

RAMSEY FOURTH (MIDDLEMOOR) INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Ramsey Fourth (Middlemoor) Internal Drainage Board
held at Ramsey Golf Club on Thursday the 21st June 2018

PRESENT

A C Roberts Esq (Chairman)	R H Lambert Esq
M J Smith Esq (Vice Chairman)	J M Palmer Esq
J R Clarke Esq	D C Roberts Esq
T G Few Esq	M Swales Esq
S W Whittome Esq	

Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Jason Edwards (District Officer) were in attendance.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from L Abblitt Esq, T A W Berry Esq and C W Smith Esq.

B.738 Declarations of Interest

Miss Ablett reminded Members of the importance of declaring an interest in any matter included in today's agenda that involved or was likely to affect any individual on the Board.

The Chairman and Mr D Roberts declared interests in agenda item 42.

Messrs Clarke and Whittome declared interests (as Members of the Middle Level Board) and took no part in discussions relating to the Middle Level Commissioners.

Mr Clarke declared an interest in the planning applications (MLC Ref Nos. 192 & 193) received for Mr F Cannata.

The Chairman declared an interest in the planning application (MLC Ref No 211) received for Mr A Roberts (L J & C M Shelton).

B.739 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 15th June 2017 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.740 Mr S Whittome

Mr Whittome thanked Members for their generous gift presented to him on his retirement as Chairman of the Board which was much appreciated.

B.741 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED

That A C Roberts Esq be appointed Chairman of the Board.

B.742 Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED

That M J Smith Esq be appointed Vice Chairman of the Board.

B.743 Election of Members of the Board

Miss Ablett reported that, as the number of candidates for membership of the Board did not exceed the number of persons to be elected (twelve), the following candidates were elected as Members of the Board for a period of three years from the 1st November 2017, viz:-

ABBLITT Luke	ROBERTS Andrew Charles
BERRY Tom Alistair William	ROBERTS David Charles
CLARKE Jeffrey Richard	SMITH Christopher William
FEW Thomas George	SMITH Matthew James
LAMBERT Richard Horace	SWALES Mark
WHITTOME Stephen Wright	

Miss Ablett also reported that Mr Richard Bowd did not seek re-election to the Board and consequently there was one vacancy on the Board.

(NB) – Councillor J M Palmer is also a Member of the Board as the nominee of Huntingdonshire District Council under the provisions of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

B.744 Vacancy in Membership

Consideration was given to the filling of the vacancy in the membership of the Board caused by the resignation of Mr Bowd.

The Chairman expressed disappointment with the lack of attendance at Board meetings by both Mr Ablitt and Mr C Smith over the past years and enquired if any action was available to the Board regarding this. Miss Ablett advised that if a member had not attended a meeting for over six months they could be removed from the Board. The Chairman reported that there were two individuals; Mr T Corney and Miss A Swales, who wished to join the Board and would contribute to meetings, but as there was only one vacancy enquired whether the Board wished to have a vote.

It was agreed that a letter should be sent to both Messrs Ablitt and Smith advising them that, in view of their non-attendance at meetings, the Board will assume they no longer wish to continue as members unless a response is received to the contrary. The Chairman advised that any decision with regards to the filling of the vacancy in membership should be delayed until a response had been received from both Messrs Ablitt and Smith.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to both Mr L Abblitt and Mr C Smith advising them that, in view of their non-attendance at meetings, the Board assume they no longer wish to continue as members unless they respond to the contrary and confirm they will attend future Board meetings. If no response is received within 30 days, the Chairman be authorised to take any action he considers necessary.

B.745 Appointment of Clerk

RESOLVED

That the Middle Level Commissioners be appointed Clerk to the Board for the ensuing year.

(NB) – Messrs Clarke and Whittome declared an interest (as Members of the Middle Level Board) when this item was discussed.

B.746 Clerk's fee

The Board gave consideration to the Clerk's fee for 2018/2019.

RESOLVED

That there be no increase in the fee paid to the Clerk for the year 2018/2019.

B.747 Appointment of District Officer

The Chairman reported that the District Officer carried out a good job for the Board and had done so for over 30 years.

Mr Whittome considered that the Board were fortunate to have Jason Edwards and expressed the Board's gratitude.

RESOLVED

That J Edwards Esq be appointed District Officer to the Board during the ensuing year on a self-employed basis.

B.748 District Officer's Fee

The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's fee for 2018/2019.

RESOLVED

That the Board agree that the sum of £6,125 be allowed for the services of the District Officer for 2018/2019.

B.749 Water Transfer Licences

Further to minute B.708, Miss Ablett referred to a letter received from ADA dated the 27th October 2017 and to the Clerk's response to Defra and also to the fact that licencing of water transfers came into force on the 1st January 2018. She advised that, as a licence is only required for transfers from EA main river and no inter-IDB transfers require licencing, this new arrangement will not directly impact the Board.

B.750 Property – Riverview - Middlemoor Pumping Station Bungalow

a) Further to minutes B.709(iii) and (iv), the Chairman confirmed that, following approval at the last meeting, various works had been carried out to the bungalow, however there were a few more repairs that needed attending to i.e. some of the flooring and carpets were well worn, the kitchen window needed replacing and some gravel was required to tidy the garden.

He reported that having spoken with the Management agents the rent was to be increased by £35 per month to £575 and therefore the Board must keep the property to a reasonable standard.

Mr Whittome stated that it was in the Board's interest to maintain the property so as to retain the tenants who, by keeping the property occupied, contributed to its security.

b) Further to minute B.709(iv), Miss Ablett reported that the Consulting Engineer had carried out a Legionnaires Disease Risk Assessment in the Board's property.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to take any action he feels appropriate in relation to the maintenance of the Board's property.

B.751 Purchase of land adjacent to the Board's holdings – Drapers Delph, Ramsey St Mary's

Further to minute B.711, Miss Ablett reported that the purchase of land at Drapers Delph had been completed on 27th October 2017 at a total cost including fees of £14,809, and the Assistant Clerk had advised that the drawing up of the tenancy agreement was in hand.

B.752 Consulting Engineers' Report

The Board considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers, viz:-

Ramsey Fourth (Middlemoor) I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers Report – June 2018

Pumping Stations

Other than any matters described below or previously reported to the Board, only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

Daintree

The winding resistance to earth on drive motor No 1 which had previously improved, has remained at a satisfactory level.

Pump Breakdown

Following the discovery during a routine maintenance inspection on 4 May 2017 of a severe vibration occurring and of a failed motor heater, and in accordance with the Board's instructions, the No 2 pumping plant, which was last overhauled 10 years ago, was removed for inspection and repair. This took place on 21 August 2017, when a shutdown of the adjacent overhead high voltage power line was carried out by UK Power Networks.

Once lifted it was obvious from an initial site inspection that no foreign object had jammed the propeller, nor was there any propeller damage causing the rotating element imbalance.

The unit was therefore returned to the Middle Level Depot where it was stripped to component level, its condition ascertained and works carried out as detailed below:

Pump Details

- i) Pump serial no.: S11317Z
- ii) Pump type: Allen Gwynnes Pumps 14" Vertical Spindle Axial Flow
- iii) Installation date: 1963
- iv) Total hours run since last overhaul in 2007: 2073 hrs

Allen Gwynnes 14" VSAF Pump

- i) The race of the thrust-bearing (RMS 20) had become damaged and was the cause of the breakdown.
- ii) The Dyn Metals Pan B water-lubricated lower bearing stainless steel shaft sleeve was in a satisfactory condition and suitable for reuse.
- iii) The Dyn Metals Pan B water-lubricated delivery-bend bearing and stainless steel shaft sleeve were in a satisfactory condition and suitable for reuse.
- iv) The pump body casing and the impeller, were in a good condition and suitable for re-use.
- v) The stainless steel fixing bolts were in good condition and suitable for reuse.

Allen Motor

Rating.: 20kW
Serial no.:48619/2

The motor was sent to Grantham Electrical for repair and their report of the work carried out follows:

Equipment: WH Allen & Sons E4/48619/2 25HP 6 pole NoVBQA1311 240 volt heaters
Motor Insulation Integrity: Motor windings Megger tested at 500volts to ground and between phases all tested clear, all phases have balanced resistance, further surge test using 1800v passed ok

Collect WH Allen motor from site, remove drive coupling, dismantle motor, clean and inspect all parts, test stator windings, supply new heater bar 100w 240v, as original has shorted and blown and apply 240 volt to heater bar to ensure heater is working correctly, remove drive and none drive end bearings, check bearing journals and housings for signs of damage or wear, Visually check rotor bar integrity onto shorting rings, Visually inspect stator windings, insulations and exit leads, re-impregnate stator windings using class H resin, stove windings in oven to cure resin, fit new Bearings type LRJ 2 ¼" brass cage /QJM 2"brass cage, grease bearings, spray squirrel caged rotor with red anti-tracking varnish, spray inside of end housings with red anti-tracking varnish, assemble motor, refit fan impeller, re-fit drive coupling, test motor, spray paint and return motor to site."

Other pumps have failed in similar circumstances, these in the past were covered by our previous company's engineering insurance, and therefore a claim was lodged with the Board's new insurer, AXA/HSB, which did include Engineering Insurance cover for sudden and unforeseen breakdown of pumping plant. This was on the basis that this pump breakdown occurred due to the failure of its thrust bearing. Traditionally land drainage pumps have low running hours and typically provide 20 years or more service before attention is required. The pumps are inspected and tested every 3/6 months; therefore, we consider the failure to be sudden and unforeseen.

However, this and two recent claims made by local IDBs were rejected as AXA/HSB considered that the pumps should have been removed for service on a 5 year frequency. This was contested by the MLC and the frequency extended to 10 years; however even this is considered unacceptable in most instances, hence an alternative insurer is being sought. In the interim there is no cover in place.

The insurers have been asked to reconsider this particular breakdown but to date no response has been received.

Middlemoor

The low insulation resistance of both submersible pump drive motor winding/cables to earth continues to be monitored and it has been noted that it has dropped somewhat further, but currently remains at a satisfactory level.

Pumping Hours

Daintree Pumping Station

	Total hours run April 12- April13	Total hours run April 13- April 14	Total hours run April 14- April 15	Total hours run April 15- April 16	Total hours run April 16- April 17	Total hours run April 17- April 18
No 1	697	115*	330*	65	171	158
No 2	251	250*	250*	182	61	183

Middlemoor Pumping Station

	Total hours run April 12- April13	Total hours run April 13- April 14	Total hours run April 14- April 15	Total hours run April 15- April 16	Total hours run April 16- April 17	Total hours run April 17- April 18
No 1	366	175	170*	92	52	136
No 2	376	196	150*	156	77	126

Close estimation

Eel Regulations

Following sustained pressure from the IDB sector, notification has been received that a paper was presented to the EA Executive Directors' Team proposing some changes to their current regulatory process. It is understood that the Executive Directors supported the recommendations in the paper and that work is now underway to establish how the EA will transition the changes and what this means in the interim for operators such as IDBs.

In line with what IDBs have been calling for, there is to be a new approach identifying the best achievable eel protection (BAEP), in terms of what is technically feasible and generally affordable. The EA also proposes to change when and where it applies its eel cost benefit analysis tool; how it considers affordability of eel protection at individual sites; and how it balances costs with risk to eel at individual sites. The EA will also investigate where there are opportunities to revise its current programming approach to optimise outcomes for eel. Finally, it will work with sector leads in developing new guidance and processes.

However, it is important to note that the EA will not be in a position to introduce its new regulatory approach until it has developed all of the new, interdependent, components of the process which the EA advise will take up to 12 months.

Internal Consultation with the Board

The process of "internal consultation" between the Commissioners and the Board (usually, but not always, with the Chairman and/or District Officer) to seek the Board's comments and thus aid the decision-making process, is generally working well and will be continued and reviewed at a later date.

Planning Procedures Update

Informatives on Decision Notices

From the planning applications listed below, decisions have been made on three but only one has an informative advising the applicants of their separate legal obligation to comply with the requirements of the Board's Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act (LDA). Whilst this is a positive step, unfortunately, it specifically refers to the Middle Level Commissioners and a now superseded version of the LDA.

It is left to the Board's discretion whether it wishes the Commissioners to make a formal response to the Councils concerned directly on its behalf, or whether it requests that its Council representatives ensure that such informatives are requested.

Planning Agents Training Day

Having identified engagement issues between "Developers" and the Commissioners and Associated Boards, a Training Day was held in late October. Approximately 50 invitations were sent out to a cross section of interested parties representing developers, agents and consultants and including all the LPA areas that we deal regularly with. Council Officers were also invited. The event was oversubscribed with twenty-five people attending but several others are on a 'short list' if another similar event is held. The feedback suggests the event was well received.

The format of the event was to inform those attending of the unique nature of the area; where the IDBs fit into the development process; what the issues are; and how the Middle Level Commissioners deal with them.

Analysing the figures very crudely 46% of attendees were agents; 34% consultants; 18% developers and less than 1% Council Officers. The areas covered were 37%, predominantly consultants, all the LPAs; 45% Fenland and 18% West Norfolk. There was no specific representation from Huntingdonshire District, East Cambs District, South Cambs District or Peterborough City Councils.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following 9 new applications have been received and dealt with since the last meeting:

<i>MLC Ref.</i>	<i>Council Ref.</i>	<i>Applicant</i>	<i>Type of Development</i>	<i>Location</i>
207	H/17/00630/FUL	Luminus Homes	Residential (11 dwellings)	Middlemoor Road, Ramsey St Marys
208	H/17/80127/COND	Miss J Freeman	Residence	Oilmills Drove, Ramsey Mereside
209	H/17/00793/HHFUL	Mr Z Sokolowski	Residence (Garage)	Herne Road, Ramsey St Marys
210	H/17/01443/FUL	Mr K N Lilley	Residence	Herne Road, Ramsey St Marys*

211	H/17/01404/FUL	Mr A Roberts (L J & C M Shelton)	Agricultural (Extension)	St Marys Road, Ramsey St Marys
212	H/17/01384/HHFUL	Mr T Tibbles	Residence (Extension)	Holme Road, Ramsey St Marys
213	H/17/01559/HHFUL	Mr T G Few	Residence (Extension)	Daintree Road, Ramsey St Marys
214	H/17/02414/HHFUL	Mr B Barnham	Residence (Extension)	Oilmills Road, Ramsey Mereside
215	H/18/00004/ADGET & 18/05002/CCM	Mr T Tibbles	Agricultural	Holme Road, Ramsey St Marys

***Planning applications ending 'COND' relate to the discharge of relevant planning conditions
Planning applications ending 'AGDET' relate to Agriculture***

A development that is known to propose direct discharge to the Board's system is indicated with an asterisk. The remainder are understood to propose surface water disposal to soakaways/infiltration systems or sustainable drainage systems, where applicable.

L J & C M Shelton chose to use the soakaway self-certification process for their agricultural building at New Fen Farm, St Marys Road, Ramsey St Marys (MLC Ref No 211) and, in doing so, agreed that if the soakaway was to fail in the future they would be liable for discharge consent.

No further correspondence has been received from the applicants or the applicants' agents concerning this site and no further action has been taken in respect of the Board's interests.

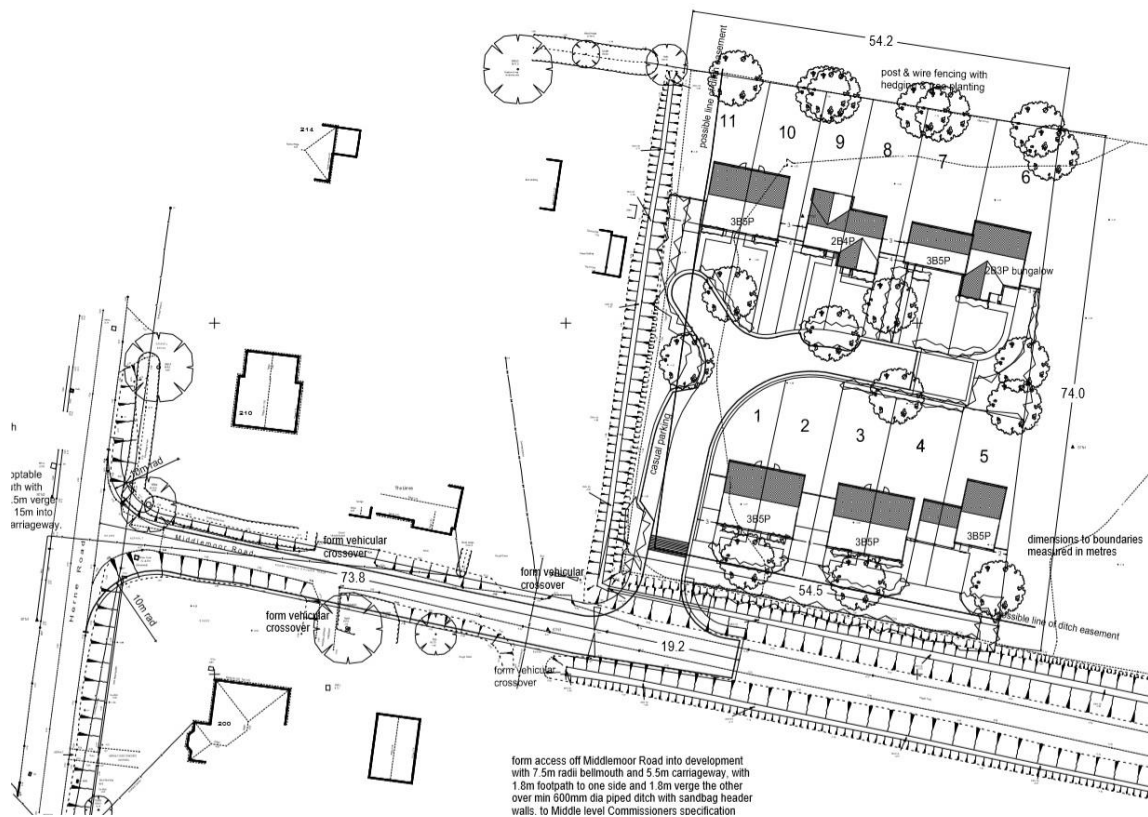
- *Retrospective planning on an all-weather equestrian exercise area at land west of 131 to 135 Herne Road, Ramsey St Marys – Mrs A Colbert (MLC Ref No 195)*
- *Demolition of existing bungalow, erection of dwellings and alterations to access at 161 Herne Road, Ramsey St Mary - Mr P Stratton (MLC Ref Nos 176 & 188)*
- *Proposed solar arrays to the north of 18 Herne Road, Ramsey St Mary's – Client of Envirep (MLC Ref No 184) & Mr S Jarvis (MLC Ref No 187)*
- *Erection of up to 3 dwellings, with associated access and car parking, including parking provision for nos. 238-244 Oilmills Road, following demolition of existing outbuildings at land adjacent 233 Oilmills Road, Ramsey, Mereside - Mr P Mossman (MLC Ref Nos 197 & 200)*

In view of the absence of recent correspondence and any subsequent instruction from the Board it will be presumed, unless otherwise recorded, that the Board is content with any development that has occurred and that no further action is required at this time.

Proposed Residential Development off Middlemoor Road, Ramsey St Mary – Solas Development Services/V E Parrott (Oakley) Ltd (MLC Ref No 180) & Luminus Homes (MLC Ref No 207)

Further to the Board's 2015 report a planning application for an eleven plot residential development, eight of which would be affordable houses for rent, was received by Huntingdonshire District Council in March 2017.

The application form advises that surface water will be disposed of via soakaways but the Flood Risk Assessment suggests several alternatives, including a regulated direct discharge into the adjacent open private watercourses. None of the alternatives are investigated in detail.



Extract from Still Associates Drawing No. 903.15 Rev. C

The LLFA has objected to the proposal and has requested further information in order to fully assess the situation.

At the time of writing a decision by the District Council was pending.

Proposed erection of open storage shed for ice cream vans and proposed erection of portal framed building for the manufacture and repair of ice cream vans for owner's use only (retrospective) including sanitary accommodation, deep bore hole water supply and drainage to septic tank at land far west Of Romany Cottage Bucks Drove Ramsey St Marys - Mr F Cannata (MLC Ref Nos 192 & 193)

According the District Council's Public Access web page for planning application 15/02318/FUL, (erection of an open storage shed), a decision by the District Council remains "In progress".

Proposed replacement dwelling at Rorkes Drift Farm, Oilmills Drove, Ramsey Mereside, – Miss J Freeman (MLC Ref No 203)

Further to the last meeting a discharge of condition application, including surface water disposal, was submitted to the District Council in May 2017.

It is not known whether any works have been undertaken within the Board's maintenance access strip. No application for any such works has been received.

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) Local Plan to 2036

The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Proposed Submission and its supporting documents were submitted for independent examination to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government via the Planning Inspectorate on 29 March.

The Secretary of State has appointed Kevin Ward from the Planning Inspectorate to carry out an independent examination of the Local Plan. The Inspector's task is to establish whether the Huntingdonshire Local Plan is 'sound'. He will then report on his findings, including advising if modifications are needed to make the Local Plan sound.

Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)

A consolidated version of the HELAA has been produced to support the Proposed Submission Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. This incorporates all site assessments from the HELAA documents published for consultation in July and October 2017. It also reflects the outcomes of the Call for Sites which accompanied the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036: Consultation Draft 2017.

Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

Note. *SFRAs are high level strategic documents and, as such, do not go into detail on an individual site-specific basis and are developed using the best available information at the time of preparation.*

The note referring to the SFRA 2010 mapping for the Middle Level Commissioners' area remains on the Council's website.

Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership (CFRMP)

The Commissioners' Planning Engineer has represented both the Middle Level Commissioners and their associated Boards since the Board's last meeting.

The main matters that may be of interest to the Board are as follows:

The Great Ouse Tidal River Baseline report

This EA document is complete and available in PDF format. The report sets out the status of flood risk management on the tidal River Ouse. One of the most critical/important maps highlights cost benefits in terms of GiA and other funding sources. The report also sets out issues going forward with regard to long term funding of managing the catchment.

The Future Fenland Project

Phase 1 of this EA project, which concerns all of the Fens, has commenced. This will take a couple of years to complete and will include Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire. Workshops for stakeholders were held in January and March 2018. One of the aims of this phase is to outline the total cost benefit analysis of maintaining the Fens.

Phase 2 will assess how the Fens may change in the future based on information from phase 1. This may include considering changes in land use and funding streams.

There are varying views on the future of the Fens and the development of the project. One of the concerns raised was the source of future funding for the management of the Fens and the conflicting views on how it should be managed.

Programme Development Unit (PDU)

This EA team will focus on helping partners deliver projects more efficiently. There are a number of large EA projects that the PDU will be involved with, therefore a hierarchy of projects will need to be established to ensure clarity of their involvement.

Flood risk activities: environmental permits (formerly flood defence consents)

There is currently a proposal by the EA to raise the costs of permitting in stages from the current £170 minimum potentially up to £1441.

Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) has advised that the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has also been involved in a similar process with ADA. A response has been prepared by ADA and for more detail see item 33 on the Agenda.

Members will be aware that the statutory fee for obtaining consent stated within the Land Drainage Act has, for many years, been only £50.00 which does not cover the real costs of processing such a consent.

Cambridgeshire County Council – Flood and Water Team – Ordinary watercourse consents have been considered and issued when required.

The Bedford Group of IDBs has advised that Ordinary watercourse consents in its area were not originally considered with protected provisions in the Development Control Order (DCO), a planning document. A legal agreement was subsequently agreed that reflects IDBs' byelaws and protected provisions.

It is understood that the EA had a similar situation at Peterborough on a Main River, even though it was a stakeholder in the project.

IDBs are reminded that they are not Statutory Consultees in such consultations but do need to be aware of forthcoming schemes in order to protect their interests.

Rain Gauges Project

Note. *The Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU - previously called OJEC, the Official Journal of the European Community) is the publication in which all tenders from the public sector which are valued above a certain financial threshold according to EU legislation, must be published. The legislation covers organisations and projects that receive public money, such as Local Authorities, NHS Trusts, MOD, Central Government Departments and Educational Establishments.*

The Eastern Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC) area (largely Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex) will be joining this Central RFCC project which is likely to be Project Managed by the EA.

The gauges will be located on secure and accessible EA or Anglian Water Services Ltd (AWSL) structures, such as water recycling centres (WRCs), and the Botanical Gardens in Cambridge.

It is intended that information from the rain gauges will be for the use of all partners for flood investigations etc with all sites available via telemetry using a web interface, possibly with three levels of membership – Administrator, Partners and the Public - and associated viewing rights within the web interface with the latter only seeing "local" information. This interface will be based on the software that AWSL already uses for its existing rain gauges and combined sewer overflows (CSOs). The data will not be directly compatible with EA data however a widget will be developed for this purpose. Discussions/negotiations are ongoing with the Met Office regarding a data swap.

The size of the project is causing delays but draft OJEU tender documents, a business case and inter LLFA and AWSL legal agreements are currently being drafted.

As members of the CFRMP, the Middle Level Commissioners have been asked to comment on the proposed location of rain gauges. The LLFA advises that the proposed new gauges have been chosen because they are adjacent to major areas of population and known "wet spots". The nearest rain gauges to the Commissioners' area are at March WRC (EA gauge) and the Middle Level Commissioners' Office. In respect of the Board's interests the District Council suggested a

rain gauge within the town itself, on Anglian Water's facility off Creek Road (MRCCSM), near River Down.

Strategic Flood Risk Planning Advisor

Funded by the Local Levy the EA has employed a Strategic Flood Risk Planning Advisor on a two year contract. The role will include providing input to LPA's Local Plans (most of which, within Cambridgeshire, are approaching completion) and highlighting flood mitigation opportunities within strategic development proposals.

Integrated FRM PhD research project

A PhD researcher at the Flood Hazard Research Centre (FHRC) Middlesex University is working on integrated flood risk management within Cambridgeshire with the aim of understanding the connectivity between different networks (such as the RFCC, CFRMP, catchment partnerships, local resilience forums, enterprise partnerships) and to see how these influence the integration of different FRM objectives (preventing new risk, reducing existing risk and managing residual risk) and other wider sustainable development objectives. An interview attended by the Chief Executive and Planning Engineer was held with the researcher on 5 January to discuss their roles and the role of IDBs and partnership working, amongst other things.

Consulting Engineer

1 June 2018

Ramsey Fourth (326)\Reports\June 2018

Miss Ablett advised that, since completion of the Consulting Engineer's report, the Clerk had written to all Chairmen advising that investigations were being made in regards to an alternative insurer. Unfortunately, it has been impossible to obtain insurance without a requirement to lift and service pumps every ten years and, consequently, the Clerk has advised that there is no value in taking out such insurance where claims are likely to be rejected in most instances and hence there was no longer insurance cover in place for sudden and unexpected mechanical equipment failure.

Miss Ablett referred to the Planning Engineer's enquiry as to whether the Board wished for the Middle Level Commissioners to make a formal response to the local councils in relation to lack of informatives attached to decision notices advising applicants of their legal obligation to comply with the requirements of the Board's Byelaws and the Land Drainage Act.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) That the Planning Engineer be requested to write to the Local Councils regarding informatives on decision notices

B.753 Capital Improvement Programme

Members considered the Board's future capital improvement programme.

RESOLVED

That the Capital Programme be approved in principle and kept under review.

B.754 District Officer's Report

The Board considered the Report of the District Officer.

The Chairman recommended that the Board continue with its three year annual phased maintenance programme.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved and that the Officer be thanked for his services over the preceding year.
- ii) That the District Officer be authorised to arrange for drainworks to be carried out for the coming year.

B.755 Environmental Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Miss Ablett referred to the Environmental Officer's Newsletter, previously circulated to the Board.

The Board considered and approved the most recent BAP report, together with the information sheets about floating pennywort.

Miss Ablett reported that Cliff Carson had recently filmed a piece on otters which had been shown on the BBC Spring Watch programme on Monday the 11th June. She reported that Cliff was due to retire at the end of June and that his replacement had been appointed.

RESOLVED

That the Board make a £25 contribution towards a gift for Cliff Carson's retirement.

B.756 State-aided Schemes

Consideration was given to the desirability of undertaking further State-aided Schemes in the District and whether any future proposals should be included in the capital forecasts provided to the Environment Agency.

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

B.757 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2018/2019 in the sum of £5,469 (the precept for 2017/2018 being £5,388).

B.758 Determination of annual value for rating purposes

The Board considered the recommendation for the determination of annual value for rating purposes.

RESOLVED

- i) That the determination recommended be adopted by the Board.
- ii) That the Clerk be empowered to serve notices and to take such other action as may be necessary to comply with statutory requirements.
- iii) That the Chairman and the Clerk be empowered to authorise appropriate action on behalf of the Board in connection with any appeal against the determination.

(NB) – Mr Clarke declared an interest when this item was discussed.

B.759 Rate arrears

Consideration was given to writing off rate arrears amounting to £3.87.

RESOLVED

That the arrears be written off.

(NB) – Mr Clarke declared an interest when this item was discussed.

B.760 Rents for the Slamp

Further to minute B.719, Miss Ablett referred to a letter received from Mrs S Pickard dated 26th October 2017 giving notice to terminate her rental of land.

The Board considered whether any change was appropriate in the levels of rental being obtained for their land at the Slamp. (Present rental - £100 per acre)

RESOLVED

That no change in the levels of rental be made at the present time, and the matter be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

(NB) – Mr Swales declared an interest when this item of business was being discussed.

B.761 Association of Drainage Authorities

Miss Ablett reported:-

a) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities would be held in London on Wednesday the 14th November 2018.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk be authorised to obtain a ticket for the Annual Conference of the Association for any Member who wishes to attend.

b) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

On the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association held in Prickwillow, Ely on Tuesday the 6th March 2018 and the fact that the administration of this branch has now been passed to the Middle Level Commissioners.

Miss Ablett advised that the new members elected to the Branch's Executive Committee included the Middle Level Commissioners' Operations Engineer, Jonathan Fenn and the Chairman, Marc Heading who was appointed Vice Chairman (with Harry Raby of the Bedford Group being appointed Chairman). She added that the agreed aim of this reworked branch will be to be more pro-active and accordingly it was expected that the Executive Committee will meet periodically to discuss catchment wide issues and will then report back to the Branch at its Annual Conference on what it has achieved over the year.

c) Subscriptions

That it was proposed by ADA to increase subscriptions by approximately 1% in 2018, viz:- from £536 to £542.

RESOLVED

That the increased ADA subscription be paid for 2018.

d) Liability of Board Members

Miss Ablett referred to, and the Board noted, a Guidance Note received from ADA dated the 28th September 2017 which summarised the issue of when Members of an Internal Drainage Board may be held personally liable for actions which they take in that capacity.

Miss Ablett advised that the Board had management liability insurance in place, which was in respect of claims made as a result of a wrongful act against members of the Board arising from the management and operations of the Board and that the cover attached was £5,000,000.

e) Updating IDB Byelaws

Miss Ablett referred to a letter received from ADA dated the 20th October 2017.

Miss Ablett reported that most of the IDBs in the area have a set of Byelaws which were made under Section 34 of the Land Drainage Act 1976 for the secure and efficient working of the drainage system in their area.

Defra have now suggested that the Byelaws which have been adopted by IDBs should be updated to include within their purpose powers in relation to environment matters. To do this it will be necessary to update the current Byelaws in line with the standard model byelaw published in October 2012.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk be requested to draft new Byelaws to include compliance with the environment regulations for consideration by the Board at their next meeting.

f) New Model Policy Statement

Miss Ablett referred to the publication of the new model Policy Statement issued in late April by ADA.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk be requested to draft a new Policy Statement for consideration by the Board at their next meeting.

g) Floodex 2019

That Floodex 2019 will be held at The Peterborough Arena on the 27th and 28th February 2019.

B.762 Fencing along Paddock Area – Rorkes Drift Farm

The District Officer advised that temporary fencing and a gate had been erected at Rorkes Drift Farm, which could be removed as and when was necessary.

B.763 Capital Programme Strengthening and Delivery

Miss Ablett referred to, and the Board noted, the slides presented by the Environment Agency at the Great Ouse IDB and EA Strategic Group meeting on the 19th April 2017.

B.764 Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

Miss Ablett reported that a meeting of the Chairmen of all of the Middle Level Commissioners' administered Boards met on the 8th March 2018 to discuss the challenges facing Boards. Innes Thomson, Chief Executive of ADA, spoke on the arrangements adopted by other Boards around the country.

Matters raised included:-

- 1) Advantages, disadvantages and barriers to amalgamation.
- 2) Future meetings and the opportunity for Boards to request items be added to the agenda.
- 3) Reviewing Board membership numbers.
- 4) Frequency of Board meetings.

B.765 Member training and the appointment of a Health and Safety Officer

Miss Ablett reported that ADA has been encouraging member training for a number of years and Defra will, from 2018, require Boards to report upon any training that has been provided to members. This was to be reported by way of an entry on the IDB1 forms and the listed topics on this form are; Governance, Finance, Environment, Health, safety and welfare, Communications and engagement, amongst others. The Board may wish to pick an area where they consider specific tailored training is pertinent for it in a given year or alternatively might ask that the Middle Level Commissioners arrange some joint training with other Boards which they are happy to do.

On Health and Safety, after reviewing arrangements for a number of Boards, it has become clear that it would be helpful if Boards could appoint a member to be in charge of Health and Safety matters. This person would take overall responsibility for Health and Safety supported by Croner through the Middle Level Commissioners. This will help provide clarity going forward as ultimately it is the Boards' role to ensure that sites, equipment and working practices are as safe as can be reasonably expected. Whilst IDBs have an enviable record on safety and much that is needed is likely to already be in place, the HSE would probe the organisational structure should a reportable accident occur and would take a dim view if clarity on the lines of responsibility were unclear.

The Chairman reported that although the Board acknowledged the requirement for a Health & Safety Officer, he was of the opinion that this was a service that the Middle Level Commissioners or a professional external contractor should be providing for the Board. Miss Ablett advised that the Board would ultimately still be held responsible should a health and safety problem arise, even if the Middle Level Commissioners or a consultant were appointed, although she did confirm that any such appointment may reduce the risk of non-compliance.

Members agreed that the Chairman and Vice Chairman should meet with the Clerk to discuss the matter further.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Chairman and Vice Chairman meet with the Clerk to discuss the appointment of a Health & Safety Officer.
- ii) That the Board participate in any training organised through the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.766 Defra IDB1 Returns

Miss Ablett referred to a letter received from Defra dated the 24th April 2018 and reported on the proposed changes to the Annual Defra IDB1 Returns.

She advised that the IDB1 form is completed each year in accordance with the Land Drainage Act 1991 and is submitted to Defra, the Environment Agency and to each Council which pays an IDB Special Levy. The form provides information on such items as income, expenditure, a policy delivery statement, the bio-diversity action plan, asset management and governance matters.

Miss Ablett reported that for the year ended 31st March 2017 the IDB1 return was amended and additional information requested, such as details of board membership, attendance at meetings, whether elections are held and confirmation that the complaints procedure is accessible from the home page on an IDB's website. This information will enable Defra to gather more data in relation to IDBs.

For 2018 the IDB1 form will be further expanded. The additions were developed in co-operation with the Environment Agency, ADA and invited IDB representatives including David Thomas on behalf of the Middle Level Commissioners. The inclusion of items within the form which would either be difficult to report on or provide information which collectively would be of little value have been resisted and the new IDB1 form should, as a result, allow Defra to gain a much clearer insight into what IDBs deliver annually. It is hoped that this in turn will assist with raising further the profile of IDBs.

B.767 Requirements for a Biosecurity Policy

Miss Ablett reported that, from 2018, Board's will be required to advise (through the IDB1 returns) whether they have in place a Biosecurity Policy. This is considered necessary following increased concern over the spread of alien invasive weeds from one waterbody to another, possibly through the use of contracted or shared plant which can carry elements of such plants if not properly cleaned after being moved from contaminated locations. ADA have stated that they support the principle of having a policy in place and, conscious that for most boards the policy requirements will be identical, they are producing a model document. The Board were asked to confirm that they were content to adopt a policy as long as it is suitable and will not include overly onerous steps which might restrict their activities.

RESOLVED

That the draft policy be reviewed by the Board at their next meeting.

B.768 The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Miss Ablett referred to the Guidance Note on the implementation of the GDPR and that all organisations must become fully compliant by the 25th May 2018.

RESOLVED

That Miss Lorna McShane, Solicitor and Assistant Clerk be appointed the Board's Data Protection Officer.

B.769 Charging for Environmental Permits

Miss Ablett reported on the consultation on charging for Environmental Permits which closed on the 26th January 2018. It is suggested within the consultation that charging should be designed to recover costs and as such there may be significant increases in the charges for obtaining Environment Agency permits for some IDB activities which require such consents. ADA have responded on behalf of the industry and their response is available on their website, www.ada.org.uk/2018/01/ada-responds-environment-agency-charge-proposals-2018.

B.770 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2016/2017

- a) The Board considered and approved the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2017.
- b) The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2017.

B.771 Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England

Miss Ablett referred to the recently issued Practitioners' guide to proper practices to be applied in the preparation of statutory Annual Accounts and Governance Statements which will apply to Annual Returns commencing on or after 1st April 2018.

B.772 Budgeting

Miss Ablett referred to the budget comparison of the forecast out-turn and the actual out-turn for the financial year ending 31st March 2018.

B.773 Review of Internal Controls

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with the current system of Internal Controls.
- b) The Board considered and approved the appointment of Whiting & Partners as Internal Auditor for the three period 2018/2019 to 2020/2021.
- c) The Board approved the Audit Strategy and Audit Plan.

B.774 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management system.
- b) The Board considered and approved the insured value of their buildings and considered having a revaluation of the Board's real estate assets, as required for audit purposes.

RESOLVED

That no changes be made to the valuation at this time and for the matter to be reviewed again at the next annual meeting.

B.775 Appointment of External Auditor

Further to minute B.687, Miss Ablett referred to the decision by the Commissioners to join the Sector Led Auditor Appointment Body for the appointment of the External Auditor and that the Smaller Authorities' Auditor Appointments (SAAA Ltd) had formed for this purpose. She reported that they had now confirmed the appointment of PKF Littlejohn to carry out the external audit of the Commissioners for a five year period commencing with the financial year 2017/2018.

B.776 Exercise of Public Rights

Miss Ablett referred to the publishing of the Notice of Public Rights and publication of unaudited Annual Return, Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and the Notice of Conclusion of the Audit and right to inspect the Annual Return.

B.777 Annual Governance Statement – 2017/2018

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 31st March 2018.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2018.

B.778 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £60,702.11 which had been made during the financial year 2017/2018.

(NB) – Messrs Clarke and Whittome declared interests (as Members of the Middle Level Board) in the payments made to the Middle Level Commissioners.

(NB) - The Chairman and Mr D Roberts declared an interest in the payments made to D C Roberts & Son.

B.779 Anglia Farmers

The Board considered their contractual arrangements with Anglia Farmers for the supply of electricity.

Miss Ablett reported that the contract with Anglia Farmers ceases on the 30th September 2018 and advised that, in view of the problems encountered over the past 15 months with the operation of the contract, a report had been sent to all Chairmen.

Miss Ablett further advised that, although the Clerk was able to recommend to the Board that they remain with Anglia Farmers for a further contract period, usually 18 months to 2 years, during which time the service provided by them will be monitored, it was the Board's decision and should they wish to be removed from the buying group then it would be the Board's responsibility to negotiate its own separate electricity contract with a supplier.

Miss Ablett reported that the Chairman had agreed for the Board to remain with Anglia Farmers.

RESOLVED

That the actions of the Chairman be approved and the current arrangements be continued for a further contract period, during which time the service provided by them, in relation to the running of the contract, be monitored.

B.780 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2017/2018

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2018 as required in the Audit Regulations.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Return, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2018.

B.781 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2018/2019

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2018/2019 and were informed by Miss Ablett that under the Land Drainage Act 1991 the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by drainage rates on agricultural hereditaments and by special levy on local billing authorities would be respectively 60.18% and 39.82%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £31,678 be raised by drainage rates and special levy.
- iii) That the amounts comprised in the sum referred to in ii) above to be raised by drainage rates and to be met by special levy are £19,063 and £12,615 respectively.

- iv) That a rate of 9.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v) That a Special levy of £12,615 be made and issued to Huntingdonshire District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vi) That the seal of the Board be affixed to the record of drainage rates and special levies and to the special levy referred to in resolution (v).
- vii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levy by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.782 Display of rate notice

RESOLVED

That notice of the rate be affixed within the District in accordance with Section 48(3)(a) of the Land Drainage Act 1991.

B.783 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Thursday the 20th June 2019.