

HUNDRED OF WISBECH INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

At a Meeting of the Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board
held at Middle Level Offices, March on Monday 16th November 2022

PRESENT

M G Day Esq (Chairman)	G L Lake Esq
N Buttress Esq (Vice Chairman)	P Tegerdine Esq
F D Leach (Deputy Vice Chairman)	Cllr S Hoy
Cllr N Meekins	C Smart Esq
N J Harrison Esq	Cllr S Wallwork

Mr Robert Hill (representing the Clerk to the Board) and Mr Graham Moore representing the Consulting Engineers were in attendance.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from J Bunning Esq, J Leach Esq, Cllr B Rackley and Cllr W Sutton Esq.

B.2029 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.

The Chairman and Mr Lake declared interests in the planning applications and any matters relating to The Thomas Squire Charity.

Mr Harrison declared an interest in any item in relation to the maintenance work of the Board.

Mr Harrison and Mr Tegerdine (as members of Waldersey IDB) declared interests in any matters concerning Waldersey IDB.

Mr Buttress and Mr F Leach as District Officers of the Board declared interests in matters concerning the District Officers and District Officers Fees.

B.2030 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on the 18th November 2021 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

B.2031 Matters Arising

None

B.2032 Election of Board Members

The Clerk reported that the term of office of the Members of the Board will expire on the 31st October 2022 and submitted the proposed register of electors which is applicable to the 2022 election.

RESOLVED

That the register be approved.

B.2033 Vacancies in Membership

Members considered the four vacancies on the Board.

The Chairman reported that he had discussions with Henry Duncalfe and Amanda Pinder who had both expressed an interest in becoming Members of the Board.

Mr Lake asked if the Board had thought it appropriate to approach Mr J Clarke again to see if he would consider a position on the Board.

RESOLVED

- i) That Mr Henry Duncalfe and Amanda Pinder be appointed as Members of the Board.
- ii) That Mr Lake be authorised to approach Mr J Clarke to see if he would be interested in becoming a Member of the Board and report further at the next meeting.

B.2034 Health and Safety

Further to minute B.2007, the Board considered the report of the Health and Safety Officer.

Mr Buttress reported that he had been in contact with the NFU and it was planned to hold a full review of the District Systems next Spring, hopefully in time to report at next year's meeting.

He informed members that although in the main, warning signs had not been subject to much vandalism, there was a persistent problem in the vicinity of Bruce Close, which provided the Boards access to the watercourse to the rear of the Thomas Clarkson School. He reported that the standard warning signs together with the No Parking signs had been put up but the No

Parking signs had been removed and vehicles parked restricting access for the Boards Contractor.

Mr Harrison reported that he does put notices on vehicles ahead of maintenance works concerning access requirements but this does not always guarantee vehicles will be removed when access is required. Cllr Hoy enquired if Highways had been contacted concerning the possibility of putting hatching/No Parking markings and if the police could be notified. She referred to the possibility of Private Highways works and agreed to forward contact details to the Clerk.

B.2035 Depot/Yard

Further to minute B.2008, Mr Hill reported that the Boards premises at Redmoor Lane, Wisbech had been sold by public auction in November 2021 for £61,000.00. He informed members that the board had previously looked at selling the premises with outline planning permission and after the deductions of these fees, sale and legal fees the net amount of £53,252.00 was currently being held as a separate pot in the Boards financial statements.

B.2036 Church Road Development, Friday Bridge

Further to minute B.2010 Mr Harrison reported that these works had now been completed.

B.2037 Access Problems

Mr Harrison reported that he was scheduled to go into Porter's site in a couple of week time and that there had been several problems in gaining access to the S B Components site. He informed the meeting that several notices had been sent out and that when he eventually gained access, there were still sections of the watercourse that he could not gain access due to obstructions that had not been moved. He reported that there were steel shipping containers within the byelaw distance and also a building, which made access/working difficult.

Cllr Hoy reported that it was her understanding that Fenland District Council owned the site and rented it to S B Components.

Mr Harrison considered some progress had been made but access/working on the site was still restricted.

Mr Moore reported that he was not aware of the Board granting consent for the building within the byelaw distance. Cllr Hoy reported the she would take up this matter with Fenland District Council.

Mr Leach reported that it was generally difficult to get any works carried out in the industrial area and enquired why the Board were paying for external legal assistance when the Middle Level had a solicitor who should be able to carry out this work. In response to an enquiry from Mr Leach, Mr Hill out-lined how the Middle Level administration fee was calculated and what level of services were included in the standard fee. Mr Buttress commented that the main issue with using the legal services at the Middle Level was the amount of time it took to get anything done.

Mr Leach enquired if the issuing of letters and notices to gain the Board access to sites to carry out routine drain maintenance works should be covered within the standard

administration fee and in response, Mr Hill agreed that for those types of work, they should be but he reminded members that they had also used the services of external solicitors with regards to access to the Porter's site.

Mr Lake considered the Board were frustrated with the speed of previous actions when using the Middle Level services.

RESOLVED

That a meeting be arranged between the Clerk, Chairman and Vice-Chairman to discuss the Boards concerns.

B.2038 Hundred of Wisbech IDB and Waldersey IDB Review of Joint Pumping Arrangements/Amalgamation

Mr Hill reported that the revised payment contribution had been agreed in principle by both Boards and payments for the last two years had been made on these calculations. He informed members when the Middle Level Solicitor had been working on a heads of terms for a formal agreement between the two Boards and had now produced a draft document for consideration.

Mr Buttress enquired if the document should be reviewed in the agenda paper, in response, Mr Hill confirmed he had received the draft this morning and that he considered it needed further refinement before the next step, which he considered should be reviewed by the Joint Pumping Working Group.

RESOLVED

That a meeting be arranged for the Joint Pumping Working Group to review the proposal for the Joint Pumping Agreement between Hundred of Wisbech IDB and Waldersey IDB.

B.2039 Clerk's Report

Mr Hill advised;

i) COVID-19 Actions

That the majority of control measures have been removed now and normal office working has resumed (with the exception of trialling a degree of flexible working, which has been shown to be effective following the previous periods of enforced home working). Impacts now are largely confined to the high rates of COVID-19 illness cases in the UK.

ii) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That an eighth Chair's Meeting was held on the 12th April 2022.

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

It was recorded that there had been a number of MLC staff changes over the period. These included the retirement of Deb Watts, Katie Hunt and Malcolm Downes. Also, Sarah Lemmon and Richard Lloyd had handed in their notice. New members of staff replacing them and linked with some restructuring of the finances and admin departments were Dave Bantoft (M&E Engineer), Sarah Bowd (Accounts Assistant), Polly Tomblason (PA Secretarial) and Claire Collings (Secretarial).

It was reported that following the successful telemetry grant bid for Local Levy £125K in grant had been secured and consequently an order had been placed for in excess of 45 new telemetry outstations. The MLC have tested the new system with the six stations they commissioned and were satisfied with its operation.

Training for Board members was covered and it was noted that ADA provide online training videos. Various methods for delivering these and recording attendance was discussed and it was finally resolved that the best way forward would be to ask all members to watch one or two videos a year and to record when they had been viewed. A record of who had watched which video would be retained and this information recorded at Board meetings and used to support DEFRA IDB1 returns.

A proposal to move from time charges to lump sum annual fees for planning and consenting matters was discussed and it was agreed that a proposal to move to this more efficient and effective way of working would be put to each Board. For similar reasons it was resolved that a proposal should be put forward which would reduce the scale of content reported to Boards under planning matters.

Inflationary pressures were touched upon and it was recognised that if this continues there will be pressure placed upon Boards to raise their rates more than has occurred in recent years. It was also recognised that along with these inflationary pressures there were increasing demands (with legal backing) evolving in relation to environmental gains and Boards should be aware of the costs of delivering on these. Examples are the government's commitment to protect 30% of all land by 2030 for the environment and of the Doubling Nature initiative in Cambridgeshire.

An update on work in relation to climate change and carbon reduction was given. Work currently in hand comprises of production of a carbon baseline for the MLC. Once complete the scale of the challenge to target carbon neutrality will be known and work will be undertaken to identify possible opportunities for reduction and mitigation, prior to production of a policy statement. During these next stages it is expected that Boards associated with the MLC will be similarly assessed and plan proposals made for them.

iii) Application(s) for byelaw consent

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

Name of Applicant	Description of works	Date of consent
Macca Tree Holdings Ltd	Pipe and fill a 36m length of private watercourse to the rear of 84 March Road, Friday Bridge	18/02/2022

iv) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities will be held on Wednesday the 9th November 2022, venue yet to be announced.

b) Meeting of the Welland and Nene Branch

The Clerk reported briefly on the Meeting of the Welland and Nene branch of the Association held in Woodhall Spa on Thursday the 2nd December 2021.

v) Water Resources East (WRE)

Further to minute B.11983 (vi), the requested contribution from this Board for the 2021/2022 financial year is once again £125. Also, the contributions for 2022/23 had been confirmed at £125. Contributions from drainage boards within the East of England secure a direct stake in WRE and help to ensure their needs and opinions are taken into account.

A draft WRE plan went out for public consultation and responses to it were to be received by 28th February 2022. The latest news can be found by visiting www.wre.org.uk.

RESOLVED

That the Board approved the requested annual contribution of £125.00 for 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 to be paid.

vi) Red Diesel

Following extensive lobbying and the efforts of ADA, DEFRA and Treasury have softened their stance on the potential loss of access to red diesel use by IDBs. Going forward then as long as the work undertaken by the IDB can be shown to have some

agricultural benefit then red diesel use can continue. The exception will be construction works and works where the sole beneficiary is an urban area.

vii) Planning and Consenting Fees

Proposed changes to planning and consenting service supply charging.

Mr Hill outlined the proposal as detailed in the report and Mr Leach considered the proposed arrangements should deliver a more efficient service but that any changes should deliver value for money and asked Mr Moore his views on the proposals. Mr Moore confirmed that he had not been consulted concerning the proposals and although he had reservations concerning the proposals for the format of the report, he considered that for this Board there was regular discussions with the Chairman, District Officers and works committee concerning Planning Matters that all issues would be adequately covered.

Mr Buttress raised concerns that although the officers of the Board would be aware of issues surrounding Planning, just having a list of applications dealt with would not give Members sufficient details to understand issues or implications for decisions they may be required to make.

The Chairman reported that he had concerns over the proposal for changes to the fee structure and had discussed this with Mr Hill before the meeting. He informed Members that while he was, in principle, in favour of moving towards a fixed fee based on a 5-year average he had concerns over percentage links to Middle Level staff costs which the Board had no influence. He agreed that any changes must provide value for money and ensure the complex issues concerning planning for the Board were dealt with effectively and efficiently.

RESOLVED

That the matter be reviewed with the Clerk at the meeting to be arrange to discuss the Boards concerns over the delivery of legal services.

viii) Anglia Farmers

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting of each Board/Commissioners the Anglia Farmers electricity contract was renewed in October 2021 for a shorter period of 6 months to 31st March 2022 and this was due to the volatile energy market at the time. As there remains an enormous amount of volatility and uncertainty surrounding energy prices and as competition is very limited, it was decided that the Commissioners and Boards should remain within the Anglia Farmers buying group at the moment as there is likely to be little scope for us to negotiate better deals. The Clerk will also report a new contract has been signed for a 12-month period to 31st March 2023 with EDF Energy through Anglian Farmers.

The Anglia Farmers Energy team does not have to commit to buying energy for years ahead at the current price levels and the flexible contract that they have to buy energy from 1st April 2022 allows them to risk manage the portfolio for their Members, which means they will be well positioned to take advantage of any energy market normalisation ahead. When market conditions have settled down/normalised the

Board/Commissioners will be asked whether they wish to remain with Anglia Farmers. But this may not be for several years based upon current market assessments.

ix) Fens Biosphere

The Clerk reported that this project is on hold and will remain so unless and until Fenland District Council is prepared to engage with a redefined brief and vision for it.

B.2040 Delivery of Annual Maintenance Contract

Mr Harrison reported that the Boards systems was generally in good order with weather conditions allowing for works to be carried out. He confirmed that some slubbing works had been carried out in the year but due to access issues some works in the industrial area had been carried over into 2022/2023. He referred to the issue for the Board concerning red and white diesel for working in industrial areas and that currently, as a temporary measure, he has a machine running on white diesel dedicated to the industrial area, but, when works in the agricultural area started, he would need to revert to red diesel.

Mr Harrison reported he had considered the possibility of purchasing a machine which could be dedicated fulltime to operating on white diesel for operating in the industrial area but that provisional costing had been estimated this would add an additional £7,000 p.a to the contract price.

In response to Cllr Meekins, Mr Hill outlined the discussions between ADA, HM Treasury and Defra to reach this point of allowing the use of red diesel if it provided benefit to agriculture and that, as the industrial area was upstream at the top of the District, it would not be possible to provide any basis that works in this area provided benefit for agriculture and therefore, white diesel would be required to be used for all maintenance operations.

In response to Mr Lake, Mr Harrison estimated that between 30 & 40% of his time was spent operating in the industrial area.

Mr Harrison referred to the possibility of having a need for emergency works with industrial area but only having a machine available to run on red diesel.

In response to Mr Hill, Mr Harrison confirmed that the cost to drain tanks, flush out and change filters was around £400 and that there was then the additional cost of running white diesel instead of red diesel.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Clerk raise the issue of possibly having to respond to an emergency in the industrial area with a machine running on red diesel.
- ii) That in such circumstances as in i), the Chairman be authorised to issue an instruction from the Board to in an emergency situation, use a machine running on red diesel in the industrial area.
- iii) That a variation letter be drawn allowing additional costs for the maintenance contract for £400 per change-over from red diesel to white diesel and the increased costs for running machinery on white diesel.

(NB) – Mr Harrison declared an interest when this item was discussed.

B.2041 Consulting Engineer's Report, including planning and consenting matters

Main outfall at Crooked Bank

Mr Moore reported that the contractor had completed the works and an inspection had been held last June with the Chairman, himself and the contractor which was the commencement of the 12month maintenance period, at the end of which, any works required will be identified and subject to everything being in order the retention monies paid.

He referred to the co-operation of the family at 19 Crooked Bank who were required to use the temporary crossing for access to/from their property. He reported that, to-date, no claims for compensation had been received from any landowner or from the occupants of 19 Crooked Bank and enquired, if as a matter of appreciation for the co-operation of the family, the board would consider an ex-gratia payment.

Attenuation Area near Point 29

Mr Moore reminded members that as part of a wider development proposal, the developer had agreed to provide an attenuation lagoon close to point 29. He reported that this had now been constructed and that the legal process to transfer the land from the developer to the Board was in progress. He informed the meeting that the developer's solicitor had raised a query concerning access from the A47 and that at a site meeting, the works committee had agreed that access from the A47 could be used in an emergency but considered that access from Cromwell Road should be retained as the principal access. He reported that it should soon be possible to carry out some hydraulic modelling to establish if further works were required. The Chairman confirmed that these costs would be met by the Board and provision had been made in the budget to meet these.

Culverting Works near Point 66

Mr Moore reported on the access issues concerning this area and that following the Boards approval, a design to pipe and fill the section of watercourse had been developed and it was intended to go to tender for the works shortly. The Chairman referred to the possibility of back-filling with suitable material that would provide the least future maintenance costs and Mr Buttress referred to the ADA Good Governance training videos in which it referenced the engagement of the local community and wondered if it would be possible to provide a grassed community area which local residents could then maintain. The Chairman considered there could be problems with this as the land was not owned by the Board and there would therefore likely be multiple riparian 'owners'. Mr Lake considered it was important to get the works completed and a decision could then be made when finalised. Mr Hill reminded members that the Board had previously authorised the works committee to deal with this scheme.

Flood Alleviation Investigations

Mr Moore reported on the problems following the Christmas 2020 rainfall events and subsequent to these the proposals for investigations to take place into a review of the Boards District System to identify possible future improvement works. He had hoped it would have been possible to have identified consultants by this meeting but, as some works may have also been identified in proposals from the Highways Agency. The Chairman reported that following initial discussions, he had received an email from the Clerk informing him that the Middle Level did not have capacity to carry out the works and that the Board should progress the matter themselves. Following this the works committee did look at possible consultants and provisionally appointed one to look into matters but had not heard further and that he had recently made contact for an update and it had been mutually agreed to end the provisional arrangement. He considered that everything depends on getting hydraulic modelling carried out but once done this would give a clear indication of what works would be required.

In response to Cllr Meekins, Mr Moore confirmed that the Middle Level did not have the capacity to carry out hydraulic modelling. Mr Leach commented that the works committee had been told that it could possibly cost as much to carry out hydraulic modelling on the Boards systems as any potential works would and queried the possibility of Grant-in-Aid Funding for the proposed modelling work.

Proposed Drainage Improvements south of Point 53 at the A47 (project ref: 346/20) and the Condition of the Existing Culverts under the A47 (Points 29, 50 & 53)

Mr Moore updated on the assistance he had given to Mr Ian Smith in his dealing with the Highways Agency and that, from an initial review of the report produced, it appears that the Highways Agency content that the Culverts are not posing an immediate problem and are sufficient in size. The Chairman confirmed that the Highways Agency currently intend to de-silt one culvert only and in response to Mr Lake, Mr Moore confirmed that this would be the culvert at point 50. Mr Moore considered that the Board needed to challenge the Highways Agencies opinion that the culverts were of sufficient size as they were installed during the 1980's when the area upstream was generally green-field and would therefore not have taken into account the now developed industrial area.

Mr Moore considered that any proposed hydraulic modelling from the Highways Agency could 'duplicate' works proposed by the Board but it was highly unlikely that the Highways Agency would accept any works that were not carried out by their own appointed consultants. Mr Moore reported that a channel for dialogue had been created and it was important to continue to use this to progress the Boards requirements.

Mr Moore referred to the Government current policy concerning SuDS and that issues still remained concerning the future ownership and maintenance of such system. He accepted that Local Authorities had limited resources to properly maintain systems and it was therefore important to ensure that proper long-term arrangements were put in place. The Board agreed that in such circumstances, a proper agreement for the long-term ownership funding, management and maintenance arrangement needed putting in place.

Concerning the proposals for car parking and new vehicular access at Pike Textiles Display Ltd (MLC Ref no's 1595, 1621 & 1627) Mr Moore referred to the proposals to install an access culvert between service ducts across the watercourse and that he had raised concerns as it was indicated on a plan supplied by UK Power Networks that at least one of the ducts carried an electricity supply. Mr Buttress considered that if we are now aware of what services are carried in the ducts, can the appropriate warning signs be put in place. In response to Mr Moore – the Chairman confirmed it was his understanding that Pike Textiles

had purchased a piece of adjacent land in order to install the access culvert and had then erected the fencing on the now new boundary line. Mr Moore did not believe this fencing had been consented and was a byelaw infringement which would further restrict the Boards access.

Mr Moore referred to a proposal to infill the short section of watercourse at Point 58. Mr Leach referred to an inlet from the highway that entered the watercourse around the location the photograph was taken from. Mr Harrison considered that if this section was infilled, it would only move the problems further along and that if infilled, it would require a very large access to allow for proper cleaning. The Chairman agreed with the comments of Mr Harrison and considered that as the section was on a bend and took large flows requiring a large access for future maintenance, it would be un-economic to take any actions to pipe and fill the section at the present time. Members agreed that no action be taken concerning the engineers' comments to pipe and fill this section.

Concerning the Seagate Home Development, Mr Moore reported that his understanding was that a planning application was likely to be submitted in the near future. He referred to proposals for access requirements and that if an acceptable sized concrete box culvert was used then adequate arrangements would need putting in place concerning its future maintenance. The Chairman reported that the works committee had only currently discussed access arrangements and not issues concerning the development.

With regards to the proposals concerning the development by Mr Means (MLC no 1634) the Board were content that as long as the proposals do not interfere with their access and maintenance operations then the final details could be dealt with by the engineer.

Mr Moore reported that the issues associated with the Foster Property Development Ltd proposals (MLC nos. 1417, 1429 & 1622) had now been resolved with discharges going into the new AW system.

Concerning the Medworth Energy proposals (MLC no. 1542) Cllr Hoy reported that the application was due to be submitted to the Secretary of State on 7th June 2022. Mr Moore reported that he had been in discussions with the developer's consultants and had clarified the Boards position. The Chairman reported that the Board would continue to need access to the Board maintained watercourses and raised concerns that it could be possible for the Boards byelaws to the over-ruled.

Mr Moore reported on a previous meeting concerning historical contraventions on the Copart site and the works agreed with the Works Committee and that it was his understanding that some of these works had already been completed

Concerning the proposals by H L Hutchinson, Mr Moore reported that the Clerk had responded to the query raised by Mr John Maxey and had contested some of the points made. Mr Leach queried if Mr Moore knew what had been contested and what responses were made, in response, Mr Moore reported he did not have that information at hand at this time.

With regards to the proposals close to Point 12, Mr Moore referred to applications received in this area and that it was understood that the culvert pipe had a 'dog-leg' but it was not definitely known the exact location. Mr Buttress reported that he had previous success with dowsing rods and agreed to inspect the location with the Chairman to try to identify the course of the culvert. If successful, he would inform the engineer to assist with dealing with the applications.

Mr Moore reported that he was still waiting for information concerning Mr Castle's proposals (MLC nos 1087, 1563& 1567) and in response to Mr Lake detailed the process that could be taken following the issue of an advisory notice.

With regards to issues concerning access culverts at Fridaybridge Road, Elm, Mr Buttress considered that the planning authority were not following up on the conditions they made in granting planning permission. Mr Moore agreed to follow this up with Fenland District Planning Officers concerning the developments at Fridaybridge Road, Elm and at other locations within the District.

Mr Leach referred to the ongoing pollution problems in the District and the problems this causes if the polluted matter outfalls into the Waldersey IDB system. Cllr Hoy reported that Fenland District Council had been dealing with the dumping of raw sewage in the Redmoor Lane area and the Chairman considered the source of this could be traced back to the industrial area. Mr Leach reported on the previous investigations by Anglian Water and the Environmental Agency to identify some sources of pollution and that those investigations were ongoing. He reported that Anglian Water had recently located a drainage network which had not been adopted by them and they therefore considered these systems were the responsibility of Fenland District Council. He updated members that Anglian Water were currently installing monitoring equipment to try to trace other sources of pollution.

Mr Buttress expressed his thanks to Mr Moore for his attendance and delivery of his report.

RESOLVED

- i) That the report be approved
- ii) That an ex-gratia payment of £100 be made to the occupants of 19 Crooked Bank in recognition of their co-operation during the replacement of the main out-fall pipe-line.
- iii) Flood alleviation Investigations
 - a) That the consulting engineer make enquires as to the likely availability of Grant-in-Aid for the hydraulic modelling of the District system.
 - b) That the works committee be authorised to deal with this matter.
- iv) That the Board require an agreement putting in place for the long-term ownership funding, management and maintenance arrangements for all Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
- v) That the Clerk write to Pike Textiles Display Ltd to make them aware of the Boards access requirements and that the palisade fencing recently erected is in contravention of the Boards byelaws and that action will be required to be taken to rectify this.
- vi) That the engineer be authorised to deal with the application from Mr Means (MLC no. 1634) on the Boards behalf.

- vii) That an advisory notice be issued to the land owner (planning ref nos: 1087, 1563 & 1567) and that the planning engineer be authorised to take further action to regulate the application.
- viii) That the planning engineer discuss with Fenland District Council Planning Officer the apparent non-compliance with planning conditions of developments at Fridaybridge Road, Elm and at other locations with the Districts.

B.2042 Capital Improvement Programme

Mr Hill referred to the programme and that the proposals for works in 2022/2023 were estimates only but would be updated following receipt of tenders for the culverting of the watercourse near to point 66 and of quotations for proposed works to the attenuation lagoon near point 29. He reported that funding had already been allocated for these schemes. He reported that works for future years would be directed by the outcomes of any Flood Alleviation Investigations.

RESOLVED

That the programme be approved in principle and kept under review.

B.2043 District Officers' Report

Mr Buttress reported that matters raised in the report had previously been dealt with in the meeting.

Mr Lake reported he had been on an inspection with the District Officers and had noticed an environmental strip left at the bottom of watercourses but that in places there were ash trees taking root and these, if left, could cause problems in the future. Mr Buttress reported that it was intended to change policy and mow alternative sides of the watercourse so these would be dealt with in due course.

RESOLVED

- i) Report and actions therein be approved and that the District Officers be thanked for their services.
- ii) That the hours worked as detailed in the report be approved for payment.

B.2044 Conservation Officer's Newsletter and BAP report

The Clerk referred to the Conservation's Officers newsletter, previously circulated to members and considered the most recent BAP report.

RESOLVED

Members considered and approved the most recent BAP report.

B.2045 Works Committee Report

The Chairman reported that all matters discussed by the works committee had been dealt with earlier during the meeting.

B.2046 State-Aided Schemes

The Board considered whether to undertake further State-aided Schemes and whether any future proposals should be included in the forward capital forecasts provided to the Environment Agency.

RESOLVED

That no proposals be formulated at the present time – but the engineer to make enquires as to the availability of Grant-in Aid for the Hydraulic modelling of the District System.

B.2047 Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

Mr Hill reported that ADA had increased subscriptions by 1% for 2022, from £866 to £875

RESOLVED

That the increased subscription be paid for 2022.

B.2048 Environment Agency – Precept

The Clerk reported that the precept for the financial year 2021/2022 has been fixed at £17,780 representing a rate (including special levies) of 0.57p.

The precept for 2021/2022 was £17,780.

B.2049 Review of Internal Controls

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

RESOLVED

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

B.2050 Risk Management Assessment

The Board considered and approved the Board's Risk Management Policy.

B.2051 Exercise of Public Rights

The Clerk to 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.2052 Annual Governance Statement – 2021/2022

The Board considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March 2022.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2022.

B.2053 Payments 2021/2022

The Board considered and approved payments which had been made during the financial year 2021/2022.

NB: Mr Tegerdine declared an interest (as a member of Needham & Laddus IDB) in the payment made to Needham & Laddus IDB.

NB: Messers Harrison and Tegerdine declared interests (as members of Waldersey IDB) in the payment made to Waldersey IDB.

NB: Mr Harrison declared an interest in the payments made to Harrison Agricultural Contractors Ltd.

NB: Councilors Hoy, Meekins and Wallwork declared interests in the payment made to Fenland District Council.

NB: Mr Buttress declared an interest in the payment made to him for District Officers Fees.

NB: Mr Leach declared an interest (as an employee of W.Norman & Sons Ltd) in the payment made to W.Norman & Sons Ltd.

B.2054 Annual Accounts of the Board – 2021/2022

The Board considered and approved the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliations for the year ended on the 31st March 2022 as required in the Audit Regulations.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to sign the Annual Return, on behalf of the Board, for the financial year ending 31st March 2022.

B.2055 Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2022/2023

The Board considered & approved estimates of expenditure and proposals for Special levy and Drainage rates in respect of the financial year 2022/2023 and were informed by Mr Hill that under the Land Drainage Act 1991, the proportions of their net expenditure to be met by Drainage rates on Agriculture hereditaments and by Special levy on Local Billing Authorities would be respectively 4.80% and 95.20%

RESOLVED

- i) That the estimates be approved.
- ii) That a total sum of £215,158 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 £10,335 and £204,823 respectively.
- iv) That a rate of 6.90p in the £ be laid and assessed on Agricultural hereditaments in the District
- v)
 - a) That a Special levy of £203,629 be made and issued to Fenland District Council for the purpose of meeting such expenditure.
 - b) That a Special levy of £1,194 be made and issued to the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk 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.2056 Date of next Meetings

RESOLVED

Mr Hill reminded members that the next Meeting of the Board will be held on Thursday 10th November 2022 at The Crown Lodge, Outwell.

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Chairman

10th November 2022