



# Vale of Pickering Internal Drainage Board

## MINUTES OF THE FULL BOARD MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 28<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2022 AT WINTRINGHAM COMMUNITY HALL

### PRESENT

Elected	Mr R Wainwright	Mr R Tindall	Mr J Stockdale	Mr A Nutt (C)
Appointed	Cllr M Potter	Cllr D Cussons		
Co-opted	Mr M Morley			

### APOLOGIES

Elected	
Appointed	Cllr S Tucker

### ABSENT

Elected	
Appointed	

### IN ATTENDANCE

Officers	Mr A McLachlan – Chief Executive Officer
	Mr R Towse – Director of Operations
	Miss Smith – Board Secretary (Minutes)
	Mr D Martin – Asset Manager

**Andrew McLachlan**  
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**82. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

82.1. The Chair welcomed Members and Officers to the Board noting apologies from Cllr S Tucker.

**83. Declarations of Interest**

83.1. None

**84. Health & Safety**

84.1. None

**85. Additional Agenda Items**

85.1. None

**86. Minutes of the previous Full Board Meeting**

86.1. The Chair drew attention to minutes from the previous meeting at Appendix A.

86.2. It was PROPOSED by Cllr Cussons and SECONDED by Mr R Wainwright and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board adopt these minutes as a true record of the previous meeting.

**87. Matters Arising**

87.1. Cllr Potter asked whether there had been any update in relation to minute 71.1.

87.2. The CEO advised that the Head of Planning at Ryedale Council had been contacted, he was helpful but non-committal. The CEO advised there are savings in the Board's Byelaws which prevent the Board taking action against water companies when their actions would otherwise be unlawful. After a discussion at the Joint Consortium Committee, there was an action on the CEO to write to the Minister asking her to support the removal of these savings.

87.3. Mr Tindall raised the purchase of the Mecalac and the cost of this, to which the CEO confirmed the order had been placed, with the deposit paid for through reserves, and that purchasing as a Consortium had allowed cost savings.

**88. Minutes of Consortium Committee Meeting**

88.1. The Chair drew attention to minutes from the Joint Consortium Committee.

88.2. The CEO advised that the Consortium Committee had discussed and agreed a shared services budget, costs of which were included in the budget the Members approved at this meeting.

**89. Maintenance Programme**

89.1. The CEO reiterated the high density of adopted watercourses in the Boards district and the difficulty this poses in being able to effectively complete planned and reactive maintenance.

- 89.2. He stressed the importance of the Board being able to provide a consistent and unified level of service and maintenance standard across the Board area, whilst being mindful of increasing budget pressures.
- 89.3. The Asset Manager gave a presentation of watercourse maintenance. He explained that officers had undertaken an objective and strategic assessment of the Boards watercourses and presented a proposed rationalised, definitive maintenance map.
- 89.4. The CEO emphasised the impact of inflation and the proposed changes to red diesel tax treatment would have on maintenance in the upcoming year and advised the proposed maintenance map is what he believed the Board could afford.
- 89.5. Cllr Potter asked whether feedback had been received from landowners relating to the level of service they received to which the DO responded that specifically not, however vehicle tracking, and visual inspections of the areas clear showed an inconsistent level of service.
- 89.6. The AM explained the two main constraints the Board faced were time and money and the aim of the rationalisation exercise was to ensure consistent maintenance, transparency, and accountability of Board responsibilities, and justified public expenditure.
- 89.7. The Chair agreed that the Board needed to accept they must consider rationalising the network but advised members the proposed maintenance map was not final, and the Board should be involved in completing the project.
- 89.8. Cllr Potter queried whether reducing the number of watercourses maintained by the Board would mean an improved, more regular standard of maintenance and if those watercourses removed from the map would fall back to riparian responsibility. The CEO confirmed this was correct.
- 89.9. The Chair requested a sub-committee is formed to scrutinise the proposal.
- 89.10. The Chair, Cllr Potter, Mr Tindall, Mr Stockdale, and Mr Morley volunteered to participate in the sub-committee.
- 89.11. It was PROPOSED by Mr Tindall and SECONDED by Cllr Potter and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board delegate a sub-committee to approve a definitive maintenance map.
- 89.12. In relation to maintenance completed this year, the DO advised that four contractors have been flailing, however one has already expressed that he will not be able to continue in future years due to the changes in tax treatment for red diesel.
- 89.13. He advised that he had discussed annual leave with operational staff due to concerns over their work life balance and the importance of management promoting staff wellbeing and adherence to the working time directive.

## **90. Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled**

- 90.1. The Chair drew attention to Invoices Paid & Accounts Settled.

90.2. It was PROPOSED by Cllr D Cussons and SECONDED by Mr Wainwright and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board notes and approves the record of Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled for the last financial quarter being £195,288.77 net.

## **91. Financial Position**

91.1. The CEO presented the Boards Financial Position in the Budget Setting Paper presented at Appendix D.

## **92. Budget & Rate Setting**

92.1. The CEO advised that the different rates in three areas likely results in an inconsistent level of service across the district, he considered the harmonisation of the rate should have occurred some time ago and urgently recommended the introduction of a consistent maintenance standard.

92.2. He explained that the rate proposal takes into consideration the red diesel tax treatment changes and inflation.

92.3. Mr Tindall noted that the proposal meant two areas would see an increase in rate, whilst one would be reduced, and highlighted that with a rationalisation exercise occurring at the same time, ratepayers may not be overly accepting.

92.4. The CEO reinforced his strongest recommendation that the Board must progress as one Board and Members should not continue to divide the area into the three former drainage districts.

92.5. The CEO added that the budget and rate proposal would allow the Board to absorb some costs rather than passing to the ratepayer, meaning the rate increase effectively remains below inflation.

92.6. The Chair added that ratepayers can approach the Board regarding maintenance queries and concerns in writing.

92.7. The CEO raised concerns regarding the Boards reserves position, highlighting that this is falling significantly short of the recommended 75% of operational expenditure.

92.8. The Board discussed the purchase of the Mecalac, pickup truck and operational depot. The CEO advised that PWLB loan could be applied for which would mean a fixed interest rate over their asset life, taken to be a 7-year period, with repayments of c£38k per year.

92.9. It was PROPOSED by Cllr D Cussons and SECONDED by Mr R Wainwright and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board authorises the CEO to apply for a Public Works Loan for £250k to be financed over 7 years to fund the purchase of a new excavator, new vehicle, and portable buildings (including establishment costs).

92.10. It was PROPOSED by Mr Wainwright and SECONDED by Mr Stockdale and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board approves the budget of £799,244 and to meet the approved budget the Board set the rate for all districts at 12.5p£.

**93. Development Control & Planning - Q3 (October-December 2021)**

- 93.1. The CEO advised that a drainage plan had been agreed in relation to the development at Gristhorpe, that there were planned upgrades to watercourses and a commuted sum agreement was now in place.
- 93.2. The AM added that the local authority are currently withholding funds until the outfall is brought to a better standard.
- 93.3. The CEO advised the Board of the positive relationships with planning officers at NYCC, formed by the Boards Senior Development Control Officer.

**94. Date of Next Meeting (s)**

- 94.1. The Board Secretary advised that calendar invites would be sent to Board members informing them of dates for 2022/23 Board meetings.