

RAMSEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

MINUTES of the EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of the Board held on the 24th June 2025 at the Old Nene Golf & Country Club, Muchwood Lane, Ramsey, Huntingdon, Cambs PE26 2XQ.

PRESENT: Mr DR Abblitt (Chairman)(DA), Councillor Mr R Brereton (RB), Mr DR Smith (DS), Mr KR Abblitt (KA), Mr PH Wagstaffe (PW), Mr L Butler (District Officer) and Mr J Chrisp (Clerk).

EGM 25.2.1

APOLOGIES were received from Mr LR Smith (Vice Chairman) and Councillor Mr ER Butler.

No declarations of interest were made.

EGM 25.2.2

APPROVAL of STATEMENT of ACCOUNTS and ANNUAL GOVERNANCE and ACCOUNTING RETURN (AGAR) for the Year ending 31st March 2025.

EGM 25.2.2.1

The Statement of Accounts attached, having been circulated prior to the meeting was discussed, and approved unanimously as proposed by PW and seconded by DS.

EGM 25.2.2.2

Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR attached, having been circulated prior to the meeting were discussed, and approved unanimously as proposed by RB and seconded by DA.

The Chairman and the Clerk were directed to sign the documents for publishing on the Website.

EGM 25.2.3

UPDATE on COLLECTION of DRAINAGE RATES

There are still £15,379.41 outstanding up to the Year 2023/24 and in view of unresolved discrepancies on the Rate Register the rates for 2024/25 in the sum of £4,935.38 have not yet been demanded. The Clerk will arrange a meeting with the MLC's Rates Officer and go through the Rate Register to make corrections and approach the debtors to talk to them to resolve any issues which might be preventing payment. RB has volunteered to assist by accompanying the Clerk when visiting those in arrears. It was suggested that a Payment Plan giving time for payment be agreed with the debtors giving time for payment.

EGM 25.2.4

CONSIDERATION of FINANCIAL and ENGINEERING RISKS

The Board is aware that both Pumping Stations are nearing the end of their natural lifespan of 50 years before complete overhaul or replacement may be necessary. The Clerk explained that this had been discussed in considerable detail with David Bantoft, the MLC's Engineer, who had included both stations in his improvement portfolio of the stations in the Middle Level Area, and we shall receive a report in due course. In the meantime, the Pumping Stations continue to be

Inspected regularly to ensure that they are in a proper working condition.

The Board had healthy reserves totalling £123,193.94 in the Development Account and a good balance of £44,101.76 in the Barclays Bank Deposit Account. The only financial weakness lay in the arrears of Drainage Rates to be recovered, and the Clerk was asked to prioritise this.

EGM 25.2.5

RENEWAL of ELECTRICITY SUPPLY CONTRACTS

The Clerk reported that Electricity Supply Contracts are with Eon Next who have very competitive rates, firstly for Lodes End Pump with a day rate of 26.7p per kwh, a night rate of 23.0p per kwh and a standing charge of 30p per day, and secondly, for Stocking Fen Pump with a day rate of 28.0p per kwh, a night rate of 18.7p per kwh and a standing charge of 30p per day, for a fixed term of 1 year ending on 24th June 2026.

Together with the Annual Insurance Cover due on the 16th of July currently with NFU Mutual these will be turned over to the MLC's bulk electricity supply agreement and Insurance cover with expected savings from the MLC's bulk buying power. This will be effective as at 1st April 2026. There may be penalties payable to Eon Next to break the electricity contracts and there should be a refund of unexpired insurance premium less administration charges from the NFU Mutual.

EGM 25.2.6

REVIEW of POLICIES, PROCEDURES and PLANS

The following were discussed generally and in the light of changes made to facilitate the transition of the Clerkship to the Middle Level Commissioners:-

Complaints Procedure.

Financial Regulations.

Statement of Internal Control

Policy Statement on Flood Protection and Water Level Management Plan

Risk Management Policy and Integrated Risk Management Plan

Health and Safety Policy Statement

Code of Conduct

Covid-19 Business Continuity Plan

Biosecurity Policy

Privacy Policy.

The review was completed with no amendments or changes being deemed necessary as proposed by DS, seconded by DA with all members present voting in favour.

EGM 25.2.7

MEMBERS' INTEREST FORMS

Completed and signed by members present. E Butler, L Smith, A Wagstaffe & S Corney yet to sign.

EGM 25.2.8

NEW REVISED GOOD GOVERNANCE GUIDES

These were handed out to those members present who had not received one through another IDB of which they were also a member.

EGM 25.2.9

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

EGM 25.2.9.1

Application by Ramsey Town Counsel under the Land Drainage Byelaws:

The Clerk reported that he had met with the Mayor, Town Clerk and Councillor Steve Corney to discuss the apparent infringement of the maintenance strip in the building of supporting earth banks to the new Skateboard Park at Queen Elizabeth 2 Recreation Ground at Mill Lane, Ramsey. The Skateboard Park had been built with deemed Planning Consent for the Town Council and built by a civil engineering company who had assumed that the strip should extend 5 metres from the brink of the main drain not 9 metres. It was accepted by the Council that there was a clear breach of the Byelaws. The Clerk said that this had already been discussed by the Board who had not stopped the work while it was in progress and took the view that drain maintenance could be carried out with a smaller machine. In the circumstances if the Council formalised the breach by making an Application for Consent under the Byelaws, they would not insist on the removal of the obstruction.

The Application has now been received with all drawings and plans and the fee paid. The Scheme drawing showed the earth banks only partly infringed the Byelaws. DA suggested that a condition be imposed that if extra cost is imposed on the Board in its drain maintenance by the interruption of the maintenance strip the Council should indemnify the Board. With this condition it was proposed by PW, seconded by DS, and with one abstention from RB as a Town Councillor but with all other members voting in favour, that Consent be granted to the Council.

As to maintenance of the private ditch dividing the Recreation Ground from the Ramsey Colts' Car Park, the Council confirmed that they were including this in the rest of their drain maintenance programme involving ditch clearance at the rear of the cemetery and Abbey Fields this coming Autumn.

EGM 25.2.9.2

Ramsey Colts Football Foundation car park work– clearance of building rubble from the main drain, completion of the outfall and removal of the fence obstructing the 9-metre maintenance strip against the bend in the main drain next to the entrance to the Ramsey Colts Car Park. The Clerk said he had had an exchange of emails with Martin Muir and all of the Board's concerns were being dealt with. The Clerk will report further after the work has been completed.

There being no further business the meeting having started at 7.00 pm ended at 8.15 pm.