



Reedness & Swinefleet Internal Drainage Board

Minutes from the Full Board Meeting held on Monday 25th January 2021 via Zoom

PRESENT:

Ratepayer Members: Mr M Barker Mr I Backhouse Mr G Cowling

Appointed Members: Cllr L Sargeantson

Co-opted Members:

Members Present:

APOLOGIES:

Ratepayer Members: Mr T Reed

Appointed Members:

Co-opted Members:

ABSENT:

Ratepayer Members:

Appointed Members:

Co-Opted Members:

IN ATTENDANCE:

Officers:

Mr McLachlan – Chief Executive

Mr Towse – Operational & Technical Manager

Miss Smith – Board Secretary (Minutes)

Others:

Andrew McLachlan
Chief Executive Officer and Clerk to the Board
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112. Order of Meeting

112.1. With the consent of the Board, the CEO chaired the first part of the meeting until the Chair was installed.

113. Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

113.1. The CEO welcomed Members and Officers to the Board.

114. Declarations of Interest

114.1. None

115. Health and Safety

115.1. None

116. Additional Agenda Items

116.1. Mr Cowling asked for a discussion on the future of the drainage board and how this will be funded.

117. Election Results

117.1. The CEO advised the Board of the election results, advising three elected positions remained vacant so the Board may wish to co-opt members.

117.2. Cllr Sargeantson advised that she had asked the Parish council to circulate the message and ask if anyone may want to join the Board.

117.3. Mr Barker requested to co-opt Mr J Cowling and Mr W Gagg to the Board. Mr Cowling advised he would like to approach Mr J Drury.

117.4. The Board unanimously resolved to co-opt Mr J Cowling, Mr W Gagg and Mr Drury to the Board should they accept. [CEO to write to these gentlemen] **ACTION CEO**

118. Election of Chair

118.1. The CEO set out the procedure for the election of the Chair and oversaw proceedings.

118.2. It was PROPOSED by MR BACKHOUSE and SECONDED by MR COWLING and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that MR BARKER be elected as Chair of the Board.

119. Appointment of Chair

119.1. Mr Barker was duly appointed as Chair of the Board.

120. Election of Vice Chair

120.1. It was PROPOSED by MR BARKER and SECONDED by MR COWLING and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that MR BACKHOUSE be elected as Vice-Chair of the Board

121. Appointment of Vice Chair

121.1. Mr Backhouse accepted position of Vice-Chair.

122. Minutes of the previous Full Board Meeting

122.1. The Chair drew attention to the minutes of the previous meeting are presented at *Appendix A*.

122.2. It was PROPOSED by MR COWLING and SECONDED by MR BACKHOUSE and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board adopt these minutes as a true record of that meeting.

123. Matters Arising

123.1. Cllr Sargeantson advised she will approach other parish councils in relation to minute 46.3.

123.2. The CEO advised that minute 89.14 is to be discussed at capital programme.

123.3. The Chair advised that minute 104.9 is now resolved adding that ERYC have accepted the planning to compost on the site but the Highway maintenance is still ongoing.

123.4. The Chair advised that in relation to minute 105.5, the silt was removed by Godfreys.

123.5. The CEO updated Members regarding minute 110.14 and his knowledge of the proposed new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS). He advised that he had been pushing directly and through ADA to ensure that payments for flooding are included as a key ELMS policy.

124. Minutes of ADOC Consortium Meeting

124.1. The Chair drew attention to the minutes of the ADOC Consortium meeting held on 11 November 2020 and went on to present items significant to the Board from that meeting.

124.2. The Chair advised the Board that telemetry installations will be across all Boards managed by the consortium.

124.3. He added that he believes there is an issue with water coming from the Moors onto the surrounding area and had a conversation with Michael Doherty [Chair of Goole Fields IDB] who is wanting to put a temporary pump to pump into the Warping Drain.

124.4. The CEO responded, stating that if more water is to be pumped into the Warping Drain, the existing contribution to this Board would need to be reviewed. The Chair agreed.

124.5. Mr Backhouse added that he is mindful that the whole system is taking more water due to the problems on the Moors. He advised he is of the opinion that Goole Fields would not have

as much to fund if the Moors were pumping and managing their own water and that the Board is taking far more water than it should, without a reasonable contribution.

124.6. The CEO informed the Board that £16k is received per year and that this would need to be revisited if a sensible conclusion is not reached with Natural England.

124.7. He added that Officers did approach Natural England, to ask if they wanted us to maintain their section but received no response. He confirmed he will approach Natural England again on the Boards behalf. **Action OTM**

125. Financial Position

125.1. The CEO advised analysis at this stage suggest the outturn position shall be broadly on budget based on expected expenditure for Q4.

125.2. Mr Backhouse asked if an electric rebate had been received. The OTM confirmed there had been a dispute with Npower regarding assumed costs with monies now owed being credited back to the Board in the region of £7k.

125.3. Mr Backhouse asked how much money is held in the Board's reserves. The CEO advised around £85k.

126. Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled to Q3

126.1. The Chair drew attention to Invoices paid and Accounts Settled.

126.2. Mr Backhouse queried the Fairfax invoice. The OTM confirmed this was an error in the papers and this was a recharge amount to the Environment Agency.

126.3. It was PROPOSED by the CHAIR and SECONDED by MR BACKHOUSE and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board approves the invoices paid and accounts settled, totalling £48,878.09 (net) as a true record subject to the amendment above.

127. Internal Audit

127.1. The CEO advised the internal audit for the year ended 31 March 2020 was completed and no matters were raised to give cause for concern.

128. Conclusion of Annual Audit 2019/20

128.1. The CEO advised the Board's External Auditors PKF Littlejohn completed their annual audit of the Board, and no matters were raised to give cause for concern.

129. Budget & Rate Setting

129.1. The Chair asked the CEO to explain the budget.

- 129.2. The CEO displayed an electronic copy of the budget and explained in detail each line of the budget calculations.
- 129.3. The Chair queried the weeding and flailing costs and requested the CEO email Board members with updated figures. **ACTION CEO**
- 129.4. Mr Backhouse queried whether it would be helpful to have further projected budgets so the Board can prepare to build up reserves. He added that a longer-term rolling budget would be more helpful when looking at the future of the Board. **ACTION CEO**
- 129.5. It was PROPOSED by the CHAIR and SECONDED by MR BACKHOUSE and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the proposed budget for 2021/22 is set at £92,093.
- 129.6. It was PROPOSED by the CHAIR and SECONDED by MR BACKHOUSE and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that to meet the approved budget the rate is set at 15p£.

130. Register of Members' Interests

- 130.1. The Board Secretary asked if members would like to receive electronic calendar invitations, advising that it would mean that other Board members would be in receipt of their email addresses.
- 130.2. Board members agreed to the sharing of their email addresses with other Board members.

131. Capital Programme

- 131.1. A discussion around the proposed new cut at the rear of the railway cottages ensued with Mr Barker explaining the benefits of this intervention.
- 131.2. The CEO asked if the Board gives authority to spend up to £10k on the two items of work, to provide the materials for two culverts and to spend the remaining balance on the new cut.
- 131.3. It was PROPOSED by the CHAIR and SECONDED by MR BACKHOUSE and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board gives authority to the CEO to spend up to £10k on the two items of work as above.
- 131.4. The CEO asked the Board how they would like to proceed if the cost of works is over budget.
- 131.5. Mr Backhouse stated he was happy to hand delegated authority to the Chair communicating via email and telephone call.

132. Maintenance Programme

- 132.1. The OTM confirmed that most flailing works have gone to plan. With the contractor performing well and completing everything which has been asked. He continued to advise that the current system of maintaining the main watercourses and splitting north/south seems to be working.

- 132.2. He added that spraying works have not worked as well this year but believes everything has been completed which was requested.
- 132.3. The Chair stated he believes the results will show mid spring in relation spraying works and that cleaning out major tributaries each year has been the correct decision however the amount of spoil coming out of the drains is something landowners have struggled with this year and requested the person cleaning the dike is to spread it further to allow it to dry out quicker. **ACTION OTM**
- 132.4. The OTM asked if the New Cut will be the primary route or Oldgate drain? The Chair requested Oldgate drain is kept as the primary route and wait to see how successful the new cut is.
- 132.5. Mr Backhouse agreed that this should be the case until the waterflow can be monitored.
- 132.6. The CEO advised that the OTM will be looking to purchase a pontoon for operators to complete chainsaw works. Mr Backhouse asked if works would commence at the clough working towards the dam this year. The OTM confirmed that the weed boat will be sent in first.
- 132.7. Mr Backhouse informed Officers that there is a large amount of silt on riverside of the drain heads and asked if discussions can be held with ABP to ensure this is kept clear.
- 132.8. The Chair advised that ABP can be contacted by telephone if clearing of silt is required. **ACTION OTM**
- 132.9. The Chair advised that both he and Mr Backhouse visited a pump that Board Contractors were using and believed it may be viable to pump over the drain head at Reedness.
- 132.10. He added that he spoke with the CEO and the OTM regarding the pump and concluded that ultimately, the Board need to find a way of improving the movement of water going forward.
- 132.11. The Chair advised that installing a large-scale pump at the end of the warping drain has been considered but a serious discussion must be held with the Board as to how this will be achieved.
- 132.12. He asked for Members of the Board to discuss as to whether the status quo is acceptable or whether things need to be moved on. He added that the only direct route into the river is at Reedness.
- 132.13. Mr Backhouse said he believed the issue the Board faces is being unable to get water away fast enough. He stated he is a farmer of some of the lowest lying land in the drainage area and this issue is making some of the land unsustainable.
- 132.14. He continued, adding that if these events continue, with the overtopping of the Foulsey dike, the more land that drains higher up the hill, more of the Boards land becomes useless.
- 132.15. The CEO advised that the Board is too small to make major investment decisions, stating that the Board should consider a strategic option with other Boards. This would give a larger base

in respect of funding, budget, and PWLB. He added that funds would be difficult to raise under the current regime.

- 132.16. Mr Backhouse queried, asking hypothetically what would be to stop the Board from doubling the rates.
- 132.17. The CEO responded that from a practical point of view, water level management of flood risk is a very important infrastructure priority but on a wider, political point of view, the Board would receive enquiries and criticism regarding this.
- 132.18. Mr Backhouse asked what funding was available through the Windfarm Reserve Scheme for the temporary pump. Cllr Sargeantson replied advising that the Board does not qualify or meet the criteria despite best efforts of pointing out the benefits to the community.
- 132.19. Mr Backhouse asked if the canvassing of the public, who want the pump to be installed, would support the cause. He then asked what level of funding was available.
- 132.20. Cllr Sargeantson advised she did not believe this would make the developer rewrite their criteria but would be happy to take this to the developer for discussion. She also advised that from Twin Rivers, the Board would be able to apply for around £50k and that there is a cap on how much can be spent each year.
- 132.21. The CEO agreed that the Board need a strategic pumping station scheme, advising that in advance of the next investment period, there is a modelling exercise underway. Due to this, The CEO advised he believed the Board may be able to achieve some feasibility funding, but this cannot be done until after April.
- 132.22. The OTM advised that funding will not be received as there are few houses in the Board area and that because much of the rate is paid by landowners.
- 132.23. The CEO proposed a temporary pump may be in order to plug a gap.
- 132.24. Mr Backhouse asked for provision at Reedness Drain head, so that extra pumping capacity is available that can be put into use quickly. A discussion ensued relating to the pump.
- 132.25. Cllr Sargeantson asked if the Board would consider amalgamation with another Board.
- 132.26. Mr Backhouse declared that he previously disagreed with amalgamation and is aware this will take a considerable amount of time to achieve.
- 132.27. The CEO asked if Members would like him to have a conversation with other Boards regarding long term amalgamation and advised that temporary pumping options should be considered to get the Board through the next period, to which the Board agreed.

133. Date of Next Meeting

- 133.1. The next Full Board meeting is due to be held on Monday 14th June 2021 at 9:30am.