mortality of 23.3 per thousand. During the three months ended March 31st, 11 cases of scarlet fever had been reported, four cases having been removed to the Skipton Isolation Hospital. The type was very mild in most cases, and the district now appeared to be quite clear. Four cases of pneumonia and been notified, two cases of crysipelas and one case of pulmonary tuberculosis. There had been a few cases of chicken pox and towards the end of the period they had been troubled with whooping cough. Much working time had been lost as a result of the influenza epidemic.

Owing to the severe cold and dry weather since the end of January chest complaints had been aggravated and many elderly people had succumbed.

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