

Dear Residents

Below is my speech made in Council this past Thursday regarding the Coleraine Culvert, Ballyclaire Bridge as well as the condition of Ballyclaire Drive between Bryneven Primary School and the Bridge over the Braamfontein Spruit.

Please note: I have planned the follow up Public meeting regarding the Coleraine Culvert with JRA for the 29th September. This meeting will be held at Redhill School at 6pm. A formal invitation will be sent shortly.

Kind regards

Cllr. Vincent Earp

Madame Speaker

The oversight report states that as a result of inclement precipitation during February 2014 the Coleraine Culvert was damaged. This is not quite correct. The February rain was **only** a contributing factor to the culverts eventual collapse.

The first reports sent to JRA of the imminent collapse of the road over the culvert was as early as October 2013. Over the next 3 months despite requests for intervention nothing was done to **seriously** investigate the culvert. By January 2013 the entire pavement on the culvert including palisade fencing had collapsed into the riverine area and the entire section was dangerous for motorists . Again it was reported and all JRA did was put up barrier tape along the one side. This was not much help for any vehicle as there was a massive hole at least 3 meters deep immediately next to the curb which dropped directly into the riverine area.

When the large amount of precipitation occurred in February and all the e-mails asking for immediate intervention had been ignored or at least not taken seriously, the road started to collapse . I then called for the road to be closed immediately.

Only once they had inspected and closed the road did JRA start to take the issue seriously. Obviously the City was now inundated with calls across the City where bridges and culverts had been damaged. With the road now closed for a month a contractor was appointed and he took over the site on the 27th March.

Madame Speaker, because of the underlying soil conditions under the collapsed culvert JRA

decided not to repair the culvert but to build a bridge. The initial cost of repairs was R4,93 million and this now escalated to the present contract price of R13,7 million. [If our our calls for intervention had been taken seriously as early as November the estimated costs of repair would never have been this high.](#)

Between 17th March and the 13th August very little was done by the contractor except to remove the old culvert on this site. [This](#) left a massive gaping hole. Residents have been frequent visitors to the site and [were](#) aghast as to the slow progress. During some weeks no one except security was even on site. Events [also](#) unfolded which could only be explained as a sad comedy of errors. Neotel cables had to be lifted, a sewerage pipe and a 400 mm water pipe was damaged by the contractors staff during excavation. Thousands of residents, not only [faced](#) major traffic congestion on surrounding roads, they also faced about 4 days without water. Telkom took 3 weeks to lift their cables.

All these repairs caused delays to the project and this has wreaked havoc in residents lives. Businesses and residents on either side of the Coleraine closure have been financially affected. Businesses in close proximity to the site have seen a major drop in their monthly revenue and are now struggling to survive.

Madame Speaker, The oversight report [also mentions the problems on Ballclaire drive and the Ballyclaire Bridge over the Braamfontein Spruit.](#) Both these problem areas are in close proximity to the Coleraine Culvert . The report states that the damaged Ballyclaire bridge would be repaired at a cost of R 600 000.00 and that the contractor would be on site in April 2014. This project was supposed to take two months . It is now the end of August Madame Speaker / Mr Mayor and nothing, I repeat absolutely nothing has been done on this site. There is no Contractor on this site.

The Section 79 Committe during their oversight visit was not happy with the condition of Ballyclaire Drive . This same road intersects with Coleraine Drive and for months we have had absolute chaos on this stretch of road. They highlighted the potholes and and continuous run off of water causing damage to the tarmac. Madame speaker, I , together with my residents, have sent numerous e-mails to JRA over a period of two years to have this section of road repaired. Especially the area on Ballyclaire Drive between Bryneven Primary School and the Bridge over the Braamfontein Spruit . JRA eventually informed me earlier this year that they would be laying new storm water pipes on this section to solve the water problem plaguing the road. Once completed they would repair Ballyclaire Drive properly. In the meantime water and potholes are a permanent feature on this extremely busy stretch of Ballyclaire Drive. It is a nightmare for residents, parents trying to access Bryneven Primary and even the Gautrain busses who have to try circumvent the massive holes and at times cross into oncoming traffic to avoid damaging their vehicles.

Madame Speaker, JRA informed me that they would have to wait for the new 2014/2015 financial year to start the project. They then said it would start in September. . September is next week. Once the rains start and the road breaks up we may have to call for the closure of Ballyclaire Drive. Do we have to wait for a fatality before we intervene and service the community.

To JRA'S credit they did attend a Public meeting on the Coleraine culvert early in August to help try address residents concerns. Residents are angry as it has been Six months since Coleraine Drive was closed off. They are demanding action, accountability and close monitoring of these projects. JRA have now promised to keep residents updated with regular statements in the local press as well as on their website.

Madame speaker as you can clearly see, the Coleraine Culvert/ Bridge project which was started on the 17th March is **now** only scheduled to be completed in December. 9 months . Residents in the area who are captains of Industry are disgusted . Engineers living in the area complain of incompetence . Are we to expect further delays due to the summer rains. Will this project take a year to complete ?

Madame Speaker I need to know why it is taking so long to complete these projects. I have reports that Contractors for JRA are not paid on time and some are waiting **LONGER THAN 90 DAYS TO GET PAID**. In many cases this involves large sums of money.

Maybe Madame Speaker this is why the Contractor is not always on site. Maybe they are not on site because of the City tendering process whereby certain contractors are given multiple contracts. Maybe because of capacity constraints these same contractors can only work on one contract at a time.

Maybe Madame Speaker that is why the new Coleraine Bridge, the repairs to the Ballyclaire Bridge and the laying of storm water pipes down Ballyclaire Drive to take care of the water runoff have not started or are far from completion.

This, surely if true, is an indictment of the City's tendering process where multiple contracts are awarded to a single contractor who may not have the capacity, the manpower and ability

to complete the contracts on time .

We need answers [Madam Speaker](#) and we need them now.

Thank you Madame Speaker.