



Reedness & Swinefleet Internal Drainage Board

MINUTES OF THE FULL BOARD MEETING, MONDAY 6th JANUARY 2020 AT 91
BRIDGEGATE, HOWDEN, DN14 7JJ

PRESENT:

Ratepayer Members: Mr Barker (Ch) Mr Cowling Mr I Backhouse Mr Hirst (VCh)
Mr Reed

Appointed Members:

Co-opted Members:

Members Present: 5

APOLOGIES:

Ratepayer Members: Mr Oldridge

Appointed Members: Cllr Sargeantson

Co-opted Members:

ABSENT:

Ratepayer Members:

Appointed Members:

Co-Opted Members:

IN ATTENDANCE:

Officers: Mr McLachlan – Chief Executive (CEO)
Mr Towse – Operations & Technical Manager (OTM)
Mrs O’Driscoll – Board Secretary (Minutes)

Others:

Andrew McLachlan
Chief Executive Officer and Clerk to the Board
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Contents

69.	Order of Meeting	3
70.	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies.....	3
71.	Health and Safety	3
72.	Declarations of Interest.....	3
73.	Additional Agenda Items.....	3
74.	Election of Chairman	3
75.	Appointment of Chairman	4
76.	Election of Vice Chairman	4
77.	Appointment of Vice Chairman.....	4
78.	Minutes of the previous Board Meeting, 13 th May 2019.....	4
79.	Matters Arising.....	4
80.	Minutes of the ADOC Consortium Meeting, 26 th November 2019.....	5
81.	Financial Position	5
82.	Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled to Q3.....	5
83.	Internal Audit	6
84.	Conclusion of Annual Audit 2018/19	6
85.	Budget & Rate Setting.....	6
86.	Policies Review	8
87.	Register of Members' Interests.....	8
88.	Capital Programme	8
89.	Maintenance	8
90.	Planning and Development.....	10
91.	Date of Next Meeting.....	10

69. Order of Meeting

- 69.1. The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and explained that as this was the AGM, the CEO would chair the meeting until a Chairman had been elected.
- 69.2. The CEO added that it was standard practice for the AGM and with the consent of the Board, he would chair the first part of the meeting until the Chairman was installed, and that following the appointments, normal Board business would commence.
- 69.3. All Members were agreeable for the CEO to chair the first part of the meeting.

70. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

- 70.1. Apologies were given from Cllr Sargeantson and Mr Oldridge.

71. Health and Safety

- 71.1. There were no Health & Safety issues to report.

72. Declarations of Interest

- 72.1. There were no Declarations of Interest.

73. Additional Agenda Items

- 73.1. The CEO explained that on advice from the Internal Auditors and in accordance with the regulations as to proceedings of the Board (Standing Orders), other business that does not appear on the agenda may be discussed, but only with the agreement of 75% of members present.
- 73.2. The CEO enquired whether members had any further items they wished to be added to the agenda. The Chairman requested that the following items be discussed: culverts, Reedness Drain Head, Goole Fields Planning and Warping Drain. The CEO advised that these could be discussed under Maintenance (item 21 on the agenda). All Board Members present were in agreement.

74. Election of Chairman

- 74.1. The CEO set out the procedure for the election of the Chairman and oversaw proceedings.
- 74.2. Nominations were invited by the CEO for the role of Chairman; Mr I Backhouse nominated Mr Barker. This was not contested and no further nominations were made.
- 74.3. It was PROPOSED by MR BACKHOUSE and SECONDED by MR COWLING and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that MR BARKER be elected as CHAIRMAN.

75. Appointment of Chairman

75.1. Mr Barker accepted and was appointed Chairman.

76. Election of Vice Chairman

76.1. The CEO set out the procedure for the election of the Vice Chairman and oversaw proceedings.

76.2. Nominations were invited by the CEO for the role of Vice Chairman; Mr Barker nominated Mr Backhouse for Vice Chairman. Mr Backhouse accepted the nomination which was not contested, no further nominations were made.

76.3. It was PROPOSED by MR BARKER and SECONDED by MR HIRST and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that MR BACKHOUSE be elected as VICE CHAIRMAN.

77. Appointment of Vice Chairman

77.1. Mr Backhouse accepted and was appointed as Vice Chairman.

78. Minutes of the previous Board Meeting, 13th May 2019

78.1. The Chairman invited comments on the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.

78.2. It was PROPOSED by MR BARKER and SECONDED by MR COWLING and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that these minutes be adopted as a true record.

79. Matters Arising

79.1. The CEO ran through the matters that had now been resolved.

79.2. With regards to matters 35.4 / 53.3 – Non-Mechanical Weed Control, the CEO advised that these had now been carried out. The Chairman enquired if any Board Members had comments on areas that have been weeded. As these areas were currently under water it was asked that Board Members keep an eye on these.

79.3. Regarding matter 39.4 , Goole Fields Wind Farms Community Fund, the CEO advised that he had looked into financial support for pumping stations and had come to the conclusion that it was not worth trying to secure money from this as most of it had now gone. Mr Hirst commented that the Twin Rivers Wind Farm Community Fund was struggling to spend money and was looking to expand the funding area. The Chairman commented that Board members could raise questions about funding opportunities.

79.4. The CEO explained that in relation to item 35.2, information about which watercourses were to be maintained had now been published on the ADOC Boards' website. The CEO presented members with the Definitive Map and demonstrated how it works.

79.5. Mr Backhouse queried Board membership and asked if there was vacancy for further Ratepayer Members. The CEO explained that the only vacancies were for members appointed by the Council, not ratepayer members. This matter (46.1) was ongoing.

80. Minutes of the ADOC Consortium Meeting, 26th November 2019

80.1. The Chairman drew Board members' attention to Black Drain Drainage Board joining ADOC as a new consortium member.

80.2. The CEO informed that from April 2020, Black Drain would be joining ADOC under the same agreement terms as the other ADOC boards.

80.3. He added that from April, OHDB would also be looking after the Danvm Board and explained that due to the size of the Board, the agreement was based on Shared Services costs rather than a fixed contract.

80.4. There were no Matters arising from these minutes.

80.5. The Minutes were PROPOSED by MR BARKER and SECONDED by MR BACKHOUSE and were NOTED by all as a true record.

81. Financial Position

81.1. The CEO directed members to the latest financial position in respect of income and expenditure up to quarter 3 according to the Board's approved budget. He explained that, based on estimated outturns at the end of the financial year, the Board stood to have a budget surplus of £10.5k. This additional amount was mainly due to the special levy adjustment carried out earlier in the year. He cautioned that the situation may of course change by year end.

81.2. Some discussion took place on the procedure for working out the drainage rate. The CEO explained that the rate was calculated based on the aggregate annual rental value (AV) of all land and property within the drainage district, based on values equivalent to those in 1988.

81.3. The discussion turned to maintenance work to be undertaken during 2020/21. The CEO advised he would like to undertake a full programme of works over the next season. The OTM added that work needed to fit around the budget, and that this would be reviewed next year, however if the network was brought to a serviceable state, it would be less costly to maintain.

81.4. The CEO informed that in order for these works to be undertaken, £8000 would need to be drawn from reserves or the drainage rate would need to be increased. He went on to say that his recommendation was for a 3% rise; this was expected to be below inflation.

81.5. The Chairman queried if the option to keep raising the rate was viable. The CEO advised that in order to avoid drawing from reserves, a significant increase of 15.2% would be needed.

82. Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled to Q3

82.1. The CEO directed Board Members to the schedule of Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled during the first three quarters of 2019/20.

82.2. It was AGREED by ALL that the Board approves the invoices paid and accounts settled, totalling £64,673.86, as a true record.

83. Internal Audit

83.1. The CEO informed that there had been nothing of concern to report back from the Board's Internal Auditors who had carried out a review of the Board's accounts and governance on the 21st November 2019. The auditor had recommended two minor points regarding the Board's meeting agendas and minutes; firstly, that "Any Other Business" should be removed as a standing item from meeting agendas, and secondly, that for ease of reference, the total expenditure figure for the relevant financial quarter(s), as reported under the Invoices Paid agenda item, should be recorded in the minutes.

84. Conclusion of Annual Audit 2018/19

84.1. The CEO explained that the Board's External Auditors PKF Littlejohn had completed their annual audit of the Board and concluded that there were no matters that required attention (clean bill of health). The results of the report had been published on the Board's website.

85. Budget & Rate Setting

85.1. It was noted that much of the details of the Budget and Rate setting had been covered under Item 13 on the agenda (Financial Position).

85.2. The CEO directed Board Members to the details laid out in the meeting papers and ran through them. The CEO explained that the Board was required to set the rate and special levy demand, and to notify the local authority by 15th February.

85.3. The CEO précised the Budget Report and Maintenance Plans laid out in item 17 of the meeting papers.

85.4. He explained that the rate was calculated based on the aggregate annual rental value (AV) of all land and property within the drainage district based on values equivalent to those in 1988; the Board must first decide on their budget requirement both in next and future years, giving consideration to:

- Operational Expenditure Requirement in 2020/21
- Capital Expenditure Requirement in 2020/21
- Other Commitments
- Requirement for Capital and Emergency Reserves

Reserves

85.5. The CEO recommended that at least 66% or $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Board's operational budget be held as reserves in case of an unforeseen disaster or emergency, such as the 2013 tidal surge event.

- 85.6. It was previously estimated that a substantial investment will be needed to bring the Board's assets up to an acceptable standard. This included improving the Board's existing pumping station to make it compliant with the Eel regulations, replacing tidal outfall doors and installing a much-needed pumping station at the end of the Swinefleet Warming Drain.
- 85.7. It was hoped that the government would change its funding formula in the next investment round to recognise that many assets such as pumping stations were reaching the end of their useful asset life. At present the only realistic alternative source of income was the statutory drainage rate.
- 85.8. It was most unlikely that the Board had enough reserves to meet the required capital investment.

The Impact of Special Levy Transfers

- 85.9. The CEO explained that Special Levy transfers were adjustments to ratepayer records when all or part of a hereditament changed from agricultural use to non-agricultural use or vice versa. The Special Levy charged on non-agricultural property was generally at a greater value/m² basis than the drainage rates charged on agricultural property, so special levy transfers could generate an increase in the Board's overall statutory income. However, due to the relatively low rate of development in the district this year, special levy transfers were unlikely to make a substantial difference to income.

Budget Estimate

- 85.10. The CEO referred members to the current estimated outturn position and budget at Appendix C
- 85.11. He explained that this year, mainly due to the one-off special levy transfers, the outturn was showing a slight surplus meaning that a fuller programme of works could be funded next year without a substantial increase in costs.
- 85.12. He added that all other costs were estimates based on anticipated operational spend.

CEO Recommendation

- 85.13. For the year 2019/20 the Board had resolved that the rate should be set at 13.39p/£; this had raised £38,966 from agricultural ratepayers and £27,844 from domestic and business ratepayers (Special Levy).
- 85.14. The December forecast for (RPI) inflation was predicted to outturn at around 3.1% in Q4 2019/20.
- 85.15. It was PROPOSED by MR BARKER and SECONDED by MR HIRST and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the proposed budget for 2020/21 as shown at *Appendix C* be approved.

85.16. It was PROPOSED by MR BARKER and SECONDED by MR BACKHOUSE and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the rate be raised by an expected below-inflation increase of 3% and set at 13.79p in the £.

86. Policies Review

86.1. The CEO explained that in the interest of good governance, several of the Board's policy documents had been reviewed and updated by the PFM, directing them to Appendix D of the supplementary papers.

86.2. The CEO gave an overview of the policies and explained that many of them were based on ADA templates or guidance. He added that the PFM was currently in the process of reviewing the Financial Regulations.

86.3. The CEO advised that once the policies had been adopted by the Board, they would be published on the Board's website.

86.4. The CEO commented that as part of good governance there would be more policies reviewed and brought to future meetings.

86.5. It was PROPOSED by MR BARKER and SECONDED by MR BACKHOUSE and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the updated policy documents be adopted by the Board.

87. Register of Members' Interests

87.1. The CEO explained that the Board have a duty to keep a register of members' interest and that these were to be reviewed annually. These were filled in and handed back by those members present.

88. Capital Programme

88.1. An update was given by the CEO regarding the Humber Head Levels Strategy.

88.2. He continued that a flood economics specialist and a modelling consultant had been employed to look at what would happen if maintenance of assets stopped.

88.3. He added that £100,000 had been secured to carry out this survey to look at all the ADOC Boards' and OHDB's assets and what capital expenditure was required.

88.4. The CEO explained that this process needed to be thorough in order to apply for funding.

89. Maintenance

89.1. As agreed under Additional Agenda Items, the Chairman raised the matter of culverts in the Board's area. He explained that a culvert had been removed at the end of November as it had been holding up water. He continued that it had been a steel pipe, like many of the culverts in the Board's district which were coming to the end of their design life and needed replacing.

- 89.2. The CEO commented that caution was needed when it came to ownership; if these were put in for the Board's benefit then it was likely they would fall under Board ownership. However, had they been put in for landowner benefit, it was likely they would fall under riparian ownership. The OTM commented that in his opinion it was likely that they had been put in by the Board.
- 89.3. The Chairman commented that it was possible that the potential of the pumps was not being realised due to the problems caused by the culverts. The Chairman pointed to the culverts on the map and some discussion took place on potential issues arising.
- 89.4. The Chairman expressed that he would like to alleviate this issue by proposing to replace these in one go.
- 89.5. The CEO advised that these assets would first need to be vested as the Board's apparatus. In total there were 13 culverts on the map of the Board's district.
- 89.6. The Chairman suggested that a new cut behind Railway Cottages would take out three of the culverts. Some discussion took place on this and the expense to the Board.
- 89.7. The CEO recommended that following the proposal from the Chairman to maintain the culverts, a couple of proposals needed to be agreed by the Board.
- 89.8. He advised that a caveat of 'for the time being' be added to the proposal for the Board to vest the culverts from Old Lane Gate/Crossmoor Bank to New Road Crossing into the Board's maintenance regime.
- 89.9. Some discussion took place on this recommendation with the CEO commenting that although it was likely that the culverts were put in by the IDB, they were not necessarily owned by the IDB.
- 89.10. Mr Backhouse commented that with the qualifier of 'for the time being' he was agreeable to this proposal.
- 89.11. It was PROPOSED by MR BACKHOUSE and SECONDED by MR COWLING and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that for the time being, the Board is minded to vest the culverts from Old Lane Gate / Crossmoor Bank to New Road Crossing into its maintenance regime.
- 89.12. It was PROPOSED by Mr REED and SECONDED by MR COWLING and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board considers having a programme of works to maintain the culverts identified.
- 89.13. The Chairman suggested a proposal for the possible new cut [behind railway cottages]; the CEO advised that a feasibility survey should be carried out first. Members discussed the work that was needed, and the Chairman commented that he believed the flow would be increased considerably should work on a new cut be undertaken.
- 89.14. The CEO identified this area on the map and suggested it be investigated by the OTM. **ACTION
OTM**

- 89.15. The issues surrounding Thorne Moors were discussed; the Chairman informed that the water levels have not dropped and that the Pumping Station on the Moors was not pumping at all.
- 89.16. The CEO explained that some of the problems with the pumping station were being caused by Swinefleet Warping Drain being blocked. He informed that an agreement was in place which stated maintenance of this section would be undertaken by the Board and was included in the yearly payment. The CEO read the agreement to Board Members.
- 89.17. The CEO presented the maps showing the section of drain that the agreement stated should be maintained by the Board.
- 89.18. He went on to say that there may be a possibility of further funding from Natural England but that £20,000 needs to be spent to properly maintain the drain.
- 89.19. The Chairman asked if it would be possible for a contribution from Goole Fields IDB.
- 89.20. All Board members agreed this work needed to be carried out, regardless of the outcome of further funding being made available.
- 89.21. It was PROPOSED by MR BARKER and SECONDED by MR BACKHOUSE and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that given the information brought to the meeting, the CEO is authorised to carry out works up to £20,000 to bring Warping Ditch into a serviceable condition.
- 89.22. The Chairman commented that the buffer zone around Thorne Moors needed to be re-implemented.

90. Planning and Development.

- 90.1. The OTM informed that there were only a couple of planning applications received for consultation, with nothing major to report.

91. Date of Next Meeting

- 91.1. The CEO informed that the next meeting would be around mid-May 2020 and that a letter would be sent out to Board Members in the coming weeks.
- 91.2. He advised that the January meeting next year would be moved to a later date in January or early February due to issues with postage and holidays over the Christmas period.