

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## SWAVESEY BYEWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**(DRAFT) MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, SWAVESEY ON****MONDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2018 AT 7.30 PM**

Present:

Councillor Mrs S Ellington	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Councillor R Turner	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Mr A Day	Charge-payers' Representative
Mr J Dodson	Charge-payers' Representative
Mr J Johnson	Charge-payers' Representative
Ms L Boyes	Parish Council Representative
Ms H Parish	Parish Council Representative
Ms S Rogers	Parish Representative

In Attendance

Mr P Quigley – Head of Environment Commissioning, South Cambridgeshire District Council

Apologies: Mr J Shepperson, Mr G Wedd, Mr K Wilderspin

**1. Introduction and Election of Chairman**

1.1. Cllr Ellington proposed Cllr Turner as Chairman, seconded by Ms Boyes. Cllr Turner was elected Chairman.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

2.1. The minutes of the previous meeting of 7th February 2017 had already been circulated. It was unanimously accepted that the contents should be confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

**3. Report of the Executive Director – Corporate Services**

3.1. The meeting received the report of the SCDC Executive Director, Corporate Services, on expenditure for the year 2017/18 (to 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018).

3.2. The report showed there would be a balance of £2,200 in the chargepayer's account at the end of 2017/18 as a result of the lack of availability of suitable materials throughout 2017/18.

3.3. There would be a balance of £6,335 in the contingency account at the end of 2017/18 for any emergency or special works.

3.4. A rate of £1:10 per hectare in 2018/19 would provide a further £2,500 in the chargepayer's account, which if added to the £2,200 end of 2017/18 balance would provide a maintenance fund in 2018/19 of £4, 700 for the purchase of materials.

3.5. The breakdown of income and expenditure for 2018/19 would then be as indicated in the report.

#### **4. Report of the Director, Health & Environmental Services**

- 4.1. This report presented a five-year expenditure summary covering the period 2012 – 2017 per Byeway.
- 4.2. Cllr Ellington circulated a number of photographs taken on her recent inspection of the Byeways showing that the surface of the most frequently used Byeways , particularly Middle Fen, Hale Road, Scotland Drove, Cow Fen, Mow Fen and Tiplers Drove had deteriorated in 2017/18.
- 4.3. The report noted that this deterioration was due to the lack of availability of suitable, locally sourced materials at reasonable cost throughout 2017/18 and presented the committee with two alternatives regarding the 2018/19 rate.
- 4.4. The first alternative was to maintain the current rate of £1:10 and using the closing balance from the 2017/18 chargepayer's fund of £2,200, together with the 2018/19 chargepayer's fund of £2,500 to source higher grade material, which was thought to more readily available, albeit at higher cost, in order to increase the likelihood of securing suitable material in 2018/19.
- 4.5. The second alternative was to set a zero rate for 2018/19 and use the closing balance from the 2017/18 chargepayer's fund to continue to source more reasonably priced material in 2018/19
- 4.6. Detailed discussions took place on what materials were needed. It was agreed that simply regrading the existing surfaces was a false economy. It was noted that the anticipated ready supply of material from the A14 roadworks had not materialised and there was every likelihood that the scarcity of lower priced material would continue. It was unanimously agreed that a finer, higher quality material, albeit at a higher cost, was needed once the Byeways had had the opportunity to dry out.
- 4.7. The committee then discussed the rate for 2018/19. It was proposed that for non-farmers a minimum charge should be set, although it was noted that this was not permitted under the relevant legislation. Consideration was also given to increasing the rate to £1:20 in order to provide additional funds to secure material. However, it was felt that the committee should first assess the availability of higher quality material, the likely tonnage of material required and the priority of works required, given that the Byeways were to be maintained to agricultural, not highway, standard. If it was then considered necessary to recommend an increased rate in 2019/20, so be it.
- 4.8. The Head of Environment Commissioning was asked to explore the availability of finer, higher quality material, albeit at a higher cost, and report back to a subsequent meeting of the committee, which was set for 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018, where it would be confirmed what material was available, together with priority allocation for 2018/19.
- 4.9. It was then unanimously agreed that the committee should recommend to SCDC that the current rate of £1:10 should be maintained for 2018/19.

#### **5. Voluntary Maintenance**

- 5.1. Members noted that the voluntary arrangement, whereby the District Council ordered and allocated materials and the chargepayers provided labour and plant to spread materials, so enabling the maximum amount to be spent on materials, had worked very well in the past but was becoming increasingly unsustainable with the passing of time.
- 5.2. The committee agreed that the current voluntary arrangements should continue for the present but asked the Head of Environment Commissioning to investigate alternatives and report back to the next committee meeting where the committee would review who was able to do what.

#### **6. Any Other Business**

- 6.1. Cllr Mrs Ellington advised the committee that Mr J Shepperson had tendered his resignation as a parish representative. All members of the committee were asked to make enquiries as to a suitable replacement as parish representative and to report back to the next meeting. It was anticipated that

a local advert would be placed asking for candidates so as to ensure transparency in any appointment process. Cllr Ellington proposed a vote of thanks for the service Mr Shepperson had given to the committee, seconded by Cllr Turner and agreed unanimously.

- 6.2 Cllr Mrs Ellington also asked the Head of Environment Commissioning to review and update the List of chargepayers and report back to the next meeting.
- 6.3 Ms Parish asked that the committee note that parish council pay for grass cutting along Turnbridge five times per year. This was duly noted.
- 6.4 Ms Rogers suggested that future committee meetings should be open to all Byeways chargepayers in order to engender a sense of community spirit and promote more involvement of other chargepayers in the voluntary maintenance arrangements. This was unanimously supported by all members.
- 6.5 Ms Rogers also suggested that an information sheet should be prepared and circulated to all Byeway landowners outlining duties and responsibilities. Ms Rogers agreed to put a draft together and report back to the committee. Cllr Turner noted that this is something that could be included in Neighbourhood Plans.
- 6.6 Ms Boyes noted that the recent planning permissions along Hale Road were likely to increase vehicular traffic along the Byeways but result in a disproportionately small levy for maintenance. Can anything be done to address this disparity possibly through the S106 process? The Head of Environment Commissioning undertook to make enquiries with planning colleagues and report back to the next committee.

The meeting closed at 20.55