



Dempster
Internal Drainage Board

**MINUTES OF THE FULL BOARD MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 19TH JUNE 2023 AT 24 INNOVATION DRIVE, HU15 2FW.**

PRESENT

Elected

Mr P Jacklin (C) Mr R Hall Mr P Chantry Mr J Cowling Mr J Phillipson

Appointed

Mr J Frost

APOLOGIES

Elected

Mr M Backhouse Mr D Walton Mr M Johnson

Appointed

ABSENT

Elected

Appointed

Cllr L Sargeantson Cllr N Coultish

IN ATTENDANCE

Officers

Mr A McLachlan – Chief Executive Officer
Mr R Towse – Director of Operations
Ms A Cowen – Director of Policy & Finance
Miss L Smith – Board Secretary

Andrew McLachlan
Chief Executive Officer and Clerk to the Board
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1823. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies.

1823.1. The Chair welcomed Members and Officers to the Board, noting apologies from Mr Backhouse, Mr Walton, and Mr Johnson.

1824. Declarations of Interest

1824.1. None.

1825. Additional Agenda Items

1825.1. None.

1826. Health and Safety

1826.1. The CEO advised that an annual report would be provided as part of the risk register review later in the meeting. There were no concerns or reports to make.

1827. Natural Environment

1827.1. The CEO presented the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for the Board to consider for adoption, which replaced the previous BAP prepared some years earlier. He explained that this plan supported the Board in meeting its statutory requirements in sustaining and enhancing biodiversity within the Board's district.

1827.2. He added that the BAP provided an audit of biodiversity within and interacting with the drainage district and established some strategic objectives underpinned by a series of action plans. The operational staff had received biodiversity and biosecurity training, enabling them to identify and record the presence of habitats and species when carrying out maintenance works.

1827.3. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr Phillipson and **SECONDED** by Mr Chantry and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board adopt the Biodiversity Action Plan.

1828. Minutes of the previous Full Board Meeting

1828.1. The Chair drew attention to minutes of the previous meeting.

1828.2. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr Chantry and **SECONDED** by Mr FROST and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board approve these minutes as a true record of that meeting.

1829. Matters Arising

1829.1. Minute 1803.13 – Swang PS upgrade - the CEO advised that there was no further feedback regarding the government's asset replacement fund.

1829.2. Minute 1822.3 had been resolved – more of the watercourse network would be subject to spraying over the 2023/24 maintenance season.

1829.3. Mr Chantry asked whether there was an allocation for serviceability works in the budget, to which the CEO confirmed that there was.

1830. Annual Risk Register and Health & Safety Review

1830.1. The CEO confirmed that he had completed a desktop review comparing business risks against the previous year.

1830.2. The CEO highlighted that there had been very little change besides becoming a 'cyber essentials accredited' organisation, meaning that the Board had introduced new software and security procedures to reduce the risk of the IT system being compromised.

1830.3. The CEO highlighted his concerns with the Board's financial reserves in terms of responding to an emergency incident. The Board was at risk of insolvency if there were to be multiple serious incidents.

1830.4. He highlighted that the urgent remedial works carried out in March had reduced the Board's reserves going into 2023/24 and that this may impact on the maintenance programme.

1830.5. The Chair queried if it would be sensible to increase the rates by 10% each year to assist the Board in building reserves, to which the CEO advised that this may be challenged by ratepayers and the local authority.

1830.6. The DO commented that this highlighted the importance of putting a serviceability programme in place for the next 5-10 years to look at the slips and instability across the Board's district, in line with the budgeting process.

1830.7. Mr Chantry highlighted that if the Board were to amalgamate with another(s), this may improve its financial resilience, but there may be an increased risk with taking on the other Board's responsibilities and liabilities.

1830.8. He then asked what the likely reduction in cost savings would be if Dempster were to amalgamate with another Board or Board's, to which the CEO replied that he would investigate. **Action CEO**

1830.9. The CEO drew attention to the draft risk register for 2023/24.

1830.10. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr CHANTRY and **SECONDED** by Mr HALL and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board approve the revised risk register for 2023/24.

1830.11. The CEO next referred to the Health and Safety Management System, explaining that there was an annual requirement for the Board to review progress.

1830.12. He reported that managers had held two internal reviews of the system along with reviews of risk assessments and COSHH, and it was intended that administrative, technical and operational staff would participate in review meetings later in the year.

1830.13. He confirmed that there were no incidents or near misses to report.

1830.14. It was **PROPOSED** by MR COWLING and **SECONDED** by MR PHILLIPSON and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board note and accept the annual review of the Health and Safety Management System.

1831. Accounting Statements and Annual Return

1831.1. The CEO referred members to the Board's accounting statements and annual return for the period 2022/23, which had been compiled by the Board's accountants, Hunter Gee Holroyd Ltd.

1831.2. The CEO summarised the accounts, noting a surplus of £6k and a modest increase in the Board's reserves. In light of the discussion under the previous item regarding the Board's limited reserves, he cautioned that these accounts did not include the £10k urgent repair works committed in March 2023.

1831.3. With no further questions on the accounts, the CEO referred members to the annual governance statements for their consideration. He advised that, as previously explained, the Board must answer "No" to assertion four.

1831.4. The CEO proceeded to read the eight annual governance statements for the Board's consideration.

1831.5. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr Frost and **SECONDED** by Mr Hall and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23.

1831.6. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr Chantry and **SECONDED** by Mr Jacklin and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board approve the Accounting Statements for 2022/23.

1832. Budget Refresh

1832.1. The CEO advised that the approved budget had been amended slightly, based on the current financial position. It now included the c£10k serviceability programme paid for in March. He also proposed that spraying replace de-weeding.

1832.2. Mr Chantry asked for details of the reductions in costs, to which the CEO presented the current budget alongside the refreshed budget (electronically) for comparison.

1832.3. The Board discussed some further amendments to the budget.

1832.4. The CEO then queried if the Board wished to proceed as planned for works on the pumping stations with an application being made to the PWLB, advising that the fixed interest rate had increased to 5% as opposed to the previous 1%.

1832.5. Mr Chantry expressed his view that he did not believe borrowing funds at this time would be a wise decision, although acknowledging that the pumping station would need attention at some point.

- 1832.6. The Board agreed that it should plan to build-up reserves in order to replace and repair its pumps and plan to take action to ensure that appropriate maintenance is carried out across the Board's district.
- 1832.7. The Board enquired whether additional flailing works could be undertaken on a section of Decoy Drain. The CEO advised against this due to the reserves position. The DO suggested that he would attempt to find an alternative method to manage this.
- 1832.8. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr Frost and **SECONDED** by Mr Cowling and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board approve the revised budget for 2023/4.

1833. Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled

- 1833.1. The DPF drew attention to the schedule of invoices, to which there were no queries.
- 1833.2. The DO noted that the electricity costs were not on the schedule due to late billing, but had been included in the budget.
- 1833.3. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr Chantry and **SECONDED** by Mr Phillipson and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board note and approve the record of Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled, totalling £10,979.81 (net) for the last financial quarter.

1834. Internal Audit

- 1834.1. The DO reported that the internal auditor had conducted the final audit for 2022/23 and had highlighted the Board's vulnerable reserves position. Otherwise, there were no other significant areas of concern. A copy of the internal auditor's report had been provided within the meeting papers.

1835. Elections Programme, Electoral Register and Board Membership

- 1835.1. The DPF presented the elections programme and confirmed that the electoral register had been made public for consideration, with no queries or challenges received.
- 1835.2. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr Hall and **SECONDED** by Mr Jacklin and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board approve the Electoral Register (1st April 2023).
- 1835.3. The CEO briefly explained the changes at East Riding of Yorkshire Council due to the recent elections and added that the Board were to await any appointments of new councillors.

1836. Drainage Rates

- 1836.1. The DPF confirmed that the first special levy instalment had been received along with the majority of drainage rates owed for 2023/24. She confirmed that there were no significant outstanding balances from the previous year.

1837. Planning & Development

1837.1. The DO advised there were no updates to report since the last meeting.

1838. Maintenance

1838.1. Mr Phillipson highlighted that the most recent flailing works in the dykes alongside his land had caused significant blockages within the network.

1838.2. The CEO queried if the Board were favourable to delegating responsibility for amendments to the maintenance programme to the Chair, to which the Board expressed their unanimous agreement.

1838.3. The Chair requested that the Board be provided with options to consider for the January meeting in relation to maintenance costs and how this may impact a rate increase for 2024/25. **Action CEO.**

1838.4. The Board discussed the cost of consents issued by the Board in relation to development and the new CO2 pipelines which would run through the district.

1838.5. Mr Chantry raised awareness of the activity of badgers at the pipe under the syphon, which is on Network Rail property. The CEO advised the Boards that he would request the development control officer to investigate as to whether Network Rail had powers to assist in resolving issues caused by badgers, such as safe relocation. **Action SDPCO**

1839. Date of Future Meetings

1839.1. Full Board meeting - Monday 22nd January 2024 at 1:00pm

1839.2. ADOC Consortium Committee - Monday 27th November 2023 at 9:30am

1839.3. The CEO made members aware of the ADA Flood & Water exhibition in Carrington, the Driffield Show and a vacancy for a Civil Engineering Apprenticeship.

1839.4. The Chair thanked Members and Officers for their attendance and closed the meeting.