

NORDELPH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Nordelph Internal Drainage Board
hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Wednesday the 18th March 2020

PRESENT

R S Means Esq (Chairman)

D H Boyce Esq

D J W Boyce Esq

G D Boyce Esq

J D Clifton Esq

Miss Samantha Ablett (representing the Clerk to the Board) was in attendance.

B.917 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.

B.918 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Board held on the 20th March and 28th June 2019 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.919 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2018/2019

- a) The Board considered the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2019.

RESOLVED

- i) That, after fully considering the internal controls put in place by their appointed administrators and the checks carried out by their appointed internal auditors, the Board were satisfied that, in all significant respects, the internal control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the authority.
- ii) That the present policies concerning risk management, budget monitoring and insured value of properties are adequate for the size of the business and that they be continued.
- iii) That the Clerk and responsible financial officer review the internal audit strategy with the internal auditor to ensure the most appropriate method is in place to ensure the Board continue to comply with the Internal control objectives to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the authority.
- (iv) That in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations the minutes record that approval of the accounts was given on 28th June 2019.
- (v) That the Chairman was authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2019.

- b) The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2019.

B.920 Election of Board Members

Miss Ablett reported that the term of Office of the elected Members of the Board would expire on the 31st October 2020 and submitted the proposed Register of Electors applicable to the 2020 election.

RESOLVED

That the Register be approved.

B.921 Water Transfer Licencing

Further to minute B.848, Miss Ablett reported that the relevant licences have been applied for for the MLC and associated Boards and that these were due to be validated before the end of December 2019 and then the EA have 3 further years to determine them. He also advised that it was worth noting that the EA have confirmed that only MLC system to IDB transfers do not require a separate licence.

B.922 Roadway to Pumping Station

Further to minute B.887, Miss Ablett reported that, as resolved at the last meeting, a further letter had been sent to the Highway Engineer at Norfolk County Council, but no response had been received. However, the District Officer confirmed that the roadway had been re-surfaced.

B.923 Pollution at Poplar Row Farm, Nordelph

Further to minute B.888, Miss Ablett reported that, as requested at the last meeting, a letter had been sent to the Environment Agency and that, since then, it appeared that the Environment Agency had prosecuted Mr Sieley. She advised that, as the District Officer had stated in his report that Mr Sieley's land remained unchanged, the Assistant Clerk had contacted the Environment Agency again to ascertain what action was now being taken.

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency advised that they regularly visited the site; the most recent visits being on the 29th July 2019 and the 3rd March 2020, and that both visits showed the lagoon area as being lower than the trackway and there was no evidence of any pathways from the lagoon to the drains.

They also advised that given the Board's concern that polluting matter may still be on site they proposed to take some soil samples from the lagoon area and would share the sample results with the Board together with any potential follow ups that may be required by the Environment Agency.

RESOLVED

That the Board continue to monitor the situation.

B.924 Clerk's Report

Miss Ablett advised:-

i) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

One option for future Board arrangements discussed at the second and third meetings was the subject of a briefing paper.

That a fourth Chair's Meeting was held on the 26th November 2019.

The meeting commenced with a presentation with slides covering the lottery funded 'Fens Biosphere' bid. This UNESCO designation would have no statutory backing but instead aims to draw attention to the unique nature of the area. Good practice sharing would be facilitated and a framework of support for positive action developed. The idea is to frame the application around the Cambridgeshire peat lands and the IDB districts which provide a network of interconnecting watercourses. As this designation would not lead to a set of actions which would be enforced but could have a positive impact on the area the Board were asked (at this stage) to consider giving its approval in principle to the bid.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve in principle

Health and Safety discussions followed and it was agreed that the new arrangement with Cope Safety Management was working well.

The future vision for the MLC and IDBs was discussed and is covered as a separate agenda item.

On member training, after discussion, it was agreed that members would benefit from training on 'communications and engagement' as it was felt that Boards generally had challenges in getting messages across to the public.

The only other item covered in any detail was in relation to Board agendas and minutes. It was resolved that the Chairs supported the move to reducing the amount of paper leaving the MLC offices and it was also agreed, for reasons of efficiency, that Chairs be provided with an action points list as soon as practical after the meetings but in advance of issuing draft minutes.

ii) Future Meetings Agendas

That as meeting agendas are getting larger, to include more information to meet legal requirements and ensure members are well informed on issues that might concern them in their role as a Board Member, the Middle Level Commissioners are considering moving close to a paperless arrangement. It is therefore proposed that (for those members that have given email addresses) we will issue the agenda in electronic PDF format. The email will ask for confirmation of receipt of the document but will offer to issue a paper duplicate, but only upon request. The aim of this change is to reduce paper wastage, reduce cost and to reduce the carbon footprint of the office.

Miss Ablett further advised that the Clerk was also investigating a better document management system, which would make reading of electronic agendas easier, as is used by the Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve receiving future agendas in electronic format, providing paper copies could be supplied, if required, and for the Clerk to investigate a better document management system.

iii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the 82nd Annual Conference of the Association had been held at the ICE building in Westminster on Wednesday 13th November 2019.

The conference was very well attended and the speakers this year were:-

Stuart Roberts - Vice President National Farmers' Union – an arable and livestock farmer who has also worked for Defra and Flood Standards Agency – who shared his views on the need for more radical and bold thinking on flood risk management and the supply of water for agriculture.

Bryan Curtis – Chair Coastal Group Network – Chartered Engineer and a member of CIWEM and ICE.

Bryan is Chairman of the Coastal Group Network. This is a network of Councils, Ports, Government bodies who provide a collective voice for the coast and management of the shoreline.

Robin Price – Interim Managing Director – Water Resources East (WRE)

Water Resources East is a partnership from a wide range of industries including water energy, retail, the environment, land management and agriculture who are working in collaboration to manage the number of significant risks to the future supply of water in the East of England. The NFU and ADA (via the David Thomas) have membership on the Board of WRE.

The conference was introduced by Robert Caudwell who asked all present to mark their appreciation of the work being done in the north east of England to respond to and manage the impacts of the floods. He stated his opinion that warnings at previous ADA conferences over the lack of river maintenance had fallen on deaf ears and that the flooding taking place at the time was clear evidence of the need to better balance capital investment with maintenance spending. He then went on to outline ADA's intention to lobby all parties throughout the general election. This included sharing the 7-point plan detailed below;

1. Long term investment horizons in the face of climate change challenges

Flood risk management delivers enduring benefits and authorities involved need to be able to plan ahead financially over multiple years and need to receive a sensible balance of capital and revenue funding, spread across the river catchments, in order to find efficiencies through climate change adaptation and resilience, and attract business investment.

2. Promote co-operation and partnership working to manage the water environment and reduce flood risk

Close cooperation between flood risk management authorities, water companies, communities, business and land managers needs the continued strong support of

government to deliver adaptive and resilient flood risk maintenance and similar activities more efficiently and affordably.

3. Total catchment management

Total catchment management is now the widely accepted approach to managing our water and now is the time to increase and empower local professionals and communities to manage and operate these catchments together.

4. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)

The next government needs to fully implement Schedule 3 of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010, to ensure future development can keep pace with the challenges of the changing climate, by ensuring that SuDS are maintained over the lifetime of a development.

5. Support local governance in flood and water level management decision making

In some parts of England there is an appetite for greater local maintenance delivery on watercourses and flood defence assets than that currently afforded from national investment. This can be achieved via the careful transfer of some main river maintenance to local bodies or the expansion of areas maintained by those local bodies, such as Internal Drainage Boards, where there is local support and transitional funding.

6. Local Government Finances

It is vital that Special and Local Levy funding mechanisms for drainage, water level and flood risk management continue to be part of this funding landscape to maintain the democratic link with local communities affected.

7. Brexit: Ensuring a resilient regulatory framework for the water environment

The next government needs to provide clear policy messages about how they wish to make the delivery of environmental improvements to the water environment easier and more effective as we transition from European legislation such as the Water Framework Directive.

Unfortunately, because the conference was held during the pre-election period sometimes known as Purdah, which restricts certain communications during this time, there were no representatives available from the Environment Agency or Defra which significantly restricted the debate on flood risk management, funding and maintenance issues. However, there was considerable support from the floor of the conference for the view that lack of maintenance had significantly contributed to the recent problems with the River Don and the flooding of Fishlake village.

Officers of the Association were re-elected, including Lord De Ramsey as President and Robert Caudwell as Chairman.

Subscriptions to ADA would be increased by 2% for the following year.

b) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities will be held in London on Wednesday the 11th November 2020.

RESOLVED

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

c) Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse Branch

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association was held on Tuesday the 3rd March 2020.

The format was as per the 2019 conference with a workshop in the morning and the conference in the afternoon. Topics covered were control of invasive species, water resources, planning and effective communications with the wider public.

That the date of the next meeting is Tuesday the 2nd March 2021.

d) Good Governance Guide for Internal Drainage Board Members

That ADAs workshops were well attended and are helping to deal with the questions being raised by Defra following the Audit Commission Report which criticized aspects of IDB governance. At least one member of this Board attended one of the two local workshops in the area and hence the Board will be able to record in the IDB1 Defra return that training has been provided on Governance. In addition to governance Defra appear to expect over time that training will be given for the following; Finance, Environment, Health, safety and welfare and Communications and engagement. The Board may wish to consider an order of priority for future training and a timetable for delivery.

e) Workstreams

That ADA annually review their workstreams and an update is included.

f) Further Research on Eels

Further to minute B.852, ADA have advised that the valuable research work being carried out by Hull University on eels and eel behaviour in pumped catchments will be continuing for at least another two years. ADA consider that the financial support to the project to date provided by the IDBs has been positive and noted by the regulator (EA), leading to positive engagement on finding practical solutions at pumping station sites. They therefore consider that it would be useful if IDBs could consider whether they would be willing to continue their annual contributions to this research over that period.

RESOLVED

That the Board contribute £100 per year for the next 2 years towards further research on eels, and Members be provided with details of the results so far at the next meeting.

g) Emergency Financial Assistance for Internal Drainage Boards

That whilst in East Anglia we have not had the unprecedented levels of rainfall which have occurred further north and in the west of the county in recent years this by no means equates to there being no risk of it occurring here. ADA have written to DEFRA seeking to formalise a mechanism for IDBs providing support to the EA in a major event to recover

costs. An update will be given should there be any substantive movement from DEFRA on this matter as a result of this request.

iv) The New Rivers Authorities & Land Drainage Bill

That this Bill has completed its Committee stage in the House of Commons and passed through its Third Reading. It has now started its progression through the House of Lords.

The Bill, which has been prepared by Defra, aims to put the Somerset Rivers Authority onto a statutory footing as a precepting body, but it would also enable the reform of IDB ratings annual value lists. It does this by recognising the need to ensure that the methodology through which IDBs calculate and collect drainage rates and special levy sits on a sound legal basis that can be periodically updated to contemporary values better reflecting current land and property valuation.

With the above in mind ADA has been working with Defra and a number of IDBs to test a new methodology using contemporary valuation and Council Tax lists that could be applied via this legislative change.

v) Environment Agency consultation on changes to the Anglia (Central) RFCC

That a consultation is taking place on the constitution of three RFCCs following a formal proposal for two new unitary authorities to be formed in Northamptonshire (West Northamptonshire and North Northamptonshire) has been submitted to the Government for consideration. If approved these authorities would come into existence on the 1 April 2020.

In Buckinghamshire the decision to create a single unitary authority replacing the existing five councils has been made by the Government, subject to Parliamentary approval. It would come into existence on the 1 April 2020.

Each new authority will be a unitary authority, delivering all local government services in their respective areas, including their functions as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFAs).

The membership of Thames RFCC, Anglian (Central) RFCC, and Anglian (Northern) RFCC currently includes representation from one or both of the existing county councils. To reflect the changes proposed the membership of all three RFCC will need to be varied before 1 December 2019.

At the same time to better reflect a catchment-based approach it is proposed to change the name of Anglian (Central) RFCC to Anglian (Great Ouse) RFCC. ADA has stated that it supports the naming revision.

vi) Tactical Plans for the Fens Agreement

That the Environment Agency have set up a multi-partner group (FRM for the Fens) to steer work on developing strategic plans for managing flood risk in the lower Great Ouse catchment. This work is considered necessary to address the impacts of population growth and climate change, which are particularly relevant in this area. The EA is requesting approval to the approach being taken in principle and follows the letter sent in January 2019. The perceived value of this work is that it pre-apportions the benefits (land and property which would flood if not defended) so that applying for grant should be more straightforward and the amount of grant possible clearer. This should give increased certainty and clarity and

resolves the issue of double counting benefits where for example a property is protected from flooding by both EA and IDB assets. Work on developing the strategy could take up to 15 years though and the proposal also therefore includes a mechanism for allowing grant-in-aided works to progress during this time on a hold-the-line basis.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve in principle

vii) Water Resources East (WRE)

That the Middle Level Commissioners' Chief Executive has been appointed as ADA's area representative on the Board of WRE. He will act as spokesman for IDBs who have an interest in the future management and provision of water in the East of England. This is particularly important as government consider plans to make the area more resilient and as the impacts of climate change start to bite in an area of rapid housing growth.

viii) Vision for the Future of Boards administered by the MLC

That Members will be aware that the Chair's meetings hosted by the MLC has had an item on the agenda for the last few meetings on future planning of administration and delivery of operations for the Board's collectively. As part of this process it has been agreed that members thoughts should be sought on what they envisage the collective future can and should look like to ensure the most resilient, delivery focused approach that can be achieved. Members should when developing their vision of water management in the fens in 2030 consider the challenges of maintaining representation, improving financial resilience, reducing duplication of work, the potential for cost savings, advantages and disadvantages of the various options available, the impacts of technology and sharing of resources and knowledge.

The information gathered from individual meetings will be collated and presented to the autumn 2020 Chairs meeting for their consideration.

B.925 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

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

Nordelph I.D.B.

Consulting Engineers' Report – March 2020

Pumping Station

One of the submersible pump drive motor phases has developed a low insulation resistance (IR) to earth which suggests a breakdown in the insulation or cable damage rather than being due to moisture ingress as all phases would be affected.

When the IR drops below $1M\Omega$ the pump will require removal for further investigation and a possible rewind carried out. The Board may wish to programme for the pumps removal during the forthcoming summer for repair or replacement. It should also be noted this pump is now obsolete and at the end of its design life.

Replacement of the pump, if necessary, may trigger the requirement of the pumping station to comply with the Eel Regulations 2009.

As has been previously reported the weedscreen is very badly corroded.

Pumping Hours

Hours Run February 2019 – February 2020 = 210

Hours Run January 2018 – January 2019 = 278

Hours Run January 2017 – January 2018 = 210

Hours Run January 2016 – January 2017 = 148

Hours Run January 2015 – January 2016 = 138

Hours Run February 2014 - January 2015 = 512

Planning Applications

No issues concerning previous applications have been dealt with and no further applications have been received and dealt with since the last meeting.

King's Lynn & West Norfolk Local Plan

Local Plan review 2016-2036

In delivering development that supports the economy and housing for current and future generations, the Borough Council needs to balance this with the need to protect and enhance the environment.

The Local Plan for the Borough currently consists of the Core Strategy (adopted in 2011) and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (SADMP) (adopted in 2016).

These two documents have been reviewed and combined to create a new draft document which identifies a strategy and detail for delivering growth in the Borough, identifying where development should be located and how it should be delivered up to 2036.

The draft Local Plan review was published for an eight week public consultation period from 4 March to 29 April 2019.

The document has been considered and a response was submitted to the Borough Council on behalf of both the Middle Level Commissioners and our associated Boards for whom we provide a planning consultancy service within West Norfolk. The response included comments on consultation during the planning process and flood risk design.

The relevant Borough Council's web page advises that the submitted comments and suggestions are being reviewed with another version of the plan being issued for further consultation in line with its [Local Development Scheme \(LDS\)](#) "to take place towards the end of the year/earlier next year."

Local Plan review Programme 2019-2021

Local Plan Documents	2019				2020				2021			
	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec
Local Plan review (2016 – 2036)	E/C	G/D	D	D/E	F	G	G		H/I/J			
Housing & Economic Availability Assessment												
Authority Monitoring Report												

Key Stages of Local Plan Preparation		Regulation
A	Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report Consultation (completed 2016)	
B	Development of options – on-going engagement on issues and emerging options	
C	Publish and Consult on draft Local Plan	Regulation 18
D	Pre-Submission plan development	
E	Pre-Submission publication and consultation	Regulation 19 & 20
F	Submission of document to Secretary of State	Regulation 22
G	Examination (Including Hearing Sessions)	Regulation 24
H	Receipt of Inspectors Fact Check Report	
I	Receipt of final Inspector's Report	Regulation 25
J	Adoption	Regulation 26

Upwell Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2038

Both the draft and revised versions of the plan have been considered as part of public consultations held between 5 April – 24 May and 18 November – 13 January.

The plan is very Upwell Village centric and the response made on behalf of both the Middle Level Commissioners and the associated Boards for whom we provide a planning consultancy service within the Upwell Parish was largely generic. Items of interest to the Board within the submitted document include Economic development including Housing – Scale and Location; Tourism,

Leisure, Recreation, and Marina; Open Community Space including Local Green Spaces; the Natural Environment; Flood Risk and Prevention including maintenance of flood defences and specific comments on allocated sites at St Peters Road/Blunts Orchard.

The opportunity was also taken to provide general information on Risk Management Authorities (RMA); Watercourses protected by the LDA and relevant RMA Bylaws; Consultation during the planning process; Early engagement and the better design of infrastructure; River setting and corridors/Green Infrastructure; Biodiversity and protected habitats and species; Flood risk and water level management including hazard mapping and development within the floodplain, open watercourses and Water Resources.

Norfolk Minerals & Waste Local Plan

Norfolk County Council is preparing a Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan Review, to consolidate its three Development Plan Documents (DPD), including the Site Specific Allocation DPD referred to in the Board's April 2017 meeting report, into one Local Plan, and ensure that the policies within them remain up-to-date and to extend the plan period to the end of 2036 to ensure consistency with the other plans being developed by the Local Planning Authorities in Norfolk.

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that most local plans are likely to require updating in whole or in part at least every five years and this requirement was incorporated into the adopted Minerals and Waste Core Strategy.

A public consultation on the draft Preferred Options document took place over a six week period from 18 September until 30 October. The County Council has reviewed the responses received and these, together with the other relevant documents, can be viewed on the County Council's webpage.

A response made on behalf of the Middle Level Commissioners and our relevant associated Boards, within West Norfolk, in response to a public consultation, advised that the document had been considered and the proposals were found to be outside the respective catchments and, therefore, no specific comments were made.

Flood Risk Management (FRM) for the Fens Technical Group [previously reported as the Future Fenland Project]

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

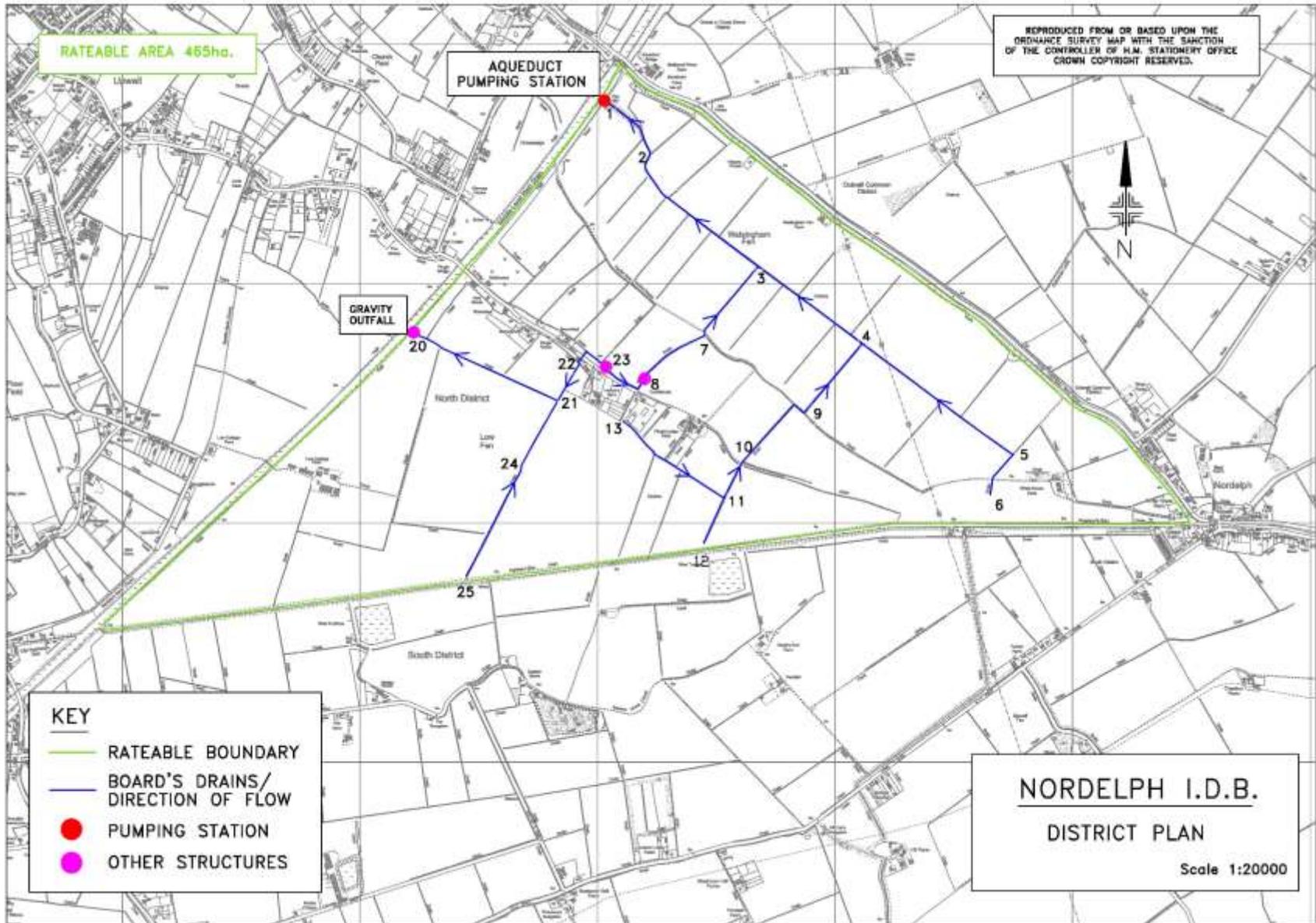
An article detailing the project was included on page 16 of the Summer edition of the ADA Gazette. This can be found at <https://flickread.com/edition/html/index.php?pdf=5d1efbbc0a48b#16>

The project is further discussed under a separate Agenda item.

Consulting Engineer

2 March 2020

Nordelph(321)\Reports\March 2020



Miss Ablett drew attention to the comments made by the Consulting Engineer in respect of the pump being in need of repair or replacement and that the Engineer had advised that the existing pump was now obsolete and at the end of its design life, and in view of the cost of replacement, which may need to be fish/eel friendly, he considered the pump could be repaired at a cost in the region of between £10-15,000.00, which may extend its' life to another 10 to 15 years. Miss Ablett advised that if the Board agreed to both the pump repairs and weedscreen replacement this would amount to a cost of approximately £25k, some of which could be funded from the general fund, together with the asset replacement fund should they wish to use these funds or alternatively an application could be made for a public works loan.

The District Officer reported that having spoken with the Engineer the pump may need repairing in 2 to 3 months or it could be 2 to 3 years and in his opinion no action was required at this time but the Board should continue to monitor the situation and to raise funds for future repairs.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) That no action be taken with regards the pump repairs and the Board continue to monitor the position.
- iii) That the Board continue to raise funds for future repairs.

B.926 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.927 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP Report

Miss Ablett referred to the Environmental Officer's Newsletter, dated December 2019, previously circulated to Members.

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.928 District Officer's Report

The Board considered the Report of the District Officer.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Reports 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 make arrangements for necessary drainworks and for flail mowing the District system in 2020/2021.

B.929 District Officer's Fee and Pumping Station Duties

- a) The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's fee for 2020/2021.
- b) The Board gave consideration to the payment in respect of pumping station duties, plus expenses, for 2020/2021.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Board agree that the sum of £1,650.00 (plus an additional payment of £105.00) be allowed for the services of the District Officer for 2020/2021.
- ii) That the Board agree that the sum of £480.00 (plus an additional payment of £25.00 for expenses) be allowed for the provision of pumping station duties for 2020/2021.

(NB) – In addition to G D Boyce, D H and D J W Boyce agreed to go along with the decision of other members in this matter.

(NB) – Mr G D Boyce declared an interest when this item was discussed.

B.930 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.

Update on the EA grant-in-aid position

Mr Hill reported that the EA undertook a 'refresh' of its grant allocation schedule and optimised it to increase the likelihood of meeting the government outcome measure targets. As part of this some schemes were deferred in favour of those which could be delivered within the next two years with certainty and the programme has, as a consequence, become financially oversubscribed. This effectively means that there will be little or no chance of receiving grant for any new schemes between now and 2021 (at the earliest). This date marks the end of the six-year funding commitment and whilst it is understood that the EA are pressing hard to have another six-year settlement and, if agreed to by treasury, for this to be larger than the previous one to help address the increasing investment required to tackle climate change driven impacts. At this point in time we do not know what will happen and changes could be made in any event to the funding model, what outcome targets are or the process of securing grant. What is clear is that the further ahead that IDBs collectively plan their investment needs the more likely whatever grant is available will be accessible by them.

Some members will recall that in 2009 asset surveys were carried out on all IDB pumping stations. As ten years has now passed it might be timely to revisit and update these to reflect any changes that might have occurred and for this updated information to be used to plan for future investment needs. Similarly, as it is five years since these assets were valued for insurance reasons, it is also considered worthwhile revising the rebuilding estimates to reflect construction cost inflation.

RESOLVED

- i) That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

ii) That no action concerning the asset survey or rebuilding estimates for insurance purposes be carried out.

B.931 Environment Agency – Precepts

Miss Ablett reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2020/2021 in the sum of £1,708.00 (the precept for 2019/2020 being £1,666.25).

B.932 Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

Miss Ablett referred to minute B.900, and reported that the Board last paid a subscription of £510 in 2015 and that she had been advised that the subscription for 2020 will be £565.

The Chairman reported that he had been in discussion with Innes Thomson, the Chief Executive of ADA, concerning membership and following discussion on the benefits and issues with boards with restricted income it was his recommendation that the Board become members of ADA.

RESOLVED

That the Board join ADA and the requested ADA subscription for 2020 be paid this year.

B.933 Health and Safety

a) Further to minute B.901, Miss Ablett reported that quotes were sought and a letter sent to the Chairman on the 25th April 2019 advising that it had been agreed at the Chairs meeting to enter into a 3 year contract with Cope Safety Management with the annual payment being split between the Boards. Assuming all Boards joined the arrangement, the cost to the Board would be £200 per annum. However it was understood that, particularly in the first year or so, extra support may be needed and this could be provided at a day rate of £500 or at an hourly rate of £85 for part days.

Miss Ablett advised that the Chairman had confirmed that the Board wished to be included in the arrangement with Cope Safety Management.

RESOLVED

That the actions of the Chairman be approved.

b) The District Officer referred to the reports received from Cope Safety Management following their visits to the District on the 13th November and the 6th February 2020.

The District Officer reported that the vegetation had been cut back, as requested. Also that the materials for the handrails for the concrete steps to the pumping station and the weedscreen, together with the materials for the kickboard had been obtained, but installation work had not yet been carried out as assistance was required which was unavailable in view of the current situation relating to COVID-19.

He advised that deep water warning signs were required for the area around the weedscreen and enquired whether the Middle Level Commissioners could provide a quote for the supply of a sign.

Miss Ablett reminded Members that the Board is responsible for ensuring they are compliant with all Health and Safety legislation and are adequately insured. In view of this, all points for action raised by its' Health and Safety consultant must be implemented so as to avoid the Board's insurance policy from becoming invalid.

RESOLVED

That the Middle Level Commissioners be asked to provide a quote for the supply of a deep water sign.

c) Miss Ablett referred to the ADA Internal Drainage Boards' Health, Safety & Welfare Survey 2018.

B.934 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2019/2020

Miss Ablett reported that in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, Internal Drainage Boards' accounts were required to be approved by resolution on or before 30th June.

B.935 Defra IDB1 Returns

Miss Ablett referred to the completed IDB1 form for 2018/2019 and to the letter from the Minister and Annual report summary and analysis received from Defra dated August 2019.

B.936 Review of Internal Controls

The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with the current system of Internal Controls.

B.937 Risk Management Assessment

a) Miss Ablett reported that it was necessary every 4-5 years to consider the formal Risk Register and in between times to judge the risks when considering the Consulting Engineer's and other reports and when setting budgets and rates/special levies. She advised that these risks had been analysed by the use of the Risk Matrix and added that, although the risk registers for IDBs very rarely changed, they would/could change over time and it was important for Boards to consider formally and that consideration was due this year.

Members considered the Board's Risk Register.

RESOLVED

That the Risk Register be approved and kept under review and the policy to review risk between formal reviews be continued.

b) The Board considered and approved the insured value of their buildings.

B.938 Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

Miss Ablett reported that, as resolved at its last meeting, the Board will continue with a limited assurance review and not take advantage of the audit exemption available for smaller public bodies with income and expenditure less than £25,000.

RESOLVED

To continue with a limited assurance review as has been carried out in previous years.

B.939 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.940 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £1,492.91 which had been made during the financial year 2018/2019 (1st to 31st March 2019) and £14,776.33 made during the financial year 2019/2020 (1st April 2019 to 29th February 2020).

(NB) – The District Officer declared an interest in the payment made to him.

B.941 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2020/2021

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2020/2021 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 93.19% and 6.81%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved, subject to the additional allowance made for transfer to the pump replacement fund.
- ii) That a total sum of £19,768 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 £18,421 and £1,347 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 26.68p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- vi) That a Special levy of £1,347 be made and issued to the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
- vii) 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).

viii) That the Clerk be authorised to recover all unpaid rates and levy by such statutory powers as may be available.

B.942 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.943 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Wednesday the 17th March 2021 at 7.00pm at New Farm House, Oaks Farm, Outwell.