



Reedness & Swinefleet
Internal Drainage Board

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

PRESENT

Elected

Mr M Barker (C) Mr I Backhouse (VC) Mr J Drury Mr G Cowing Mr T Reed
Mr W Gagg

APOLOGIES

Elected

Mr J Cowling

Appointed

ABSENCES

Appointed

Cllr L Sargeantson

IN ATTENDANCE

Officers

Mr A McLachlan – Chief Executive Officer
Mr R Towse – Director of Operation
Ms A Cowen – Director of Policy & Finance
Miss L Smith – Executive Assistant (Bd Sec)
Mrs C Howard – Administrative Assistant

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

200.1. The Chair welcomed Members and Officers to the Board, noting apologies from Mr J Cowling.

200.2. The CEO introduced Mrs C Howard to the Board as the new Administrative Assistant.

200.3. Mr Gagg arrived.

201. Declarations of Interest

201.1. None.

202. Additional Agenda Items

202.1. None.

203. Health and Safety

203.1. The CEO advised that there were no specific incidents to report.

204. Natural Environment

204.1. The Chair drew attention to the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for the Board to consider for adoption.

204.2. The CEO explained the legal responsibilities and statutory requirements of the Board. He explained that the BAP provides a framework for the Board to follow in working to fulfil its duties in respect of sustaining and enhancing the natural environment. It also provided an audit of flora and fauna that was present within or interacted with the Board's district. He added that the Board's operational staff had received training on biodiversity and biosecurity in relation to this plan.

204.3. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr T Reed and **SECONDED** by Mr I Backhouse and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board adopt the Biodiversity Action Plan.

205. Minutes of the previous Full Board Meeting

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

205.2. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr G Cowling and **SECONDED** by Mr T Reed and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board approve these minutes as a true record of that meeting.

206. Matters Arising

206.1. In relation to minute 187.2 which noted an action on the CEO to raise concerns about badger legislation with DEFRA, the CEO advised that this was ongoing.

- 206.2. In relation to minute 197.8, the CEO confirmed that a letter had been sent to Goole Fields Drainage Board. The Chair confirmed that its contents had been discussed at their most recent Board meeting.
- 206.3. In relation to minute 197.10 regarding Crowle Moors, it was confirmed that a meeting had been arranged between Board Officers and the Wildlife Trust in the interests of discussing means of improving the management of water running from the Moors into the Board's district.
- 206.4. It was confirmed that minute 198.5 regarding the serviceability programme had been superseded and would be discussed under the maintenance item.

207. Annual Risk Register and Health & Safety Review

- 207.1. The CEO confirmed that he had completed a desktop review comparing risks against the previous year and drew attention to the draft Risk Register for 2023/24.
- 207.2. The CEO advised that the Board were now 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. He cautioned that this had not reduced the overall score on the risk register because the external threat in relation to cyber security continued to increase.
- 207.3. Mr I Backhouse queried if the reduced risk score from 9 to 3 for the level of reserves held by the Board for emergency purposes was appropriate, given that the Board's reserves were still relatively low in monetary terms.
- 207.4. The CEO agreed that this was a fair challenge but advised that the risk to this Board was lower in comparison to other Boards, due to it having fewer pumping stations.
- 207.5. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr M Barker and **SECONDED** by Mr G Cowling and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board approve the revised risk register for 2023/24.
- 207.6. The CEO went on to introduce the review of the Health and Safety Management System, explaining that it contained a requirement for the Board to review progress on an annual basis. He added that across the YHDB consortium, there had been two Health & Safety Reviews by executive and managerial staff during the review period along with a review of risk assessments.
- 207.7. The CEO noted the presence of giant hogweed within the district.
- 207.8. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr M Barker and **SECONDED** by Mr J Drury and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board note and accept the annual review of the Health and Safety Management System.

208. Accounting Statements and Annual Return

- 208.1. The DPF 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.
- 208.2. The DPF summarised the accounts, highlighting a surplus of £18k.
- 208.3. The Board discussed energy costs and the impact on the Board's finances.
- 208.4. The DPF explained the presentation of the financial figures on the Annual Return documents, noting the restated fixed assets figure following the adoption of a new fixed assets valuation policy in 2022/23.
- 208.5. With no further questions on the accounts, the DPF referred members to the annual governance statements for their consideration. She advised that, as previously explained, the Board must answer "No" to assertion 4.
- 208.6. The DPF proceeded to read the eight annual governance statements.
- 208.7. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr M Barker and **SECONDED** by Mr T Reed and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23.
- 208.8. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr I Backhouse and **SECONDED** by Mr G Cowling and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board approve the Accounting Statements for 2022/23.

209. Budget Refresh

- 209.1. The CEO advised that the original budget for 2023/24 had been amended slightly following receipt of updated contractor costs.
- 209.2. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr M Barker and **SECONDED** by Mr J Drury and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board approve the revised budget for 2023/24.

210. Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled

- 210.1. The Chair drew attention to the schedule of invoices paid.
- 210.2. Mr M Barker highlighted that the contractor's invoice had now been received.
- 210.3. Mr M Barker queried whether the long-reach machine had been hired for the Boards' operational staff to use, to which the DO confirmed that was the case. He added that any costs incurred beyond the Warping Drain would be recharged to the Environment Agency.
- 210.4. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr M Barker and **SECONDED** by Mr T Reed and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board note and approve the record of Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled, totalling £25,418.27 (net) for the last financial quarter.

211. Internal Audit

211.1. The DPF confirmed that the final internal audit for 2022/23 had been completed, referring members to the auditor's report within the meeting papers. The report confirmed that there were no matters of concern and that it acknowledged the implementation of the new fixed asset policy, which had allowed a more accurate representation of the Board's assets. In regard to the level of reserves, it acknowledged the increase on the previous year and recommended that it would be prudent to continue to monitor this during the year and look to implement a strategy and timetable for achieving the desired policy position of 75% proportion of reserves.

211.2. The Board noted and accepted the internal auditor's report.

212. Drainage Rates

212.1. The DPF advised that the amount of drainage rates arrears from 2022/23 stood at approximately £200, and that one account had been referred to the Board's enforcement agents following a successful application for a liability order via the magistrate's court.

212.2. She added that approximately 92% of 2023/24 rates income had been received to date and that reminders were due to be issued shortly.

213. Elections Programme, Electoral Register and Board Membership

213.1. The DPF informed members that an election was due and referred them to a programme setting out the dates for the stages in the process, including advertising the election, the deadline for nomination papers, and a polling date should one be required.

213.2. A copy of the electoral register was presented electronically to Members.

213.3. The DPF confirmed that the electoral register had been advertised online as is required, and there had been no challenges to the electoral register.

213.4. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr M Barker and **SECONDED** by Mr I Backhouse and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board approve the Electoral Register (1st April 2023).

213.5. The Chair drew attention to the recent changes in the Council at the latest local election. At present, Officers were waiting for confirmation as to which appointments will be made to the Boards, although it is the belief that existing Members will remain.

213.6. The DPF left the meeting.

214. Planning & Development

214.1. In relation to the peat works development, the DO advised that changes had been proposed to the phasing of access road improvements and that the Board's SDCPO had been in touch with the LPA regarding this matter. The DO explained that the Board were not in a position to object as the proposed roads were not within 9m of a watercourse.

214.2. He added that a meeting had been held with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust regarding a watercourse within Crowle Moors, which had the potential to be improved and take more runoff.

215. Maintenance

215.1. The DO presented the current maintenance map, advising that £12k of the 2023/24 budget had been allocated to serviceability works, including to repair slips on Foulsey Dike West, Stockfield and Rush Croft.

215.2. The DO advised that a contractor had provided cost estimates for various remedial works. Regarding the concerns about Kings Causeway, he advised that the most appropriate works would be piling, although due to the cost of traffic management, only 100 meters of piling would be affordable.

215.3. Mr Gagg asked whether the piling could be carried out from the field side, to which the DO confirmed it might be a possibility.

215.4. The Chair suggested that Kings Causeway be flailed in order to thoroughly assess its condition and queried how long the wood piles would last. The DO advised that they generally last 30-40 years.

215.5. The DO referred to another repair issue, advising that a chain had failed on the outfall structure on the Warping Drain. He added that due to a continued build-up of silt at the final section of the outfall, the part between the berm-ending and the brick structure was difficult to access.

215.6. Officers and Members discussed the best time to clear the Warping Drain.

215.7. The CEO commented that Natural England [NE] had approached the Board to carry out maintenance on the top section of the Warping Drain under a PSCA agreement, to which Mr Drury pointed out that the flow still had to pass through the bottom section.

215.8. The CEO continued that a meeting had been held with a representative from NE who had indicated that they would like to work with the Board on the basis that there may be some Defra funding available for those working to improve drainage in lowland peat areas.

215.9. Mr Barker queried the likely funding sources, to which the CEO advised there might be FDGiA, Defra external grant, or a public works loan if the Board were willing to fund all or a proportion of the works themselves.

215.10. The DO presented the proposed maintenance map, explaining that de-silting and de-weeding had been swapped for 2023/24 as per previous agreements.

215.11. It was **PROPOSED** by Mr Gagg and **SECONDED** by Mr Backhouse and **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Board approves the annual maintenance programme.

215.12. Mr Barker asked the CEO if he had made representation to Defra regarding field margins. The CEO responded that he had and discussed this through ADA and that whilst there were some

reimbursement schemes, those schemes were mainly focussed on the natural environment and habitat.

215.13. The DO advised that an assessment was due to be carried out at Reedness Junction Pumping Station, including a full inspection of the pump.

216. Date of Future Meetings

216.1. The Chair drew attention to forthcoming meetings:

- Full Board meeting - Monday 22nd January 2024 at 9:30am
- ADOC Consortium Committee - Monday 20th November 2023 at 9:30am

216.2. The CEO highlighted other events that Members may wish to attend:

- Flood and Water Live on 5th -6th July 2023 at Carrington
- Driffield Show on 19th July

216.3. The CEO also highlighted that there was an Apprenticeship opportunity available at Ouse and Humber Drainage Board if members were able to help advertise this.

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