

APPENDIX A

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SWAVESEY BYEWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, SWAVESEY ON

MONDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 7.30 PM

Present:

Councillor Sue Ellington	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Councillor Tumi Hawkins	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Mr G Wedd	Charge-payers' Representative
Mr J Johnson	Charge-payers' Representative
Mr J Dodson	Charge-payers' Representative
Mr K Wilderspin	Charge-payers' Representative
Ms L Boyes	Parish Council Representative
Ms H Parish	Parish Council Representative
Ms S Rogers	Parish Representative

Additional attendees;
John Burgess

Landowner at Tiplers Drove

In Attendance;

Trevor Nicoll, Interim Assistant Director Waste and Special Projects; Michael Parsons, Waste Operations Manager;
Patrick Matthews, Drainage Officer.

Apologies: Mr A Day

1. Introduction and Election of Chairman

1.1. Ms Sue Rogers proposed that P Matthews should act a chairman for the meeting – this was unanimously accepted by the committee.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

2.1. The minutes of the previous meeting of 24 January 2019 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 2019/20 (to 3 February 2020). Section 1.1 of the report explained that the 1984 Act provides for an annual charge to be made to the chargepayers, expressed as a rate per hectare within the Byeways rateable area. The charge for 2019/20 was set at £1.20 and a similar charge for 2020/21 would produce an amount of £1640.

- 3.2. The report showed there would be a balance of £1557 in the chargepayer's account at the end of 2019/20, which when added to the 2020/21 charge, will be reflected in the budget calculation for 2020/21.
- 3.3. There would be a balance of £8823 in the contingency account at the end of 2019/20 for any emergency or special works. The report suggested that £2959 could be added to the contingency account for 2020/21 although other options were available.
- 3.4. The report recommended that £3,000 should be provided for maintenance in 2020/21 giving a breakdown of income and expenditure for the year 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 2015 – 2020 per Byeway.
- 4.2. Cllr Ellington explained that an inspection of the Byeways was undertaken on 28 January 2020 and that the surface of the most frequently used Byeways, particularly Middle Fen, Hale Road, Cow Fen, Mow Fen, Utton's Drove and Tipplers Drove had deteriorated over the autumn/winter period. Recent rainfall has prevented the spreading of any remaining materials from the most recent allocations to Tipplers drove and Cow Fen.
- 4.3. Mr Dodson raised questions on whether the Parish Council would be billed for the past two years' charges. The Drainage Officer explained that the Finance department at SCDC would contact the Parish in the near future to confirm there would be no additional charges on the Parish.
- 4.4. A lively debate took place regarding the condition of Hale road in particular. This bye-way is subjected to very heavy use due to the traffic to the Windmill kennels and cattery, the allotments and a number of private properties. Sharp disagreements exist over the level of maintenance and future surfacing along a drove that is primarily intended for use by agricultural vehicles but is now extensively used by the public. In the end, Cllr Ellington proposed that a special meeting of all interested parties should take place to consider all possible options including use of possible A14 legacy funding, private contributions or donations from other sources. SCDC officers agreed to endeavour to set up a meeting in conjunction with relevant charge-payers, parish council, allotment holders and household/business interests. It was hoped this could take place within three to four months.
- 4.5. Due to the high cost of materials the meeting discussed the possibility of increasing the maintenance charge per hectare. However, following due consideration it was proposed by Mr Wilderspin and seconded by Ms Rogers that the rate for 2020/21 should remain at £1.20 per hectare. This was unanimously approved by representatives.
- 4.6. Concerns were raised by Mr Wedd and Mr Dodson that recent works undertaken by Anglian Water involving the use of the byeways have caused damage to sections of both Utton's and Tipplers droves. SCDC officers agreed to get in touch with Anglian Water's agent to ensure suitable reinstatements are put in place.

5. Voluntary Maintenance

- 5.1. Members again noted that the voluntary arrangement, whereby the District Council ordered and allocated materials and the chargepayers provided labour and plant to spread materials, has been very successful in the past as a method of keeping costs to a minimum. However, members of the committee expressed concern that with a number of landowners approaching retirement, the voluntary maintenance would become unsustainable. In particular, works along Hale road may require special attention as the local landowner may no longer be prepared to spread materials in future.
- 5.2. The committee agreed that the current voluntary arrangements should continue for the present but consideration should be given to the use of contractors. The related increase in the costs of using private contractors will be reviewed and discussed at subsequent meetings. It was proposed by Ms

Rogers and seconded by Mr Wilderspin that the voluntary arrangements should continue for the 2020/21 period. This was unanimously accepted by the meeting.

- 5.3. The committee felt that it would be worth investigating whether the special meeting mentioned at 4.4 above should explore different methods of maintenance and the associated cost implications. Additionally, investigations might consider whether changing the Swavesey Byeways Act 1984 might allow a greater flexibility regarding funding. However, it was pointed out by officers that changing the Act could be a very costly and time-consuming process.

The meeting closed at 21.00