

RAMSEY UPWOOD AND GREAT RAVELEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Ramsey Upwood and Great Raveley Internal Drainage Board
hosted at the Middle Level Offices, March on Thursday the 13th May 2021

PRESENT

A C Roberts Esq (Chairman)	J I Edwards Esq
R Blackhurst Esq (Vice Chairman)	M Lambert Esq
J R Clarke Esq	C W Pickard Esq
S J Corney Esq	C P Wilkinson Esq

Miss Lorna McShane (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Leo Butler (District Officer) were in attendance.

Apology for absence

An apology for absence were received from A Butler Esq.

B.1267 Standing Orders

Further to minute B.1267, Miss McShane reported that ADA have obtained agreement from Defra for the flexibility which allowed the Board to choose how they wished to hold Board meetings during the pandemic to become permanent. This change will allow remote attendance or fully virtual meetings to take place in future should that best meet the Board's particular requirements at that time.

RESOLVED

That the Board adopt the revised Standing Orders.

B.1268 Declarations of Interest

Miss McShane 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 declared an interest in the planning application (MLC Ref No. 376) received from J C Roberts.

B.1269 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 7th January 2021 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1270 Appointment of Clerk

RESOLVED

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

B.1271 Clerk's fee

The Board gave consideration to the Clerk's fee for 2021/2022.

RESOLVED

That there be no increase in the Clerk's fee for 2021/2022.

B.1272 Appointment of District Officer

RESOLVED

That L Butler Esq be appointed District Officer to the Board during the ensuing year.

B.1273 Board Membership

Further to minute B.1243, Miss McShane reported that Mr Michael Lambert had accepted the invitation to become a Members of the Board

The Chairman welcomed Mr Lambert who was attending his first meeting of the Board.

B.1274 Damage to Bank Close to Point 54

Further to minute B.1245, Miss McShane reported that there had been difficulty in obtaining information on the ownership of this land.

RESOLVED

That a site meeting be arranged with the Solicitor/Assistant Clerk, the District Officer and the Middle Level Commissioners' Senior Engineer to ascertain the exact whereabouts of the area of land that had been damaged by horses.

B.1275 Use of Drove Claimed by the Board

Further to minute B.1246, the Chairman reported that the only outstanding matter which needed to be attended to was the fitting of a gate and he advised that he would take steps to have this installed.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman arrange for the gate to be installed.

B.1276 Drain Adjacent to Tesco's at Point 28

Further to minute B.1247, the Consulting Engineer reported that, further to the Board's instruction at its' January meeting, Ellingham Consultants Ltd were employed to determine the post-development unregulated "free flow" rate discharging from the site. A report was received from them which confirmed that:-

- Only the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability would be attenuated to greenfield rates.
- The flow rates for lesser (but more frequent events) are when increased flows above greenfield rates are experienced.
-

If the Board were to use the current contribution fee calculation and the known discharge rates the contribution fee associated with the discharge had been determined as being £22,730.05.

RESOLVED

That a letter be sent to Tesco Stores Ltd requesting that a one-off sum of £22,730.05 be made as a contribution fee for increases in the discharge rate under their consent.

B.1277 Cadent Gas

Further to minute B.1248, the Consulting Engineer advised that works to protect the gas pipe were likely to start in September 2021 and would involve installing a concrete slab over the pipe that ran along the drain. The Board had granted consent for these works and as part of the consent it was necessary for a Work Statement to be prepared as it would be necessary to de-water the drain for the works to proceed.

The Consulting Engineer advised that he was meeting representatives of Cadent Gas on site the following Monday.

RESOLVED

That the Consulting Engineer continue to monitor and advise the Board.

B.1278 Development at Ramsey Business Park, St Mary's Road, Ramsey (MLC Ref Nos. MLC 225, 278, 354, 357 & 359)

Further to minute B.1249, the Consulting Engineer advised that no further comments had been received from the applicants or the applicants' agents and no further action had been taken in respect of the Board's interests in this matter.

B.1279 Contravention of Byelaws and access for maintenance – Grasmere, Chapel Road, Ramsey Heights

Further to minute B.1250, Miss McShane reported that no further action had been necessary on the contravention of byelaws as the District Officer had managed to gain access for maintenance purposes.

B.1280 Abbey Farm

Further to minute B.1251, Miss McShane advised that due to the confidential nature of the issues concerning this item, it was necessary to pass a formal resolution to exclude the public.

RESOLVED

That in pursuance of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting when the above matters are being considered by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

B.1281 Clerk's Report

Miss McShane advised:-

i) Application for byelaw consent

That the following application for consent to undertake works in and around watercourses has been approved and granted since the last general meeting of the Board:-

<u>Name of Applicant</u>	<u>Description of Works</u>	<u>Date consent granted</u>
Cadent Gas Limited	Provide protection from vehicle damage to high pressure gas main	16 th February 2021

RESOLVED

That the action taken in granting consent be approved.

ii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Meeting of the River Great Ouse Branch

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association was held virtually on Tuesday the 2nd March 2021.

Matters covered were that there was a change in Chairman with Harry Raby stepping down and Marc Heading taking his place. Councillor Doug McMurdo takes on the role of Vice Chairman. This maintains the balance of having upland and lowland members in key roles and also balances council and agricultural ratepayers' interests. John Heading was appointed for another three years on the ADA Board as branch representative. Robert Caudwell gave an update on ADA matters focusing in on progress of the agriculture bill through parliament and the lowland peat initiative which he considers must not negatively impact on livelihoods and the need to produce food for the nation. Next to speak was Brian Stewart who was seeking support for his initiative to create an Ex-Officio post on the FRCC for the sitting Chairman of the Great Ouse branch of ADA (EA nominated post). This was supported unanimously and Marc Heading will take up this new role with immediate effect.

Claire Jouvray and Paul Burrows gave updates on the revenue funding position, which was quite healthy with sources of money found to deliver what had been targeted and on the long-term strategy for the area including the tactical plans which are set to make access to grant

in aid smoother than it might otherwise be. A warning was raised that funding may get squeezed as time passes and the financial impact of COVID-19 gets addressed.

Approximately 30 people attended this virtual meeting, which should return to its normal format at Prickwillow Hall next year.

That the date of the next meeting is Tuesday the 1st March 2022.

b) ADA response to publication of EFRA Flooding Inquiry Report

That ADA have responded to the Government EFRA report into the winters flooding, which has the headline conclusion that the lack of clear flood-resilience targets is leaving England at risk of 'playing catch-up' with climate change.

Encouragingly, in addition to recognising these challenges, EFRA have also clearly stated that in light of ever more frequent and severe storms, there is an urgent need to provide long-term funding for the maintenance of existing and new flood defences, to match capital commitment together with a need to examine the mental health impacts of severe flooding, calling for an action plan to address this alongside the economic and physical effects.

ADA's response and the full EFRA report can be found via the following link; <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5801/cmselect/cmenvfru/170/170.pdf>

iii) Smart Level System/District Wide Telemetry Bid

Further to minute B.1252(vi), Miss McShane reported that a Local Levy Bid has been submitted that appears to have been successful and also, as the bid covers all MLC administered IDBs there is scale which will facilitate very competitive rates.

When looking at the cost of telemetry there will be a number of factors that will impact upon cost. We have asked Xylem to put together a table that should cover the upper and lower bounds of all IDB pumping stations (see below). Prior to placing an order a site survey will be undertaken, average cost for this is expected to be in the region of £200. Xylem will then assess what if any control panel modifications will be required to allow telemetry. The other defining factor will be whether there is to be an additional requirement for remote control of the station pumps and set points. The table covers this range.

The costing bands are:

Low	£2000 - £5,000	Minor panel modifications are required, signals are present but need work to the panel to present or make these available to telemetry.
Medium	£5,001 - £24,999	Signals are not present to enable telemetry and panel modifications are quite intensive to bring the panel to a point where a telemetry unit can be installed.
High	£25,000 +	Signals are not present and the panel requires major modifications to give the required signals. Should this option be required it is anticipated that consideration first should be given to replacement of the control panel which would bring more value and longevity. Signals for telemetry could be more easily accommodated in a new panel.

Note: All above figures are gross and if the Board resolves to go ahead as part of the Grant funded scheme currently on offer will be discounted 50%

Note: The telemetry access will be cloud based, increasing the flexibility in access at the appropriate level for staff and District Officers.

RESOLVED

That the Board do not wish to be included in the arrangements for telemetry provision.

iv) Land Registry

Whilst is a legal requirement for land occupiers to notify the Board of any change of occupation, including releasing contact details for the new occupiers, on many occasions this does not occur and time is spent trying to determine who the new occupier is. When the normal avenues fail to deliver any meaningful information we now use our Land Registry account to gain details of the current land owner. The costs of making an application via this method are small (currently £6) but obviously this will show up on the Board accounts, hence the need to draw this new way of working to the Boards attention.

v) National Drainage Show & Floodex 2021

That the National Drainage Show & Floodex 2021 will be held at ExCel, London on the 9th and 10th November 2021.

B.1282 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

The Board considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

Green Dyke Pumping Station

The Chairman reminded Members that, as it was nearing the end of its life, a decision had been taken to replace Green Dyke pumping station. Grant aid has been sought for the replacement and costings were being prepared by the Consulting Engineers.

New Fen Pumping Station

Costings had been obtained from three contractors to survey pump 1 with a view to pricing for the removal, complete overhaul and reinstatement of the pump and motor. The three contractors, Sulzer, KSB and Bedford Pumps had provided quotations and these had been passed to the Chairman for review.

Subsidence at New Fen Pumping Station

The discharge chamber was being monitored for movement due to subsidence. It was reported that monthly monitoring of the discharge chamber will continue to be carried out and recorded.

Pollution in a watercourse adjacent to Green Drove

The Engineer reported that pollution in a watercourse adjacent to Green Drove was being investigated but the source had not been clearly identified. The watercourse will be monitored for further signs of pollution and action taken if the source is located. During the course of investigation

a discharge into the Board's system from two adjacent new properties was discovered and the developer had been approached to pay the required discharge fee.

RESOLVED

i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.

ii) New Fen Pumping Station

That quotations for works to pump 1 be passed to the Chairman for review.

iii) Hawthorne Properties site (MLC Ref Nos. 337, 353, 367 & 368)

That an entry be placed on the Local Land Charges Register.

iv) Pollution in watercourse adjacent to Green Drove

That the watercourse be monitored for pollution and the developer be approached to pay the discharge fee.

(NB) – The Chairman declared an interest in the planning application (MLC Ref No. 376) received from J C Roberts.

B.1283 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.1284 District Officer's Report

The Board considered the Report of the District Officer.

The District Officer reported that all drainworks had gone to plan and were carried out including the Catchwater Drain after negotiation with the landowner. For the forthcoming year the drainworks to be carried out would be in the Green Dyke part of the District.

RESOLVED

That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved and that the Officer be thanked for his services over the preceding year.

B.1285 Conservation Officer's BAP Report

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.1286 District Officer's Fee

The Board gave consideration to the District Officer's fee for 2021/2022.

RESOLVED

That the Board agree that the sum of £3495.00 be allowed for the services of the District Officer for 2021/2022.

B.1287 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 Defra.

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time.

B.1288 Environment Agency – Precept

Miss McShane reported that the Environment Agency had issued the precept for 2022/2022 in the sum of £5,229.00 (the precept for 2020/2021 being £5,229.00).

B.1289 Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

Miss McShane reported that the sum of £2,589.21 (£10,729.63 less £8,140.42 paid on account) (inclusive of supervision) had been received from the Environment Agency based on the Commissioners' actual expenditure on maintenance work for the financial year 2019/2020 together with the sum of £4,933.45 in respect of 80% of the Commissioners' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2020/2021.

B.1290 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.

B.1291 Rate Arrears

Consideration was given to writing off rate arrears amounting to £4.62.

RESOLVED

That the arrears be written off.

B.1292 Health and Safety

Further to minute B.1261, the Chairman reported that all the recommendations from the Cope Safety Management report had been carried out with the exception of two actions; the steps at Upwood Common pumping station and there were surfaces that needed to be levelled at the rear of Green Dyke pumping station.

B.1293 Review of Internal Controls and appointment of Internal Auditor

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

Miss McShane reported that the agreement with the Commissioners' Internal Auditor ended in 2021 and that, due to restrictions caused by COVID-19 and increased workloads from the winter rainfall events, it had not been possible to properly tender for a new agreement. Following discussions with Whiting & Partners it had therefore been agreed that the current arrangements would be extended by one year to allow sufficient time for the tender process to be carried out.

RESOLVED

That the Board approve the one-year extension of the appointment of Whiting & Partners as Internal Auditor.

B.1294 Risk Management Assessment

- a) The Board considered and expressed satisfaction with their current Risk Management Policy.
- b) The Board considered and approved the insured value of their buildings.

B.1295 Exercise of Public Rights

Miss McShane 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.1296 Annual Governance Statement – 2020/2021

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended on the 31st March 2021.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2021.

B.1297 Payments

The Board considered and approved payments amounting to £57,754.63 which had been made during the financial year 2020/2021.

B.1298 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2020/2021

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2021 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 2021.

B.1299 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2021/2022

The Board considered estimates of expenditure and proposals for special levy and drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2021/2022 and were informed by Miss McShane 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 50.66% and 49.34%.

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £68,432 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 £34,666 and £33,766 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 21.0p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District.
- v) That a Special levy of £33,766 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.1300 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.1301 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED

That the next Meeting of the Board be held on Thursday the 6th January 2022 at the Old Nene Golf and Country Club, Ramsey.