



Reedness & Swinefleet Internal Drainage Board

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 24TH JANUARY 2022 AT CASTLE VIEW FARM

PRESENT:

Elected Members: Mr M Barker (C) Mr I Backhouse (VC) Mr G Cowling Mr J Drury Mr W Gagg
Mr J Cowling

Appointed Members:

APOLOGIES:

Ratepayer Members: Mr T Reed

Appointed Members: Cllr L Sargeantson

ABSENT:

Ratepayer Members:

Appointed Members:

IN ATTENDANCE:

Officers:

Mr McLachlan – Chief Executive Officer
Mr Towse – Director of Operations
Miss Smith – Board Secretary (Minutes)

Andrew McLachlan
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148. Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

148.1. The Chair welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting noting apologies from Cllr Sargeantson.

149. Declarations of Interest

149.1. All Members present declared a pecuniary interest in Reedness Clough Pumping Station.

150. Health and Safety

150.1. None

151. Additional Agenda Items

151.1. Mr J Drury requested a matter in Swinefleet be discussed under Planning & Development Control.

151.2. The Chair requested the CEO provide the Board with commentary around future flood prevention for the district and surrounding areas under Planning & Development. (Discussed under item 163)

152. Minutes of the previous Full Board Meeting

152.1. The Chair drew attention to minutes of the previous meeting presented at Appendix A.

152.2. It was PROPOSED by MR G COWLING and SECONDED by MR I BACKHOUSE that the Board approves these minutes as a true record.

153. Matters Arising

153.1. In relation to minute 144.2, Mr Barker queried whether a meeting had yet been arranged and requested details. **Action BdSec**

153.2. The CEO confirmed a meeting had been arranged with Robert Caudwell, Chair of ADA, and Member of the Lowland Peat Task Force group.

153.3. Mr Backhouse raised the Black Dike, year ago was worried that the Clough Door was not capable of sealing.

153.4. The DO advised that this had been inspected, the rubber seal does not fit flush, and there is not enough weight in the door to hold it shut.

153.5. A discussion was held around replacements and repair, and it was concluded that the DO sources quotations for a flap valve whilst the door is sealed on a temporary basis. **Action DO.**

154. Minutes of ADOC Consortium Meeting

- 154.1. The Chair drew attention to minutes of the ADOC Consortium meeting and invited queries and concerns from the Board.
- 154.2. The Chair raised concerns with maintenance being carried out too late within the Boards district this year. He also queried whether weed and silt removed from the dikes could be discharged more appropriately.
- 154.3. There was a discussion whether spreading siltation could affect stewardship payments and it was requested that this is raised with the Rural Payments Agency. **Action CEO.**
- 154.4. The Chair highlighted the minutes commentary around the possible purchase of a mobile pump for use by the ADOC Boards which would not be going ahead at this point.
- 154.5. The DO and CEO reassured Members that in a flooding event, if larger boards has pumps available and required by the smaller boards, these would be made available.

155. Financial Position

- 155.1. The CEO explained that the outturn position is expected to be below budget, however advised there may be fluctuations due to unforeseen events.
- 155.2. He added that negotiations with landowners regarding capital projects are not progressing and therefore the funds remain set aside.

156. Capital Programme (For Approval with Budget)

- 156.1. The CEO confirmed the current FDGiA period has commenced, however due to the appraisal system remaining biased towards residential benefits, Reedness & Swinefleet IDB will continue to face challenges in accessing these funds.
- 156.2. The CEO advised that the Asset Manager is currently investigating the possibility of gaining funding for the replacement of pumps across the Consortium, past their asset life, which would not normally be eligible.
- 156.3. The Board previously expressed a desire to invest in a new pumping station at Swinefleet Warping Clough.
- 156.4. The CEO advised that his was certain an application would need to be made to the PWLB to borrow most of an assumed build cost of up to £750k, this is due to difficulties accessing grant in aid. The CEO advised all funding sources would be explored; however, the first step must be to request feasibility funding from the EA.
- 156.5. The Chair, in relation to the Warping Drain, highlighted that this does not just carry the Boards districts water, it takes water from Goole Fields and the Moors. He added that water is not being held and released at a controlled rate, as is defined in the original agreement.
- 156.6. The Chair requested that a discussion takes place with Goole Fields IDB as part of any scheme.

156.7. It was unanimously agreed by the Board to request feasibility funding to start the process.

157. Budget & Rate Setting

157.1. The CEO explained the recent conflicting statement released by HMT and HMRC regarding red diesel. He advised it is assumed that there will be a 10% increase in contractor costs and that the budget has assumed the new tax treatment will not change for IDBs.

157.2. The Chair and Mr Backhouse, commented on the prospective budget and rate increase presented by the CEO, and both gave the opinion that the rate should be increased further to 16p£ to assist with building Board reserves.

157.3. It was PROPOSED by The Chair and SECONDED by Mr Backhouse and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the rate is set at 16p£.

157.4. It was PROPOSED by The Chair and SECONDED by Mr G Cowling that the budget is approved and adjusted in accordance with the rate, with funds to be allocated to Board reserves.

158. Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled to Q3

158.1. The Chair drew attention to Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled at Appendix C, highlighting an omission of a contractor's invoice.

158.2. The DO advised he had attempted to contact the Contractor on multiple occasions and would be visiting him once the Board meeting had closed.

158.3. It was PROPOSED by The Chair and SECONDED by Mr Drury and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board approve invoices paid and accounts settled to the value of £42,249.66 (Net).

159. Internal Audit

159.1. The CEO presented the internal audit report at Appendix D, confirming there were no matters of concern however across the Consortium there would be a methodology developed for the valuation of assets across all partner boards within the consortium with the Auditor in time for the Annual Return along with a formal reserves policy.

160. Conclusion of Annual Audit

160.1. The CEO confirmed the Board passed its external audit for 2020/21 by the Government-appointed auditor, PKF Littlejohn, without any qualifications.

161. Policy Update (Health and Safety)

161.1. The CEO explained that a new consortium-wide Health and Safety Policy and Safe System of Work is currently being prepared by the consortium's Capital Delivery Manager who is a qualified member of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH).

- 161.2. The policy sets out the Board's legal requirements and is based on the Health and Safety Executive's HSG65 model guidance.
- 161.3. The policy sets out the responsibilities of the Board and officers, and as well as containing procedural matters, it includes safe systems of work such as activity-specific risk assessments and control systems through permits to work e.g., confined spaces entry.
- 161.4. The Board will be required to undertake a short annual review of this policy and system which shall be included in the annual business risk assessment already undertaken as a precursor to the annual return.
- 161.5. It was PROPOSED by The Chair and SECONDED by Mr J Cowling and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the CEO in consultation with the Chair be given authority to adopt the consortium wide Health and Safety Management Policy and Safe System of Work on behalf of the Board upon its completion.

162. Reedness Clough Pumping Station

- 162.1. All Members present declared their interest in this matter.
- 162.2. The CEO gave background to the privately commissioned and constructed pumping station at Reedness Clough and the offer of the owner to vest this to the Board.
- 162.3. The CEO and Members discussed vesting the new pumping station in the Board.
- 162.4. The CEO advised that he was duty bound to present a series of risks and benefits so the Board could make an informed choice, but this was a matter for the Board so would not be making a specific recommendation.
- 162.5. The Chair explained that the response from landowners and the community had been overwhelming, who had all expressed their gratitude for the new defence. He expressed thanks to St Johns College for their donation of £3k towards the asset, and Reedness Parish Councils donation of £300 towards new fencing.
- 162.6. He advised there had been a large community involvement, with local contractors donating their time and assistance to the project.
- 162.7. The Chair went on to inform the Board that the original budget for the pump was £73k with a contingency of 20% included. He confirmed that this installation had been completed for c£74k.
- 162.8. The Board considered and discussed the risks and benefits to the Board in vesting the new asset.
- 162.9. It was PROPOSED by Mr J Cowling and SECONDED by Mr G Cowling and UNANANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board accept the offer to vest the pumping station in the Board.

163. Planning and Development Control

- 163.1. The CEO advised the Board was contacted by a residents' group regarding concerns over the Peat Works development, who were informed the Board is only able to comment on drainage matters but will monitor development for impact on the drainage network and request Land Drainage Consents where required.
- 163.2. Mr Drury raised a concern regarding the erection of a fence close to Swinefleet Playing Field which is causing issues with public access and possible access for dike maintenance.
- 163.3. The DO advised he would investigate this matter and discuss with the Parish Council. **Action DO**
- 163.4. The Chair queried the Boards plan in response to tidal flooding.
- 163.5. The CEO explained that the Boards district falls within the Humber Levels, the area most at risk of flooding in the UK after the Thames. He advised of the Humber Strategy Group and their role in securing investments and improvements to flood defence to protect communities and the environment.
- 163.6. Both Mr Backhouse and The Chair expressed their views that local landowners should be involved in these groups or local consultations should be held regularly.
- 163.7. The CEO advised he would request there are representatives from this area introduced to the Humber Strategy Group and that a meeting with the EA is arranged to discuss their plan to protect the area from tidal flooding. **Action CEO.**

164. Maintenance Programme

- 164.1. Referring to the Chairs comments that maintenance in the Boards district had been completed later than needed, the CEO queried, whether moving forward, the Board wished to stipulate a time frame in future agreements with contractors.
- 164.2. The Chair suggested that all works should be completed at the latest by the end of October.
- 164.3. The DO advised that in response concerns raised in the last full board meeting, relating to contracts being too short for Contractors to properly invest, he had investigated and intended to offer contracts on a 3-year basis with an additional 2 years should the Board and Contractor wish to continue, ensuring the Board remains OJEU compliant.
- 164.4. Mr Backhouse highlighted that Rushcroft dike needs maintenance.

165. Date of Next Meeting

- 165.1. The Board Secretary confirmed the calendar is in final stages and dates will be presented to the Board in the forthcoming week.
- 165.2. The Chair thanked Members and Officers for their attendance and closed the meeting.