

4-5 EDWARD VII., A. 1905

portion of the Borough of Hove comprised in what was formerly the area of the Brunswick Square and Terrace district, *i.e.*, about one-sixth of the area of the present Borough of Hove. On behalf of the council it was contended that the Hove Corporation could not lawfully prevent the erection of overhead wires across any of the streets in Hove, and that there was nothing to prevent the supply of telephonic communication to subscribers in the Borough of Hove by means of overhead wires, as advised by the engineer.

Whatever the merits of the contention on the part of the Hove council may be (and the committee do not for one moment admit the right claimed), the local government board have refused to sanction any loan in respect of the execution of works in the Borough of Hove until the consent of the Hove council has been obtained.

The decision of the local government board was communicated to the committee in the following letter:—

(Copy.)

‘LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD,

‘WHITEHALL, S.W., 5th June, 1902.

‘SIR,—I am directed by the local government board to state that they have had under consideration the report made by their inspector, Colonel Slacke, after the inquiry held by him with reference to the application of the town council of Brighton for sanction to borrow £45,000 for the establishment of a municipal exchange in the Brighton telephone area.

‘The board approve generally of the scheme, but unless the consent of the town council of Hove is obtained, they will not be prepared to sanction any loan for the execution of works in that borough.

‘If therefore, the town council are unable to obtain such consent, the board should be furnished with a revised estimate of the cost of the scheme, excluding all works in the Borough of Hove.

‘I am further to ask for a copy of a resolution of the town council applying for the board’s consent to the use of the building on the pavilion estate as the central exchange, under the provisions of the Brighton Pavilion Estate Act, 1850, as amended by the Brighton Pavilion Acts Amendment Act, 1876, and the Provisional Order of 1891.

‘I am at the same time to draw attention to the last paragraph of the board’s letter of the 3rd of March last, as regards the payment of interest on capital, and to state that no item on this account should be included in any revised estimate which may be submitted.

‘I am, sir, your obedient servant,

‘JOHN LITHIBY,

‘Assistant Secretary.

‘The Town Clerk, Brighton.’

The committee requested the local government board to grant them an interview with reference to the matter, but the board did not accede to the request, and the matter of the loan has since remained in abeyance.

The committee do not consider that the refusal on the part of Hove to grant underground wayleaves constitutes any reason why the council should not proceed with the installation of the exchange elsewhere than in the Borough of Hove. They are informed that the corporation of Glasgow have encountered a somewhat similar difficulty but have, nevertheless, proceeded with the execution of their scheme and have brought it to a successful issue.

Neither do the committee regard the refusal of their consent by the corporation of Hove as final, inasmuch as it appears from the following letter received from the town clerk of Hove that they intend to apply for parliamentary powers to construct underground conduits in the next session of parliament:—