

# **WARBOYS SOMERSHAM AND PIDLEY INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

At a Meeting of the Warboys Somersham and Pidley Internal Drainage Board held at The Lakeside Lodge, Pidley on Thursday 2nd December 2021

## **PRESENT**

M England (Chairman), C Leadbetter (Vice Chairman), J Armstrong, D Brown, Cllr Bull, D Edwards, D England, D Fabb, M Heading, I Johnson, T Noble, J Short, H Whittome, S Whittome.

Mr Robert Hill (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Robert Wilmer (District Officer) were also in attendance.

## **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from D Cornwell, Lord De Ramsey, A Edgley, J German, G Munns, Miss L Munns and R Waters.

The Chairman referred to the recent death of Mr Lenton Allpress and Mr Hill confirmed that Mr Allpress had been a long-standing member of the Board, serving as Vice Chairman of the Board from 19<sup>th</sup> February 1970 to 5<sup>th</sup> November 1980 and as Chairman from 5<sup>th</sup> November 1980 to 5<sup>th</sup> November 1992.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Board's appreciation of the services rendered by Mr Allpress as a member, and of the manner in which he undertook his duties as Chairman, be recorded in the Minutes.

## **B.1773 Declarations of Interest**

Mr Hill 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.

Mr M Heading and Messrs H and S Whittome declared interests (as Members of the Middle Level Board) in any matters relating to the Middle Level Commissioners.

Mr Fabb declared interests in Planning application references H/21/00913/FUL and H/21/00914/FUL and MLC reference numbers 504, 533, 951, 1079, 1151 and 1152.

Mr Noble declared an interest in Planning Application reference H/21/00747/FUL.

Mr Heading declared interests in MLC planning matters reference numbers 770, 776, 777, 961, 993, 1097 and 1098.

## B.1774 Inspection of the District

Prior to the Meeting of the Board, an Inspection took place attended by Messrs M England, C Leadbetter, J Armstrong, D Brown, D England, D Fabb, I Johnson, T Noble, J Short and S Whittome.

Mr Hill and Mr Wilmer (District Officer) were also in attendance for the Inspection.

### i) Piling Works on Upstream Section of Fenton Lode;

The Chairman explained that more works had been completed than had originally been anticipated, but it had been considered better value for money to address this section as a whole rather than having to return at a later date. The District Officer, Mr Wilmer, commented that it was hoped that the grass reeding would have time to establish and stabilise the banksides further.

### ii) Section of Watercourse between Points 81-71

The District Officer pointed out slips along the channel and that they had not been considered critical to address with piling immediately. The Chairman informed members that he was uncertain if piling was required at this location and considered it would be possible to address the slips while carrying out routine maintenance works.

### iii) Pidley Pumping Station

The District Officer informed members of the workings of the Station and ran the automatic weed-screen cleaning equipment through a cycle to check if the recent fault had been successfully repaired.

### iv) High Fen Pumping Station

Members crossed the Fenton Lode over the new footbridge to view the recently completed improvement works at the Pumping Station. The District Officer informed members of the workings of the Station.

### v) Washways Pumping Station

The District Officer informed members of the issues at the Pumping Station during the rainfall event of Christmas 2020. Members discussed the likely impact of the change from red diesel to white diesel on both pumping and drain maintenance works.

### vi) Washways discharge channel opposite Stainless Metalcraft site (new building)

The Chairman informed members of the site meeting he attended with the MLC Planning Engineer concerning the piling works carried out by Stainless Metalcraft, and, that, as access would be retained on the side of the new site, the piling works should not cause any issues to the Board. The Chairman confirmed there were still some matters outstanding concerning the site, which were being attended to by the MLC Planning Engineer.

The District Officer referred to the overhanging trees from the Stainless Metalcraft site and the need for these to be attended to before next year's drain maintenance works.

vii) Bridge over the Washways discharge channel at Honeysome Industrial Estate

The District Officer informed members that works to the section of watercourse downstream of the bridge were planned for next year and pointed out the problems along this section for access.

viii) Eastern Bank of the Washways discharge channel between Points 5a and 4a

The District Officer pointed out the restricted access to this section from the current development and the likely future restrictions if the planned development for this area proceeds.

Members viewed the problems for carrying out drain maintenance works from this side of the watercourse and the need for a long-reach machine. He commented that in previous years, because of the problems on this side of the channel, works had been carried out from the other side and the works should be done from this side next year as programmed.

The Chairman referred to the Agreement and Performance Deed in relation to this new section which terminates in 2023, and the need for a detailed inspection to ensure any required works for remedial repairs and bank stabilisation were identified prior to this.

B.1775 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 3rd June 2021 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.1776 Matters Arising

None

B.1777 Standing Orders

Mr Hill reported that the Middle Level Commissioners' Solicitor was dealing with the matter of enquiries with Defra concerning reducing both the number of elected members and the number for a quorum, but to date had nothing to update the Board on. Mr Hill informed members that another board administered by the Middle Level was in the process of reducing numbers in the same way, but progress was slow. The Board approved for the Clerk to monitor the progress being made with the other board's application and to progress this Board's application accordingly.

B.1778 Vacancy in Membership

Mr Hill reported that Mr A Edgley had contacted him concerning his membership of the Board and that he considered, as he had a day-to-day involvement in running the farming business within the Board, it would be sensible for his son, Stephen, to take his place, and he had therefore offered to stand down from his membership of the Board.

Members considered the two vacancies on the Board.

RESOLVED

- i) That the decision of Mr A Edgley be received with regret and the Board's appreciation of his services to the District be recorded in the minutes.
- ii) That Mr Stephen Edgley be invited to fill one of the vacancies on the Board if willing to do so.
- iii) That Mr Sam Johnson be invited to fill the second vacancy on the Board if willing to do so.

B.1779 Board Membership

Further to minute B.1744(b), Mr Hill reported that Mr J Armstrong had accepted the Board's invitation to become a Member of the Board.

The Chairman welcomed J Armstrong, who was attending his first meeting of the Board.

B.1780 Appointments 2021/2022

The Chairman reported that, due to personal reasons, he would be unable to continue in his role as Chairman.

RESOLVED

- a) That Mr England's decision be received with regret and that the Board's appreciation of the manner in which Mr England had undertaken his duties as Chairman be recorded in the minutes.
- b) That Mr C Leadbetter be appointed as Chairman of the Board.
- c) That Mr D Brown be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Board
- d) That Middle Level Commissioners be appointed as Clerk to the Board
- e) That the Finance Committee be constituted as follows;

The Lord De Ramsey, D D Brown, D W England, M P England, D R A Fabb, J German, C Leadbetter, T E A Noble, H W Whittome

- f) That the Bank Mandate be changed for the Chairman and Vice Chairman to be added as signatories for the Board, and that the signing rights be either Mr Leadbetter or Mr Brown together with either the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer of the Middle Level Commissioners.

B.1781 Fenton Lode New Cut (Tesco Site)

Further to minute B.1746, Mr Hill drew Members' attention to the Consulting Engineer's Report and his recommendation that a thorough and detailed inspection of the diversion is undertaken in early 2022 to ensure that any slippage in the banks, slip stability or other issues are raised and dealt with whilst there are sufficient funds available before the Agreement and Performance Deed terminates in 2023.

#### RESOLVED

- a) That the Consulting Engineer be authorised to arrange a detailed inspection of the diversion in early 2022 and report to the Chairman.
- b) That upon receipt of the report, the Chairman be authorised to take any action as he considers appropriate.

#### B.1782 Outstanding Drainage Rates

Mr Hill reported that work to produce a detailed plan to identify any unknown rateable areas was in hand.

#### RESOLVED

That the Clerk continue works to produce a detailed plan, and, upon completion, take actions to identify any areas of land that remained unallocated to a ratepayer.

#### B.1783 Clerk's Report

Mr Hill advised;

- i) COVID-19 Actions

That due to the risk of COVID-19 mutations appropriate measures are being put in place, revised and reviewed as per government advice and using activity-based risk assessments.

- ii) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That a seventh Chair's Meeting was held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021.

The meeting covered a wide variety of matters likely to affect IDBs. A summary of the key points and resolutions follows;

- a) The MLC Chair introduced the meeting and took the opportunity to warn those present that government were pushing for land in this area to be set aside to mitigate the impacts of climate change. In this respect there was concern that the data underpinning this move was out-of-date and inadequate and that there was a risk that no proper account would be taken of the storage effects of the land as it is currently managed compared to how it might react if managed as wetland.
- b) To better fit in with the farming calendar the annual safety audits carried out by Cope are to be moved to January and February. In response to a question from the floor, Chairs

were advised that it is ultimately the Board and not the MLC's responsibility to manage safety at Board owned assets, although the MLC will assist where they can.

c) Chairs considered that it was considered important that IDBs and the MLC have a policy on climate change. It was felt likely that this will become increasingly important as pressure mounts for action to be taken. In this respect the Clerk advised that the MLC intended to carry out a baseline assessment of its carbon footprint which would then be used to underpin plans for reductions in CO2 release and for mitigation. This model would be made available to those IDBs which wished to follow a similar path. Once what could be reasonably achieved has been defined a policy to steer implementation would be produced. Obviously, the aim will be to achieve net zero or as close to it as can be realistically and practically be achieved.

d) The Chief Executive outlined the work of WRE, including the regional reconciliation of water supply just carried out, the proposals for two new reservoirs (one in Lincolnshire and one in Cambridgeshire) and the future plans for water security providing a 1 in 500 year level of drought tolerance for potable water supply. On this latter point he advised that he had been pushing hard for the needs of agriculture to be taken into account, noting that wet farming and environmental targets for farming would require extra water in this region. Also, he considered that separating agricultural need from environmental need was an error and failed to recognise the close tie between the two.

e) It was reported that it seemed increasingly likely that despite lobbying MPs and Defra it will be the case from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 that IDB's will lose access to red diesel for anything other than powering generators and for heating. This will increase costs and will present problems with the use of contractors who also work for agriculture which will have an exemption, hence can continue to use red diesel in plant.

f) On member training it was agreed that the MLC would set up a Zoom type seminar running several of the ADA video training sessions back-to-back. All members of all MLC administered IDBs would be invited and attendance will be recorded. This was seen as the most efficient way of delivering the training that Defra expects members to have undertaken.

g) For the next round of IDB meetings, the MLC website secure pages will be used for Board meeting documents. Members will be sent links to the appropriate webpage with a password. The documents can then be downloaded whenever it is convenient to do so. **MEMBERS WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO FOLLOW THIS ROUTE RATHER THAN REQUIRE PAPER COPIES OF DOCUMENTS.** In exceptional circumstances – for example for those members without email addresses - a paper copy of the relevant documents can still be printed off, bound and sent out. The use of the Microsoft Teams software is also to be explored for future years.

h) GDPR was discussed and it was resolved that for internal matters, or where working with partner organisations all email addresses will be visible to allow members to see who has knowledge of the matter under discussion. All external communications will normally be blind copied unless there is a need to show the address or the address is already known (for example when a member is passing on a query he or she has received themselves). It was also agreed that the website could continue to show names and primary contact numbers as long as addresses were not identified.

iii) 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>Details of Consent Granted</u>	<u>Date Consent Granted</u>
Mr D Harlock	Installation of 3 no field underdrain Outfalls – 1 between Points 171 and 181 and 2 between Points 172 and 183	14 <sup>th</sup> June 2021

iv) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the 84<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Association was held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

The Conference was once again held virtually and was split into two parts; the Conference in the morning and AGM in the afternoon. It is expected that, whilst in future years it is hoped to return to a face-to-face format, the clear separation between conference and AGM is likely to be retained.

Speakers this year included Rebecca Row MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State – Defra), Dieter Helm (economist) and Lord De Ramsey (then President of ADA).

Topics covered included the challenges of climate change and the need to step up to the plate in delivering on the aim to achieve a net zero target as soon as possible, the importance of partnership working and the importance of agriculture in feeding the nation. The latter included the need to better educate the population, who clearly desire to move forward on delivering climate change and ecological objectives, but do not fully appreciate the role of agriculture, its real impacts or even properly understood where and how food is sourced. One example given that challenged a common assumption that agriculture was bad for the environment was that recent monitoring of CO2 release had shown that a well irrigated peat field of onions released less CO2 than adjacent dry grassland.

In his speech Lord De Ramsey announced that he was stepping down as President and that his place would be taken by Henry Cator. He was warmly thanked by ADA for his many years of service and was presented with a painting by an artist which it is known he admires. Henry spoke about how pleased he had been to be invited to take over the role and that he looked forward to working with ADA to meet the future challenges of the industry.

The AGM that followed gave an update on the work of ADA, noting the likelihood that, despite vigorous lobbying, the expectation was that from 1st April 2022 IDBs would no longer be able to use red diesel for anything other than heating or to run generators. This will impact on costs and will provide challenges to the continued use of agricultural contractors. The passing of the Environment Bill was touched upon which will release barriers to the formation of new IDBs and will also provide opportunities for IDBs to explore extending their boundaries if it was clearly beneficial to do so. Innes Thomason spoke on the work of ADA and the consultations ADA had responded to, including proposals to extend beaver introduction and a water abstraction licencing charging review amongst other things. Finally, it was reported that the ADA Board had agreed to a 1% rise

in subscriptions for the 2022/23 year and noted that with inflationary pressures a higher increase should be expected next year.

b) Meeting of the River Great Ouse Branch

That the Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse branch of the Association will take place on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022 at Prickwillow Village Hall.

c) Updating IDB Byelaws

Further to minute B.1622, ADA have advised that there was an error in the Model Byelaws relating to penalty note referred to s37 of the Criminal Justice Act 1982, which was actually repealed on the 1.12.2020 by the Sentencing Act 2020. Consequently, Defra has amended the Penalty Notice attached to the byelaws to include the correct reference. This Penalty Notice is not part of the Byelaws and hence is a simple correction. There is no requirement either to readvertise or seek DEFRA approval and the version now uploaded to the website is the corrected one.

v) Environment Act

In November 2021 DEFRA announced that the Environment Act became law. The stated aim of this Act is to improve air and water quality, tackle waste, increase recycling, halt the decline of species, and improve the natural environment. However, the Act also includes powers (specific to IDBs) which amend the Land Drainage Act 1991, addressing the technical issue of missing or incomplete data, which is preventing existing internal drainage boards from expanding and new ones from being established. DEFRA have stated that they will be working on the associated secondary legislation over the coming year and will be engaging with IDBs through ADA on this.

vi) Smart Level System/District Wide Telemetry Bid

Further to minute B.1751(iii), the Clerk reported.

## Red Diesel

The Chairman referred to the discussion held earlier during the Inspection concerning the future use of red diesel.

In response to Mr H Whittome, the District Officer confirmed that the Board operated two diesel engine powered pumps, both of which were at Washways Pumping Station.

Mr H Whittome queried if it would be possible for ADA to enquire of Defra about the possibility of having an arrangement of claiming back duty/tax for the use of white diesel, as is in place in parts of Europe.

Members discussed the implications for contractors in using red diesel for agricultural work and white diesel for the Board's work and did not consider there was currently enough detail available to formulate policies/procedures concerning the use of red diesel.

## Agenda Documents

Members discussed the proposal to have all agenda papers available on the secure page of the website, and, whilst they accepted that the aspiration should be to move towards becoming paperless, they also acknowledged issues for some members, particularly regarding internet access.

### RESOLVED

That paper copies continue to be made available to Members upon request.

## Updating IDB Byelaws

### RESOLVED

That the Board approve the updated byelaws as now uploaded to the Board's website.

## Smart Level System/District Wide Telemetry Bid

Although Members had recently received correspondence concerning this, Members discussed the position, accepting that, as had previously been advised by the Clerk, the decision would be taken on the responses received.

Mr Johnson queried the possible overall benefits of the scheme as he considered it unlikely that there would be cost savings amounting to the future annual running costs.

Mr H Whittome referred to the costs being 50% funded by grant aid and in response to further queries informed Members that the system would be cloud-based and therefore available to any Member who had the correct log-in details.

He considered the system would provide substantial direct benefits to the Board, in that it would enable the District Officer to prioritise his visits to pumping stations based on the information provided and, also, with particular regards to Washways Pumping Station, it would allow better management of the operation of that Station and the three stations pumping into Fenton Lode.

Mr Heading supported these comments, adding that the system would provide "real time" information which would enhance the management of the District systems. The Chairman queried if there would be further additional costs due to compatibility issues at some of the older installations.

Members were in favour of proceeding with the scheme and approved for it to be funded from existing balances. The Chairman referred to the individual complexities at each pumping station, and, during an event such as last Christmas, the District Officer had difficulty in attending to all the pumping stations at the same time. He referred to a previous proposal for individual Board Members to act as a Relief Pump Superintendent to give cover in such circumstances.

He reminded Members that when this had been previously discussed it had been agreed for the relevant Members to receive a small "annual retainer", although nothing had in fact been claimed.

Members were in agreement for providing relief cover at the pumping stations and for the District Officer to arrange training for individual stations. They did not consider it appropriate to receive an annual retainer, although accepted that there could be exceptional circumstances where reimbursement could be appropriate.

## RESOLVED

That the following Members receive training to act as Relief Pumping Station Attendants at the following stations;

Acre Fen	I Johnson
High Fen	M England
Pidley	D Edwards
Puddock	T Noble and J Short
Washways	I Johnson
Westmoor	G Munns

## B.1784 Consulting Engineers' Report, including Planning and Consenting Matters

Members discussed possible future capital improvement works and the District Officer referred to the possible installation of automatic weed-screen cleaning equipment at Acre Fen Pumping Station, as it was only possible to clean the screen by using a mini digger. In response to the Chairman, the District Officer estimated that a mini digger was required 3 – 4 times per year to clean the weed-screen.

The Chairman considered that future improvement works would be reviewed by the Finance Committee at their next meeting, with a view to making a recommendation to the Board.

Members confirmed their approval for the Consulting Engineer to carry out a thorough and detailed inspection of the works for the diversion of Fenton Lode/Fillenhams Drain, and report before the Agreement and Performance Deed terminates in 2023.

Mr S Whittome referred to the cost of dealing with planning applications and the inability of the Board to recover these costs from applicants as they were not statutory consultees.

Members discussed the complex issues surrounding the proposals to remove the right to connect to public sewers. Mr H Whittome informed Members of the discussions at the Middle Level Board Meeting concerning this matter, and Members agreed that, due to the complexities involved, they were unable to either support or object to the proposals.

## Planning Applications

- Residential development on land east of Llanca, Huntingdon Road, Chatteris – Bexwell Tractors (MLC ref nos 607 and 739) and H B Villages Developments Ltd (MLC ref nos 943,973 and 977)
- Haulage Yard at Furlong Farm, Chatteris – Mandley Brothers (MLC ref nos 718, 944 and 981)
- Development on land to the south of 19 Blackmill Road, Chatteris – Mr B White/DBM Landscapes (MLC ref nos 874 and 893) and Mr V Salisbury (MLC ref no 1159)
- Erection of 6 no single storey dwellings at 22 London Road, Chatteris – GKL Residential Developments Ltd (MLC ref nos 1037, 1169 and 1171)

- New Advanced Engineering Training Centre at Chatteris Engineering Works off Honeysome Road, Chatteris – Stainless Metalcraft (Chatteris) Ltd (MLC ref nos 1117, 1123 and 1161)
- Developments at Wilsons Orchard, Fenside Road, Warboys (MLC ref nos 504, 533, 951, 1079, 1151 and 1152)\*
- Residential development on land to the west of Richmond Lodge, Fen Road, Pidley – Mr Hopkins (MLC ref nos 907, 936, 980 and 1104).

\*Mr Fabb declared an interest in the development at Wilsons Orchard.

In response to the Chairman, Mr Hill reported that he had spoken to the Planning Engineer concerning these applications, and that the Planning Engineer had confirmed that they all had outstanding matters which required resolving to the satisfaction of the Board and, as additional costs would be involved, the Planning Engineer was requesting approval from the Board to continue discussions with the applicants/applicants' agents to resolve these outstanding matters.

### RESOLVED

a) That the Consulting Engineers report to be accepted and approved.

b) That, due to the complexities involved, the Board would neither support or object to the proposals to remove the right to connect to public sewers.

c) Planning Applications (as listed) – the Consulting Engineers to continue discussions with the developers and their agents to resolve and regularise the outstanding issues associated with the developments.

### B.1785 District Officer's Report

The District Officer informed Members that there were still additional piling works to be carried out, which would now be carried over into next year. He estimated that there were approximately 400 more piles scheduled to be put in. The Chairman estimated that this was in the region of £2,500 worth of materials and Mr Hill confirmed that this would be adjusted in the year-end financial statements.

The District Officer informed Members that next year's works were planned for the High Fen system and a large section of Fenton Lode and the discharge channel and that he proposed to send notices out now concerning these works.

He referred to the District Inspection earlier in the day and the problems associated with the eastern bank of the discharge channel downstream of the 'Tesco site'. He informed the Members that the previous access to this bankside was through the Honeysome Industrial Estate, but when the Tesco development was proceeding, a gate was placed across the access, for which he did not have a key. He also mentioned potential future access issues to the watercourse should the proposed housing development proceed.

In response to the District Officer, the Chairman confirmed that the Board would tender for the drain maintenance works next year.

The Chairman referred to previous discussions concerning the possible purchase of an excavator from Bartletts and that he had spoken with representatives onsite, and the current position was that it could not be available until Spring/Summer 2022. The District Officer referred to the

works that would be required to the machine to make it compatible with the Board's requirements and that he considered it would be more beneficial to look for something more compatible with the Board's requirements.

The Chairman thanked the District Officer for his work through the year and commended him for the way he carried out his duties, which at times were under very stressful circumstances.

#### RESOLVED

- i) That the District Officer be authorised to send out drain works notices as proposed
- ii) That the Clerk review the applications made to re-establish the Board's right of access to the eastern bank of the Washways discharge channel through the Honeysome Industrial Estate
- iii) That the Planning Engineer note the Board's requirement for access to the watercourse when dealing with development proposals for the areas of land to the north of the now developed 'Tesco site'.

#### B.1786 Contribution from Developer

Mr Hill reported that a contribution towards the cost of dealing with the increased flow or volume of surface water run-off and treated effluent volume had been received.

#### B.1787 Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

Mr Hill reported that ADA had increased subscriptions by 1% for 2022.

#### RESOLVED

That the increased subscription be paid for 2022.

#### B.1788 Health and Safety

Further to minute B.1762, the Chairman referred to the report received from Cope Safety Management following their visit to the District on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

The Chairman referred to the visit and report from Cope Safety Management and the District Officer confirmed that all points previously raised had now been dealt with to the satisfaction of the Health & Safety Consultant.

#### B.1789 Financial Statement

a) Mr Hill reported that the Board's revenue cash balances on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021 were;

Clients Premium Account	-	£861,417.27
Clients Premium Account (Labour)	-	£1002.88

- b) Mr Hill also reported that drainage rates and special levies amounting to £83,455.71 were outstanding on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021.

#### B.1790 Risk Management Assessment

Further to minute B.1764(b), Mr Hill referred to the Consulting Engineer's revised valuation of High Fen Pumping Station and the Chairman's subsequent instruction that the insured value of the Board's buildings be increased from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

#### RESOLVED

That the Chairman's actions be approved

#### B.1791 Completion of the Annual Accounts and Annual Return of the Board – 2020/2021

- a) The Board considered and approved the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.
- b) The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

#### B.1792 Defra IDB1 Returns

Mr Hill referred to the completed IDB1 form for 2020/2021 which the Board noted and approved.

#### B.1793 Expenditure/Estimate Update

Mr Hill referred to the Budget Monitoring Schedule and informed Members that the figures included the full cost of the timber purchased for the piling works, which, at the end of the financial year would need adjusting for the materials that would be carried forward as stock into the following year. He reported however, that as it had been approved to utilise existing balance to fund the majority of the works, this adjustment would not have any material impact on the out-turn.

He referred to Highland Water Contribution payable by the Environment Agency and that payment of the full claims submitted had recently been received. He commented that although the current position was forecasting the year-end out-turn to be around the budget forecast, this was dependant on the amount of pumping that would be required during the winter, a major factor over which the Board had no control.

#### RESOLVED

That the update be approved.

#### B.1794 Dates of Next Meetings

It was noted that the corresponding date for the June meeting would be a Bank Holiday in 2022. In response to the Chairman, Mr Hill confirmed that it would be better for the production of the finance papers if the meeting could be put back a week.

RESOLVED

That the next Meetings of the Board be held as follows in 2022, viz;

- i) Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022.
- ii) Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022 (prior to which the District Inspection will be held).

B.1795 Any Other Business

Mr Brown referred to the piling works carried out at the Stainless Metalcraft development and that the piles, as viewed on the earlier inspection, were very close to the waters' edge, which could cause instability to the remaining bank. The Chairman reported that the piles used were 8m in length, and, in the opinion of the Middle Level Planning Engineer, should not cause an issue for the Board. He also confirmed that the Board would have access to the watercourse on the development side.

The District Officer reported that the trees along the bankside on the Stainless Metalcraft side were again causing problems and it was intended to carry out maintenance works along this section next year.

Mr D England referred to the proposed housing development at Womb Farm and the need for the whole site to be reviewed from an engineering perspective to ensure that the Board's requirements were met. He considered, if necessary, there may be the need for a special meeting with the Consulting Engineers to discuss the development.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to Stainless Metalcraft requesting that they attend to the overhanging trees on their site ahead of next year's drain maintenance works.

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Chairman

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Date