

## Dempster Internal Drainage Board Meeting

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015 – Swinefleet Village Hall

### Minutes of Meeting

Present: *Peter Chantry (PC)*  
*Paul Jacklin (PJ)*  
*Mark Johnson (MJ)*  
*Cllr John Frost (JF)*  
*Edward Cowling (EC)*  
*Iain Omand (IO)*  
*Russ Towse (RST)*  
*Mike Ball (MJB)*

1487. **Apologies for Absence:** *Barry Philipson, Stuart Hall and Martin Backhouse*

1488. **Declarations of Interest:** None

1489. **To sign and approve the minutes of the Board meeting held on 14 October 2014:**  
JP proposed that they were a true record of the meeting. Seconded by PJ.

1490. **Matters Arising from the Minutes:** None.

1491. **Rate Setting Discussions:** IO presented his paper to the Board. He explained the importance of sound financial management and the need to set a budget together with an agreed drainage rate for the forthcoming financial year. He pointed out that within any management system there was an element of risk but this would be monitored throughout the year and steps taken to address it.

The figures presented were challenged by the Board insofar that they considered them to be too high resulting in a pessimistic view of the Board's financial health. PC felt a more realistic cost for maintenance to be around £12,000. PJ agreed that the figures were too high indicating too high a deficit. PC added that the £9,931 estimated outturn cost for drain maintenance should be nearer to £7,500 and the figure for flailing and de-weeding for year 15/16 should be £12,000. On this basis, IO recalculated the drainage rate based on 3 different values for the drainage rate and produced revised draft budget figures for the forthcoming year.

PC raised the issue of Goole Fields Drainage Boards water coming into the Dempster district. He said a figure of £350 should be levied to them on account of their water having to be dealt with and the figure adjusted to reflect this.

Two revised rates were then put to the Board by IO. The first was for a rate of 8p in the pound resulting in a net expenditure of £33,789. This would mean the Board running at a loss in the sum of £2841 and the need to use its reserves to make up the shortfall. The second proposition was a drainage rate of 8.25p in the pound giving rise to a net

expenditure of £31,912 equating to a loss of £1841 which the Board would run with. There was a vote on the two proposals with the 8p rate receiving three votes and the 8.25p rate receiving two votes. The 8p rate was therefore accepted as the rate for the coming year.

1492. **Policies Review:** IO presented his draft financial regulations for the Board. He stated that he had made a number of changes to the 24 points as he felt they were not robust enough to manage the inherent financial risks in managing an internal drainage board. He suggested the regulations be reviewed on an annual basis and this would form part of the Board's risk management policy. RST suggested the Board members consider the Contractor Code of Conduct before the next meeting to enable a fuller discussion to take place.

As part of IO's revised financial regulations, it was explained to the Board the thresholds that would form part of a financial risk management strategy. Up to £2000 a single invitation to price would be permissible. Between £2000 and £10,000 three written quotations would be invited and over £10,000 a formal advertised tender would be prepared. IO also emphasised the need for goods and services to be procured only by the clerk and deputy clerk. PC challenged the situation with regard emergency works given his physical proximity to the Board's only pumping station. The view was that each situation would be judged on its merit at the time but that caution should be exercised. It was agreed that the Contractor Code of Conduct and the financial regulations would be reviewed by the members and brought back to the next meeting. This was agreed with a show of hands.

1493. **Clerk & Engineers Report:** RST said work had started on the Health & Safety Policy. East Riding Council's auditors have been informed as this was a comment following their audit of the Board last year. MJB reported that the Biodiversity Action Plan commissioned during the tenure of the former clerk & engineer was now completed. The final details had been put into the report by the council's Sustainable Development team.

IO suggested moving monies from the Board's savings account to its current account to avoid paying bank charges. He felt that in the order of £20,000 would achieve this.

1494. **A&F Consulting Invoice Payments:** Following a meeting between RST, MJB and a legal colleague at East Riding Council, it was decided that it would be more cost beneficial for the Board to pay the outstanding A&F Consulting invoices. It would be made clear that payment would represent full and final settlement. PJ suggested payment would be made using one cheque. EC proposed this motion which was seconded by PJ followed by a unanimous show of hands.
1495. **ERYC Invoicing Payments Quarters 1,2 & 3:** The council's invoices for providing clerk and engineer duties, was discussed. At the request of PJ and PC, RST offered to make available the timesheet details for both himself and MJB to enable the Board to scrutinise the work undertaken in relation to the invoice period. PJ proposed that payment be made. It was seconded by MJ.

1496. **ERYC Contract for ADO Consortium:** MJB informed the Board that he had arranged, following a discussion with PC, to invite the Environment Agency's lead officer on Public Sector Cooperation Agreements, Ian Russell to attend a meeting at West Cowick on 5 February to examine the possibility of the Board using such an agreement to contract with the council for its clerk and engineer duties. PC will attend.
1497. **Contractor Tendering 2015/16:** It was agreed to discuss the existing agreement with the current contractors with a view to them being involved with the re tender process at the next meeting
1498. **Any Correspondence not covered in Engineers Report:** RST stated all had been quiet on the two running matters with the Goole Fields 2 Wind Farm and the Twin Rivers project.
1499. **Any Other Business:** None
1500. **Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 18 March at 7pm in the Village Hall, Swinefleet.