

IMBANKING COMMISSIONERS

At a Meeting of the Commissioners for Imbanking Fen Lands and Low Grounds within the Parishes
of Chatteris, Doddington and Wimblington
hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Tuesday 14th May 2024

Present:

M E Heading Esq (Chairman)
R Gowler Esq (Vice Chairman)
C Gowler Esq
Ms A Morris
D Morris Esq

G Wakeham Esq
R Mason Esq
L A Nicholas Esq

P Burrows (Clerk & MLC Chief Executive) and Mrs Ruth Martin (Lead Clerk) were in attendance.

Welcome and Apologies

Apologies: S Edgley Esq; C Martin Esq

C.227 Declarations of Interest

The Clerk 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.

C.228 Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising and the Minutes of the Last Meeting were agreed.

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 9th May 2023 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

C.229 Constitution and Membership

The Board agreed that Mr Heading be appointed as Chairman of the Commissioners. This was proposed by Mr L Nicholas and seconded by Ms Morris.

RESOLVED

That Mr Heading be appointed as Chairman of the Commissioners.

C.230 Commissioners Financial Statement

Viz:

IMBANKING COMMISSIONERS**FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS AT 31st MARCH 2024****GENERAL FUND**

31-Mar-24

Payments made:-

Curf & Wimb. Comb.IDB - Contribution 0.00

Middle Level - Administration charge 120.00

120.00

Balance carried forward

17,235.3717,355.37

01-Apr-23

Balance brought forward

15,809.29

31-Mar-24

Rent - T Noble

1,400.00

Interest on Deposit Accounts

146.08

1,546.08

17,355.37**BALANCE SHEET****Capital Section****Liabilities**

Capital Provisions

75,000.00

Assets

Land - Turf Fen 10.500 acres

75,000.00

Revenue Section

Creditors

350.00

Debtor (Rent)

0.00

General Fund

17,235.37

Balance in hand - Barclays Bank

Clients' Account

880.00

Business premium Account

16,705.37

17,585.37

92,585.3792,585.37

The Commissioners considered and approved a financial statement showing the sum of £17,355.37 was standing to the credit of the Commissioners on the 31st March 2024.

C.231 Use of Commissioners Funds

No eligible works have been identified and subsequently no works undertaken.

The Chairman confirmed that if any eligible projects come to light they will be considered.

The Clerk advised that the Health and Safety works at Wimblington Common Pumping Station, and the new steps required at Curf Pumping Station, both as identified by the Curf and Wimblington Combined Internal Drainage Board, could be considered. The Commissioners agreed to delegate the decision to The Chairman.

RESOLVED

That the decision to fund the works as identified be made by The Chairman.

C.232 Land at Turf Fen, Chatteris and Assets

The Commissioners agreed that no change in the rental level is required. However, they are mindful that the Fens Reservoir may have an impact on the land in the future.

The impact on the Fens Reservoir was discussed and how this may affect the Commissioners. The following definition of the Imbanking Commissioners was shared with the Commissioners:

The Imbanking Commissioners are an established venerable body set up by Act of Parliament around 1791. The purpose of the Act was to protect low grounds north of the Forty Foot Drain from Carters Bridge to the junction of the Sixteen-foot drain, northwards along the Sixteen Foot drain to Boots Bridge and then along the road to Wimblington and then following the Turnpike Road back to Carters Bridge. At the time the banks of the Forty Foot and Sixteen Foot were “in so ruinous state, that the Fen Lands and Low Grounds to the said Banks are in part overflowed and the remainder of the said lands and grounds are in imminent danger of being in the same state, to the great prejudice and hazard of the owners and occupiers thereof.”

In short, they were empowered to maintain the banks of the Forty Foot and Sixteen Foot for that area. The area was about one thousand two hundred acres and initially as well as the Lord/Lady of the Manor of Doddington, members of several respective manors, owners of twelve acres of land qualified as a Commissioners. Within the Act they also had powers to ensure Roads/Droves were not dug up (Turf cutting was big at the time). As part of the Act they were given power to enclose 10 acres of land to provide an income from rental.

Subsequently the Middle Level Commissioners came along and were given powers concerning the embankments and local authorities/highways took responsibilities for public roads etc., taking away from the Imbanking Commissioners their main functions. Subsequent oversights in Parliament meant the Imbanking Commissioners were never abolished and they formally exist today under their original Act. The Commissioners have a small cash balance and generate income annually from the rent of the land but they are restricted as to what the funds can be used for.

The Chairman observed that if a Statutory Instrument is needed for other purposes (such as the Fens Reservoir) the Imbanking Commissioners could be dissolved, but it is still unclear what would happen to the Commissioners assets. However, the Commissioners agreed that principle to use any Statutory Instrument relating to the Fens Reservoir could be used to dissolve the Commissioner could be explored.

RESOLVED

That no change in the level of rental be made.

C.233 Risk Management Assessment

The Clerk advised that the land has been valued at £75,000. Although the Commissioners thought the open market value of the land could be higher, the valuation of the assets would remain as at present.

RESOLVED

That no changes be made to the valuation at this time.

C.234 Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next meeting of the Commissioners be held on Tuesday 13th May 2025 at the Middle Level Offices at 4.15pm.

C.235 Any Other Business

Nothing was raised, and the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting closed at 4.40pm

.....
Chairman

.....
Date