

Minutes of the meeting of Feldale Internal Drainage Board held on Thursday 26th May 2016 at the Three Horseshoes, March Road Turves at 8.00 pm.

Present P D Band, G W Dale, M W Dale, T J Fletcher, M Sweet, O Wheatley, Mrs M A Wright (Clerk), R Wright (Consultant), Cllr C Boden

Apologies for Absence R J Stevenson

The Chairman welcome Cllr Boden (Fenland District Council representative) who was attending his first meeting.

110/16 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 14th May 2015 were correctly recorded and that they be signed as being a true record

111/16 Matters arising

All matters that are on-going will be reported in the main agenda.

112/16 Maintenance of Channels

a) The Chairman reported that during 2015/2016 - 12 hours of flail mowing and no slubbing was undertaken.

b) The Chairman felt that the district drains were in a good state and that no maintenance works other than a complete flailing of the system was required. Resolved – that all drains be flailed and no planned dredging would be undertaken unless an emergency arose.

113/16 Pumping Station

a) The Chairman reported that the Fire extinguisher was serviced and that A J Speechley & Son did a service on the panel and pumps at a cost of £831.09.

b) The Chairman reported upon the condition of the station and the remedial works that have been undertaken by the Environment Agency contractors –

1 replace with stock proof fencing around station

2 Realign existing gate and supply and fit a pedestrian gate (Eldernell side)

3 Supply and install a new 4.5m gate and reinstall the existing pedestrian gate (Bassenhally side)

4 supply and install 2 new downpipes

5 Supply and place approx. 40 tonnes of A1 material to make a ramp from lower berm and access the station, make tidy around station

c) National Vulcan inspected the lifting equipment, Centrifugal pump and its motor slip ring and the control panel. They stated that a safety clip is reto-fitted to the load hooks and the safe working load and identification number should be clearly marked in accordance with a test certificate. The report was noted and investigations would be made.

- d) It was reported that a new Electricity supply contract with SSE up to 31st March 2019 has been agreed with the assistance of CG Utilities Ltd
- e) Following the report of damage to a recorder put in place by the Middle Level Commissioners and to the contractor's fence occurred. The Middle Level Commissioners provided an estimate to provide a video camera and recorder to record activity in the area of the Pumping Station door at a cost of £509.00. RESOLVED – that the situation be monitored and should the necessity arise for a security system to be installed a further quote be obtained.
- f) The Chairman reported that he had sprayed around the station and had opened the inlet to build up water levels for irrigators.

114/16 General Matters

- a) Planning – It was reported that the Consulting Engineer had dealt with planning applications on behalf of the Board.
The Board investigated the possible direct drainage connection of the access road to the Bassenhally Farm development and a Discharge contribution of £6,125.88 was obtained. Problems with agreeing the discharge from the main development is ongoing. The Consultant had contacted Middle Level and arranged a meeting with the Developer to sort out the drainage issues, but they did not attend. The Developer felt that Middle Level were unapproachable and Cllr Boden reported that Fenland DC had tried to address issues with the Middle Level and Developers. Mr Wright had spoken to Stuart Hemmings, a retired CEO of Black Sluice IDB and a Civil Engineer who would be prepared to act on the Board's behalf. Another possibility was using the North level District IDB. The problem being that the Developer has proposed to discharge surface water run-off from Phase 1 at 2.51l/s/ha but the MLC have not indicated that this is at an acceptable discharge rate. The Developer now wishes to agree Phase 2. The Developer has produced a drainage strategy for Phase-2 development based on the assumption that the proposed discharge rate of 6.3l/s (2.5 x 2.5ha of developable land. RESOLVED – that the Consultant speaks to MLC and if their response is not acceptable Stuart Hemmings be approached to resolve the drainage issue.
- b) Risk Management - Control and Risk Management – Mr Wright reported upon the risk management assessment and that a review of the Board's insurance cover along with recommendations by ADA to review Systems of Internal Control and all policies and procedures on a regular basis was undertaken. RESOLVED – that no amendments to the current procedures and policies were required.
The Consultant referred to the Water & Flood Awareness briefing that had been communicated to all member.
- c) DEFRA - Review of Amalgamations – No further developments have arisen.
- d) Rate Determination – The Clerk reported that 19.872 (8.041ha) owned by Cambs County Council has been removed from the Agricultural section to the Special Levy section. The land value being £762 and the Special Levy value £18,840.
This resulted in the Agricultural section reducing from 48.89% to 40.82% and the Special Levy increasing from 51.11% to 59.18%

115/16 Environment Agency

Whittlesey Washes Safety Works- Bank works and work on the low concrete wall has now been completed between Stanground and Ball Bridge. At Stanground large cement wagons delivering the concrete for the wall and dumper trucks moving backwards and forwards on the site. The bank works are now completed from Ball Bridge working towards Stanground and will tie into the concrete wall just past the Stanground Sluice. Security cameras were installed within the compound at Stanground to record activities on site 24 hours per day.

The EA are holding an event to mark the completion of the works on Friday 1st July, from 11am to 1pm at the Stanground Scout HQ, Wessex Close, Stanground PE2 8HZ

116/16 Payments – The Board considered and approved payments made during 2015/2016 vouchers 1-26 that amount to £9,369.97

117/16 Annual Accounts 2015/2016

a) The Annual Governance Statement section 1 of the Annual return had been circulated to all members and it was resolved that the Clerk and Chairman sign in the appropriate place.

b) The Accounting Statement for 2015/2016 was also approved and it was resolved that the RF and Chairman sign it in the appropriate place.

b) Audit Arrangements – External Audit –It was reported that Littlejohn LLP had been appointed as external auditor. The 2015/2016 audit has been advertised with inspection of accounts from 6 June to 15 July 2016 and returns are to be completed by 13th June 2016.

Internal audit arrangements – Ivan Cooper an ex Finance Officer with Fenland District Council has agreed to undertake the internal examination for the 2015/2016 accounts and his report was circulated and adopted by the Board.

RESOLVED – that I Cooper be appointed as Internal auditor report on 2016/2017 financial years accounts.

For 2015/2016 the external auditor reported that the Board did not initially provide a reconciliation between the section 48 notice as requested. They also reported that assets should be valued at their original cost (or a proxy such as insurance value where this is not known)

118/16 Estimates of Income and Expenditure

The Board considered and approved estimates of Income & Expenditure for 2016/2017. The payment of the Clerk's salary for 2015/2016 was £1,365 and is proposed at £1,450 for 2016/2017. The Chairman's allowance for 2015/2016 was £550 and is proposed at £600 for 2016/2017.

The Board made a surplus of £10,986.46 of which £6,125.88 relates to the Development contribution from Larkfleet Homes. The surplus of £4,860 is a result of savings on fuel of £1,500, drain works £2,013, maintenance of £630, and it is equivalent to a rate of 4p.

119/16 Rates and Levy Requirement

Under Section 37 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, the appropriate proportions in which the net expenditure of the Board must be borne for 2015/2016: -

- | | |
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| a) Proportion to be borne by Agricultural Sector | 40.82% |
| b) Proportion to be borne by Special Levy issued to Fenland District Council | 59.18% |

In 2016/2017 a rate of 1p together with corresponding special levy would raise £1,189.97 whereas in 2015/2016 it would raise £1,009.19

The estimated net expenditure of £11,905 in 2016/2017 is equivalent to a rate of 10p. The Board discussed the level of reserves and considered that the current level could be increase to cover regular maintenance work as the Development Account funds of £8,380.00 were for works to improve drainage from the Developed areas where the contribution originated. It was proposed and seconded that the rate should remain at 12p
RESOLVED that: -

- a) A rate in the £ on agricultural land and buildings of 12.00p in the £ to raise £5,829.36
- b) A special levy on Fenland District Council of £8,450.28

In 2013/2014 agricultural land paid £3,947.20 and FDC £4,126.32 (8p)

In 2014/2015 agricultural land paid £5,427.40 and FDC £5,673.69 (11p)

In 2015/2016 agricultural land paid £5,920.80 and FDC £6,189.48 (12p)

120/16 Any other business

a) Badgers – members raised concern over the extent of Badgers in and near to district drains. They were also concerned that they were migrating into arable field and posed a definite danger to farming operations. It was reported that the licencing system regarding works near to sets was being altered and could restrict works even further. The Environmental Officer at MLC would be contacted to up-date the Board on the current position.

b) Water Abstraction – It was reported that changes have been proposed to regulate the flow of water into drainage districts from other systems. ADA were lobbying Defra to have the proposals removed. Abstractors could also lose water quantities if they failed to use the volume licenced.

121/16 Date of next meeting May 2017

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm.