

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday 22nd January at 9.00am at E C Brown & Sons, Wype Mere Farm, Wype Drove, Whittlesey.

Present R C Brown, R Easton, M Fisher, T Martin, M Sweet, P Tingey, R Wright, R L Price.

Apologies for Absence Cllr E R Butler, R Fletcher

FGP 271/19 Vacancy on Board. It was recommended that Andrew Wagstaff of Marshall Farm, Farcet Fen be approached to ascertain whether he would serve as a member on the Board.

FGP272/19 Administration & Engineering Services

a) Further to minute FGP224/18 the future administration of the Board. The CEO indicated that the time had come to plan for his retirement and how the Board wished to proceed. RESOLVED – that the CEO and OE obtain details from respective Drainage Authorities as to the services they could supply. It was also agreed that an advertisement for an assistant be considered. The Chairman felt that in due course a joint meeting of members of Feldale, Holmewood & District and Woodwalton should be arranged but first details need to be collected.

b) Risk management – The CEO reported that he and the OE had met with the NFU on Tuesday 15th January and talked about existing Health & Safety arrangements and how the Board operated. Visits were made to Wype, Ironside, Beggars Bridge, Goosetree Estate, Goosetree Corner, water controls at Ramsey Mereside, Ramsey Mereside station and workshop and the water control at the Plough Farcet Fen. The CEO reported that he would be undertaking a deep clean of the stations and workshop. An inventory of items in the workshop would be undertaken. The Chairman was concerned that personal items of the former District officer were still being stored in the workshop. The items would not be insured and were taking up space that would be needed for the storage of board equipment. It was agreed that he be asked to remove the items. T Martin mentioned that he had an old store where the DO had some items already.

c) Staff Appraisals - Operation Engineer, CEO. RESOLVED – that this be deferred until the Vice Chairman was back from his holiday.

FGP273/19 Operation Engineer

a) Phase 2 Telemetry works – The OE reported that works were progressing, but D Bullock from Lee-Dickens is currently committed to some office based work and unable to finish phase 2. A detailed report from Darren had been circulated to all members. Equipment for phase 2 was currently being stored at Wype Doles Station. The Board had now paid for five licenses for the Operation Engineer, Electrical Engineer, P Green, CEO/Chairman/Vice Chairman and members. Log in details to be agreed.

b) Conquest lode – issues with pump are still outstanding. Once the track is accessible FenFlow will be able to lift the pump and report upon the reason for the vibration.

c) Nursery site Eastrea Road – Taylor Wimpey. The CEO reported that surveys within the site had identified the route and condition of the public sewer. Extensive work would be required on the sewer. Mr. Forster was still refusing to allow Taylor Wimpey to survey his land. The Board were asked if they or the Middle Level could carry out the survey. RESOLVED – That it was between Taylor Wimpey and Mr. Forster to resolve the issue.

d) Drain works – Piping of drain point 271 opposite the Plough completed as has the culverting at Bedford.

The Drain works for 2018 had been completed save for two sections at Ramsey Road/Blackbush. The current cost for machine hire being £32,272.10

The fact that some crops hindered drain works and resulted in machine moves that were costly was raised and the matter would be taken to the Board to decide if a change of policy was required.

FGP274/19 Estimates –The CEO presented the estimates for 2018/2019. Expenditure amounted to £214,326.48 and income of £256,261.28.

The theft of the Ivor Williams trailer from Ironside was reported and it was agreed that a new trailer from Barnwell Trailers for £3,425 be purchased. The theft had been reported to the police and Insurers.

The issue of the condition and removal of trailers was discussed, and the Chairman felt that a trailer/waste container system may be more beneficial than concrete pads and retaining walls. Prices to be obtained and the matter discussed further.

The CEO reported that Barclays bank would be closing on 3rd May 2019 and would mean that cheques may have to be paid in at March or Old Fletton branches.

The CEO reported that he had not actioned the quote regarding Directors and Officers insurance cover as the main insurance cover was due for renewal in march. The members supported the CEO action.

FGP/275/19 Flood Risk management for the Fens

The Chairman reported upon a letter received from the EA regarding the formation and funding for a Flood Risk management Group for the Fens. (Great Ouse Fens). He was concerned that they stated that in recent years flood and drainage management in the Fens has been undertaken in somewhat of a piecemeal approach and reactive manner. He was also concerned over the funding issues.

The CEO reported that he and the OE were meeting with the EA to discuss the listing of Assets for the FRM for the Fens Phase 1. On Thursday 24th January.