



Reedness & Swinefleet
Internal Drainage Board

**MINUTES OF THE FULL BOARD MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 22ND
JANUARY 2024 AT 24 INNOVATION DRIVE, HU15 2FW.**

PRESENT					
Elected	Mr J Drury	Mr I Backhouse	Mr J Cowling	Mr G Cowing	Mr T Reed
APOLOGIES					
Elected	Mr M Barker				
Appointed					
ABSENCES					
Appointed	Cllr L Sargeantson				
IN ATTENDANCE					
Officers		Mr A McLachlan – Chief Executive Officer			
		Mr R Towse – Director of Operation			
		Mrs A Larkin – Director of Policy & Finance			
		Miss L Smith – Executive Assistant			

Andrew McLachlan
Chief Executive Officer and Clerk to the Board
24 Innovation Drive
Newport
East Riding of Yorkshire
HU15 2FW

01430 430237
info@yorkshirehumberdrainage.gov.uk
yorkshirehumberdrainage.gov.uk
[@idbyorkshire](https://twitter.com/idbyorkshire)

222. Order of the Meeting

222.1. With the consent of the Board the CEO chaired the start of the meeting until a Chairman was installed.

223. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies.

223.1. Members and Officers were welcomed, and apologies were noted for Mr M Barker.

223.2. The CEO advised that following the 2023 drainage board elections, the following members had been duly elected.

Mr Ian Backhouse

Mr Malcolm Barker

Mr Geoff Cowling

Mr James Cowling

Mr John Drury

Mr Tony Reed

224. Declarations of Interest

224.1. None.

225. Election of Chairman

225.1. The CEO set out the procedure for the election of the Chairman and invited nominations from Members.

225.2. It was PROPOSED by Mr T Reed and SECONDED by Mr J Cowling and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board appoint Mr I Backhouse as Chairman.

225.3. No further nominations were received.

225.4. Mr I Backhouse accepted the appointment of Chairman.

226. Election of Vice-Chairman

226.1. The CEO set out the procedure for the election of the Vice Chairman.

226.2. It was PROPOSED by Mr J Cowling and SECONDED by Mr J Drury and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board appoint Mr G Cowling as Vice-Chair.

226.3. No further nominations were received.

226.4. Mr G Cowling accepted the appointment of Vice-Chairman

227. Additional Agenda Items

227.1. None.

228. Health and Safety

228.1. No issues raised.

229. Natural Environment

- 229.1. The DO commented that he had taken advice from the Board's ecologist before commencing maintenance activities on the Warping Drain.
- 229.2. He noted that it had previously been reported that damage had been caused to a badger set within this area, but that upon investigation, this had not been the case.
- 229.3. The DO confirmed that the Board work within legal boundaries and take all reasonable steps to preserve the natural environment.

230. Minutes of the previous Full Board Meeting

- 230.1. The Chair drew attention to the minutes of the previous Full Board Meeting held on 19th June 2023.
- 230.2. 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.

231. Appointment of Internal Auditor

- 231.1. The DPF explained the work of the internal auditor who carries out two audits per year. Best practice guidance recommends the Board should consider the independence and competence of the internal auditor and consider and agree the internal audit programme of work having regard to identified risks.
- 231.2. The DPF referred members to the Internal Auditor's CV, the Internal Audit Plan, and letter of engagement, provided within the meeting papers.
- 231.3. It was PROPOSED by Mr J Cowling and SECONDED by Mr J Drury and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board appoint Northern Internal Audit Services to provide internal audit services for the financial year 2023/24, upon being satisfied of the provider's independence, competence, and proposed programme of work.

232. Matters Arising

- 232.1. Minute 187.2 – CEO to seek advice regarding badger legislation. Noted as superseded.
- 232.2. Minute 197.8 – Goole Fields IDB annual contribution - the CEO advised that the Asset Manager was liaising with the CEO of Goole Fields IDB to agree a methodology to determine their contribution in relation to managing discharge entering the Warping Drain.
- 232.3. Minute 197.10 – Crowle Moors site visit. The CEO advised that the SDPCO had met with Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and Natural England in relation to run-off from Crowle Moors and that the Board may be required to take enforcement action.
- 232.4. Minute 198.5 – Serviceability Programme. Noted as superseded, to be discussed under the maintenance update.

233. Minutes from the ADOC Consortium Meeting

- 233.1. Mr I Backhouse referred to the ADOC Consortium meeting held on 27th November 2023 where issues relating to the Warping Drain had been discussed.
- 233.2. Members commented on the significant impact of the Moors on the surrounding farmland and the CEO highlighted a specific request from Mr Barker - to include a pump at the Ouse-end of Warping Drain.
- 233.3. Mr I Backhouse highlighted the pressures placed on the Warping Drain by surrounding Boards as well as by Natural England, causing a financial detriment to the Board.
- 233.4. The CEO advised that a meeting was due to be held in February where the Chairs and Vice Chairs of affected boards would be discussing future management of the Moors. He added that c£23k was to be received from Natural England in the next financial year and as previously discussed, conversations were ongoing with Goole Fields IDB in relation to their contribution.

234. Budget & Rate Setting

- 234.1. The CEO advised that at the time of writing, the budget outturn position was estimated to be -£2,952 against a planned budget of £118,720, or -2.4%.
- 234.2. Mr I Backhouse queried if this position was prior to a transfer of surplus to reserves, as at the previous meeting it had been agreed that any surplus funds would be placed into reserves.
- 234.3. The CEO clarified that no funds had been placed into reserves for the current year and noted that although the amount of reserves fulfilled the Board's policy position of a minimum 75% of operating budget, they were not of a sufficient value to allow for investment in replacement pumps or other infrastructure.
- 234.4. The Board discussed energy costs and how these had been volatile. It was noted that invoices were not being received in a timely manner which had resulted in the need for manual readings taken by Board staff.
- 234.5. It was confirmed that an energy contract had been agreed, via Woldmarsh, until September 2024 and that as a precaution, £30k electricity costs had been budgeted for 2024/25.
- 234.6. The DO explained that additional funds would be assigned to the Warping Drain and that the cost of maintenance collectively was representative to previous years, taking into account an inflationary increase.
- 234.7. It was noted that there were two capital schemes ongoing that were externally funded, and thus were not shown in the Board's revenue budget. He CEO explained that these were accounted for separately and would appear on the year-end accounts.
- 234.8. It was PROPOSED by Mr G Cowling and SECONDED by Mr J Cowling and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board increase the rate to 21p/£ to meet an estimated budget requirement for 2024/25 of £132,613.

235. Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled

- 235.1. The Chair drew attention to the schedule of invoices paid and accounts settled for the first three quarters of 2023/24.
- 235.2. Mr J Cowling raised concerns that the Board had not received invoices for weed control or flailing, to which the DO advised that works had not yet been completed.
- 235.3. It was PROPOSED by Mr I Backhouse and SECONDED by Mr J Cowling and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Board note and approve the record of Invoices Paid and Accounts Settled, totalling £70,843.73 (net) for the financial period April to December 2023.

236. Conclusion of Annual Audit

- 236.1. The DPF confirmed that the external auditors, PKF Littlejohn, had completed their annual audit of the Board's governance and accounting statements and had concluded that no matters were of cause for concern, meaning the Board had passed the external audit.

237. Internal Audit Reports

- 237.1. The DPF referred members to the internal audit report from November 2023 and confirmed that no concerns had been raised. She added that the report recommended that the Board continue to monitor its reserves position.
- 237.2. The Chair commented that the outcome of the ongoing projects and discussions with Goole Fields IDB may assist with and form the basis of a strategy to enable the Board to make better informed decisions in relation to its reserves.

238. Drainage Rates

- 238.1. The DPF advised that there was one outstanding debtor, owing £48, which had been referred to the Board's enforcement agents.

239. Planning & Development Control

- 239.1. The DO confirmed that there were no major planning applications to report, only small changes to existing buildings that would change the dynamic of drainage network.

240. Maintenance

- 240.1. Referring to Mr Cowling's earlier comment regarding lack of contractor invoices, the DO explained that the contractor had not yet completed the agreed flailing works, which had disrupted subsequent maintenance procedures. He added that he would be contacting the contractor in relation to this.
- 240.2. The Chair asked Members if they were satisfied that there was enough supervision of contractors, as there had been a couple of significant issues recently which had prevented works being completed on time.

- 240.3. The CEO advised that contractors were required to provide maps of completed work on a monthly basis for the Asset Manager to log on the Board's maintenance maps, but acknowledged that this did not always happen.
- 240.4. The DO advised that he would request that operational managers increase their engagement with contractors and oversight of agreed works. **Action DO**
- 240.5. Mr J Cowling raised the issue of the slips along Swinefleet Causeway, which were due to be piled. The DO advised that a contractor was needed to complete this work, but alternatively, Ouse and Humber's operational team could complete it on a rechargeable basis.
- 240.6. The DO presented the Board's maintenance maps, advising that these would be presented at the June meeting for the Board to agree the maintenance programme. The Board requested that maps be sent to Members for them to identify slips for inclusion within the programme. **Action DO.**
- 240.7. In relation to the Warping Drain, the DO confirmed that a long-reach machine was being used for minor tree works, and that once complete, there would be a clear route for watercourse maintenance.
- 240.8. Mr J Drury asked if the chain had been reattached on the counterbalance on the Swinefleet flap valve outfall, the DO advised this would be completed once the levels had dropped.

241. Membership

- 241.1. It was PROPOSED by Mr I Backhouse and SECONDED by Mr G Cowling and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to co-opt Mr W Gagg to the Board, subject to his acceptance at the next meeting.
- 241.2. The CEO confirmed that he had contacted the local authority (ERYC) regarding appointed members' attendance at Board meetings and had requested that the matter be considered at the appropriate levels within the authority.

242. Date of Future Meetings

- 242.1. It was confirmed that the next Full Board meeting was due to take place on Monday 17th June 2024 at the Board's offices.